LEGISLATIVE, FINANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
A G E N D A

JANUARY 23, 2012 - 6:30 P.M.

CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
15 LOOCKERMAN PLAZA
DOVER, DELAWARE

Public comments are welcomed on any item and will be permitted at appropriate times. When possible, please notify the City Clerk (736-7008 or e-mail at CityClerk@dover.de.us) should you wish to be recognized.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

1. Proposed Resolution #2012-02 - Requesting the General Assembly to Amend Article IV - Financial Affairs, Section 50 - Debt Limit, of the City of Dover Charter
   (Due to time constraints, this item has been placed on the Council agenda for the meeting being held later in the evening.)

2. Proposed Ordinance #2012-03 - Related to Senior Citizen Income Exclusions *(Committee Referred This Item Back to Staff on November 14, 2011.)*

3. Minority Recruitment Committee Recommendations

4. Public Comment Period

5. Adjournment by 7:00 P.M.

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THE AGENDA ITEMS AS LISTED MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED IN SEQUENCE. THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE TO INCLUDE THE ADDITION OR THE DELETION OF ITEMS, INCLUDING EXECUTIVE SESSIONS.

ACTION FORM

PROCEEDING: Legislative, Finance & Administration Meeting 1/23/12 **AGENDA ITEM NO.:** 1
DEPARTMENT OF ORIGIN: Finance **DATE SUBMITTED**: 01/17/12
PREPARED BY: Donna Mitchell
SUBJECT: City of Dover Charter – Amendment to City Charter – Section 50 Debt Limit
RELATED PROJECT:
APPROVALS: City Council
EXHIBITS: Council Resolution 2012 – 02
EXPENDITURE REQUIRED: N/A **AMOUNT BUDGETED**: **FUNDING SOURCE (Dept./Page in CIP & Budget)**:
TIMETABLE: N/A
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Staff recommends approval of the change to the City of Dover Charter – Section 50, Debt Limit.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The recommended change to the City of Dover debt limit is to expand and clarify the purposes for debt issuance without a referendum vote by inserting specific uses of general obligation debt which will be secured by the full faith and credit of the City.

The change continues to provide a referendum requirement when the debt issuance would exceed one-fourth of one percent of the taxable assessed value of real property.

PROPOSED COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 2012-02

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DOVER, IN COUNCIL MET:

That the Mayor and Council have determined that the Charter of the City of Dover should be amended to expand and clarify the purposes for which bonds may be issued without a referendum vote. Therefore, the Mayor and Council of the City of Dover respectfully request the General Assembly of the State of Delaware to amend Article IV - Financial Affairs, Section 50 - Debt Limit, paragraph (c) of its Charter, which amendments, if adopted by the General Assembly, would be as follows:

CITY OF DOVER CHARTER - ARTICLE IV - FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Sec. 50. - Debt limit.

(a) Whenever the needs of the city shall require more money than is at the time in the city treasury from current receipts, the council shall be authorized and empowered to anticipate current revenue by borrowing such sums as shall be needed not in excess of one percent of the total taxable assessment for a general tax. The amount so borrowed shall be paid back out of current revenue received thereafter.

To exercise the power aforesaid the council shall adopt a resolution to that effect, which resolution shall require the affirmative vote of at least three-fourths of all the members of the council, and the approval of the mayor. The indebtedness created under this section shall be evidenced by the bond, or note, of the city, and the faith and credit of the city shall be deemed to be pledged thereby.

(b) The mayor and council is hereby authorized and empowered to borrow from time to time on the faith and credit of the City of Dover sums of money for such purposes as may be deemed necessary and proper by the mayor and council of the said city which purpose shall be consistent with the powers conferred upon the mayor and council of the City of Dover by the Charter thereof, as amended, for the management and maintenance of the said city and for these purposes the mayor and council shall have full power and authority to issue bonds of the said "City of Dover."

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The aggregate of the amounts so borrowed together with all other bonded indebtedness for which the full faith and credit of the City of Dover has been pledged shall not at any time exceed a sum equal to five percent of the total assessed value of real property situate within the bounds of the City of Dover as such boundaries shall from time to time appear.

The said bonds shall be issued in one or more series, shall bear such date or dates, shall mature at such time or times, shall bear interest at such rate or rates, shall be payable at such time or times, and at such place or places, shall be in such denominations, and shall contain such other provisions as the mayor and council may provide and shall be set forth in the said bonds. Said bonds may or may not be coupon bonds and may be registered or otherwise as the mayor and council deem advisable.

The mayor and council shall direct and effect the preparation and sale of said bonds at such time or times, at such price or prices, and upon such terms as the said mayor and council deem advisable, and all the monies arising from the sale of said bonds shall be used for the municipal purposes of the City of Dover specified in the resolution authorizing their issue.

The form of said bonds and of any coupons which may be thereunto attached shall be as prescribed by the mayor and council, and all such bonds shall be signed by the mayor and the treasurer of the City of Dover and sealed with the corporate seal thereof. Facsimile signatures of the mayor and treasurer and a facsimile of the corporate seal may be imprinted upon such bonds and any coupons attached to said bonds in lieu of the signatures of the said mayor and treasurer in their own handwriting and of the affixing of the corporate seal itself.

Said bonds of the City of Dover shall be exempt from all state, county and municipal taxes.

The mayor and council of the City of Dover are hereby authorized and required to levy and raise by taxation in each and every year such sums of money as may be required to pay the interest accrued on said bonds while all or any of said bonds remain unpaid, and the said mayor and the city council are further authorized and required to levy and raise by taxation, from time to time such sum or sums of money as shall be needed to establish such sinking funds as the said mayor and the city council may at their discretion authorize for the redemption of said bonds, or any of them, at or before their maturity and such sum or sums of money as shall be required to otherwise redeem any or all ~~or~~ ***of*** said bonds at or before their maturity. Taxes for interest and for redemption of said bonds shall be levied and raised as taxes for general municipal purposes in the said city are levied and raised and shall be in addition to those levied and raised for any and all other municipal purposes.

A statement appearing in the bonds issued under the provisions of this section to the effect that the bonds have been duly authorized shall be deemed and held to be conclusive evidence in favor of the lawful holder of any such bonds that the terms and conditions of this section have been fully met and complied with.

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(c) Bonds may be authorized and issued pursuant to subsection (b), without a referendum vote, by a resolution of the council which shall have the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members thereof and the approval of the mayor, for the following purposes:

(i) To finance ***capital projects, including, but not limited to,*** public storm sewers, ***water mains, sewer mains,*** streets and ~~appurtenances~~ ***public buildings*** provided that no more than ¼ of one percent (.25%) of taxable assessed value of real property of aggregate principal amount of ***general obligation*** bonds may be issued at any one time pursuant to this clause and any new bonds issued pursuant to this clause may not cause the total aggregate principal amount of ***general obligation*** bonds outstanding at any one time to exceed one percent of the total taxable assessment for a general tax at the time such new bonds are issued; and

(ii) To refund bonds secured by the city's full faith and credit, prior to their stated maturity, provided that (A) the present value of the aggregate principal and interest payments of the refunding bonds are not greater than the present value of the aggregate principal and interest payments on the bonds to be refunded determined by discounting at the effective interest rate on the refunding bonds, calculated based on the internal rate of return: and (B) at the time of issuance of the refunding bonds there are deposited in escrow, pledged to secure the refunded bonds, sufficient monies and/or direct obligations of, or obligation the principal of and interest on which are guaranteed by, the United States government, which, without regard to any reinvestment earnings, will be sufficient to pay when due all interest, principal and redemption price on the refunded bonds at maturity or upon earlier call for redemption.

ADOPTED: *

S:\RESOLUTIONS & PROCLAMATIONS\2012\2012-02 Request to GA-Art IV-Financial Affairs, Sec. 50-Debt Limit.wpd

CARLETON E. CAREY, SR.	THOMAS J. LEARY
MAYOR	COUNCIL PRESIDENT

SYNOPSIS

This amendment expands and clarifies the purposes for which bonds may be issued without a referendum vote.

Actions History:

January 23, 2012 - Scheduled for Consideration by City Council

January 23, 2012 - Scheduled for Introduction at Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee *(Due to time constraints, this item will move directly to Council the same evening)*

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Sponsor:_____

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
146th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE BILL NO._____

AN ACT TO AMEND THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF DOVER
RELATED TO FINANCIAL AFFAIRS - DEBT LIMIT

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE (Two-thirds of all members elected to each House concurring therein):

Section 1. Amend Section 50 - Debt limit, of Article IV - Financial Affairs of the Charter of the City of Dover by deleting the text indicated in strikeout and inserting the text indicated in underscore as follows:

Sec. 50. - Debt limit.

(a) Whenever the needs of the city shall require more money than is at the time in the city treasury from current receipts, the council shall be authorized and empowered to anticipate current revenue by borrowing such sums as shall be needed not in excess of one percent of the total taxable assessment for a general tax. The amount so borrowed shall be paid back out of current revenue received thereafter.

To exercise the power aforesaid the council shall adopt a resolution to that effect, which resolution shall require the affirmative vote of at least three-fourths of all the members of the council, and the approval of the mayor. The indebtedness created under this section shall be evidenced by the bond, or note, of the city, and the faith and credit of the city shall be deemed to be pledged thereby.

(b) The mayor and council is hereby authorized and empowered to borrow from time to time on the faith and credit of the City of Dover sums of money for such purposes as may be deemed necessary and proper by the mayor and council of the said city which purpose shall be consistent with the powers conferred upon the mayor and council of the City of Dover by the Charter thereof, as amended, for the management and maintenance of the said city and for these purposes the mayor and council shall have full power and authority to issue bonds of the said "City of Dover."

The aggregate of the amounts so borrowed together with all other bonded indebtedness for which the full faith and credit of the City of Dover has been pledged shall not at any time exceed a sum equal to five percent of the total assessed value of real property situate within the bounds of the City of Dover as such boundaries shall from time to time appear.

The said bonds shall be issued in one or more series, shall bear such date or dates, shall mature at such time or times, shall bear interest at such rate or rates, shall be payable at such time or times, and at such place or places, shall be in such denominations, and shall contain such other provisions as the mayor and council may provide and shall be set forth in the said bonds. Said bonds may or may not be coupon bonds and may be registered or otherwise as the mayor and council deem advisable.

The mayor and council shall direct and effect the preparation and sale of said bonds at such time or times, at such price or prices, and upon such terms as the said mayor and council deem advisable, and all the monies arising from the sale of said bonds shall be used for the municipal purposes of the City of Dover specified in the resolution authorizing their issue.

The form of said bonds and of any coupons which may be thereunto attached shall be as prescribed by the mayor and council, and all such bonds shall be signed by the mayor and the treasurer of the City of Dover and sealed with the corporate seal thereof. Facsimile signatures of the mayor and treasurer and a facsimile of the corporate seal may be imprinted upon such bonds and any coupons attached to said bonds in lieu of the signatures of the said mayor and treasurer in their own handwriting and of the affixing of the corporate seal itself.

Said bonds of the City of Dover shall be exempt from all state, county and municipal taxes.

The mayor and council of the City of Dover are hereby authorized and required to levy and raise by taxation in each and every year such sums of money as may be required to pay the interest accrued on said bonds while all or any of said bonds remain unpaid, and the said mayor and the city council are further authorized and required to levy and raise by taxation, from time to time such sum or sums of money as shall be needed to establish such sinking funds as the said mayor and the city council may at their discretion authorize for the redemption of said bonds, or any of them, at or before their maturity and such sum or sums of money as shall be required to otherwise redeem any or all ~~or~~ of said bonds at or before their maturity. Taxes for interest and for redemption of said bonds shall be levied and raised as taxes for general municipal purposes in the said city are levied and raised and shall be in addition to those levied and raised for any and all other municipal purposes.

A statement appearing in the bonds issued under the provisions of this section to the effect that the bonds have been duly authorized shall be deemed and held to be conclusive evidence in favor of the lawful holder of any such bonds that the terms and conditions of this section have been fully met and complied with.

(c) Bonds may be authorized and issued pursuant to subsection (b), without a referendum vote, by a resolution of the council which shall have the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members thereof and the approval of the mayor, for the following purposes:

(i) To finance capital projects, including, but not limited to, public storm sewers, water mains, sewer mains, streets and ~~appurtenances~~ public buildings provided that no more than ¼ of one percent (.25%) of taxable assessed value of real property of aggregate principal amount of general obligation bonds may be issued at any one time pursuant to this clause and any new bonds issued pursuant to this clause may not cause the total aggregate principal amount of general obligation bonds outstanding at any one time to exceed one percent of the total taxable assessment for a general tax at the time such new bonds are issued; and

(ii) To refund bonds secured by the city's full faith and credit, prior to their stated maturity, provided that (A) the present value of the aggregate principal and interest payments of the refunding bonds are not greater than the present value of the aggregate principal and interest payments on the bonds to be refunded determined by discounting at the effective interest rate on the refunding bonds, calculated based on the internal rate of return: and (B) at the time of issuance of the refunding bonds there are deposited in escrow, pledged to secure the refunded bonds, sufficient monies and/or direct obligations of, or obligation the principal of and interest on which are guaranteed by, the United States government, which, without regard to any reinvestment earnings, will be sufficient to pay when due all interest, principal and redemption price on the refunded bonds at maturity or upon earlier call for redemption.

SYNOPSIS

This act would expand and clarify the purposes for which bonds may be issued without a referendum vote.

ACTION FORM

PROCEEDING: Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee **AGENDA ITEM NO.:**
DEPARTMENT OF ORIGIN: Assessor's Office **DATE SUBMITTED**: 1/23/2012
PREPARED BY: Cheryl Russell, Assessor
SUBJECT: Proposed Amendment to Chapter 102 – Taxation, Section 102-183 – Qualifications, Exclusion from Income, of the Dover Code
REFERENCE: Senior Citizen Property Tax Abatement Discussion 11/14/2011
RELATED PROJECT:
APPROVALS: Council
EXHIBITS: 1. Draft Ordinance 2. Michael Smith Email 3. Background and Analysis from 11/14/2011 CAF
EXPENDITURE REQUIRED: **N/A** **AMOUNT BUDGETED**: N/A **FUNDING SOURCE (Dept./Page in CIP & Budget)**: N/A
TIMETABLE: Upon Council Approval
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Staff recommends amending ordinance 102-183 (b)(3) to update the language to specify Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) as the type of Civil Service Retirement to be excluded and also to strike out the dollar amount for the maximum amount allowed for the deduction from income.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The senior Citizen Tax Abatement qualifications section (b) Exclusions to Income; currently consists of:

1. Social Security benefits
2. Railroad Pensions
3. Federal Civil Service Retirement (150% of current Social Security Limit)

The Federal Civil Service Retirement was added a few years ago because it was similar to Social Security (as is the Railroad Pension). Those retirees that are under the "old" CSRS plan did not contribute to Social Security and do not receive this benefit from that employment; therefore this was added to the exclusion of income for the City of Dover Senior Citizen Tax Reduction Program.

It has come to our attention that the "new" FERS plan for Civil Service Retirement did contribute to Social Security and receives both social security and pension from this employment; therefore this particular plan should not be added to the exclusion for the City of Dover Senior Citizen Tax Reduction Program. The intent to add Civil Service Retirement weighed heavily on the fact that the retirees do not receive a social security benefit.

The amendment to the ordinance specifies that the third exclusion to income be CSRS ONLY.

Military Pension
Staff does not recommend that Military Pension be added to Section (b) Exclusions to Income, because this retirement plan also contributed to Social Security. This would allow Military Retirees the ability to exclude social security ***and*** military pension from their adjusted gross income. (similar to the FERS plan)
The revenue impact of adding Military Pension to the Exclusion to Income qualification could not be determined. The census bureau does not differentiate military pensions and was not able to assist us.

Income Cap
The idea of putting a basic cap on the income limit with no exclusions was reviewed. The only "pro" to this is that there would be no determination needed for exclusions of different plans. The "cons" that we could anticipate are:

1. Complicating the application process; requiring more documentation for seniors with Social Security income only. (195 applicants)
2. Discontinuation of abatement for seniors turning 65when they begin to draw Social Security benefits
3. Not consistent with the County income qualifications

Military Disability/Disability Income

Staff reviewed the possibility of adding income directly related to disability to the exclusion to income qualification. Kent County offers this deduction from the Adjusted Gross Income. However, Kent County has an income limit qualification on their Disability Reduction; similar to their senior citizen reduction. Kent County also requires that once the property owner is 65 years of age, they are required to apply for Senior Citizen reduction and no longer qualify for the disability reduction. Kent County did not explain the reasoning behind the deduction of the income related to disability; we can only assume it has something to do with the transfer of reduction from Disability to senior citizen at the age of 65. The revenue impact of adding Income Related to Disability could not be determined. Since Kent County transfers the property owner to the Senior Citizen Reduction Program, they do not have the number of property owners that qualify or are considered disabled within the City of Dover limits.

Currently, the City of Dover does not have age limitation or income limitations for the disability reduction. The only requirement is that they are 100% disabled as determined by the Social Security Administration and must provide an award letter from SSA each year upon application.

New Castle County and Sussex County have income limitations for the disability reduction plan; however they do not deduct income related to disability. They also transfer the property owner to senior citizen when they turn 65 years of age.

Staff does not recommend deducting income directly related to disability at this time.

CITY OF DOVER PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2012-03

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DOVER, IN COUNCIL MET:

That Chapter 102 - Taxation, Article VI - Exemptions; Board of Assessment Appeals, Section 102-183 - Tax Exemption for Senior Citizens, be amended by inserting the text indicated in bold, blue, italics and deleting the text indicated in red strikeout as follows:

Sec. 102-183. - Tax exemption for senior citizens.

(a) *Authority*. This section is adopted to implement 22 Del. C. § 1001 et seq., granting exemptions from municipal taxation on real property for persons 65 years of age or over. Compliance must be made with such chapter 10 and this section in order to qualify for such exemption.

(b) *Qualifications*. The exemption shall be for real property owners 60 years of age or over. If qualified, their real property shall be exempt from municipal taxation to the extent of the first $50,000.00 of assessed valuation. This exemption shall be subject to the following:

(1) *Owner resides alone*. If the income of a property owner who resides alone exceeds the sum of $15,851.00 (2008) for the income tax year immediately preceding the date of making an application for the exemption, then the exemption shall not be granted. The maximum income limit stated in the preceding sentence shall increase each year by the same percentage as the cost of living adjustment granted to recipients of Social Security retirement benefits.

(2) *Spouses reside together*. If the income of a property owner and spouse who reside together exceeds the sum of $22,192.00 (2008) for the income tax year immediately preceding the date of making an application for the exemption, then the exemption shall not be granted. The maximum income limit stated in the preceding sentence shall increase each year by the same percentage as the cost of living adjustment granted to recipients of Social Security retirement benefits.

(3) *Exclusion from income.* In computing income of the property owner in order to determine entitlement for the deduction, Social Security benefits; railroad pensions and ~~**federal civil service retirement**~~ ***Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)*** ~~**(not to exceed the sum of $35,190.00 (2010)**~~ ***up to*** 150 percent of the Social Security maximum benefit. ~~**The civil service retirement income exclusion shall be based each year on the maximum Social Security benefit at 150 percent), shall not be considered as income.**~~

(4) *Location, use of property*. The real property must be located within the limits of the city and must be used exclusively for residential purposes.

(5) *Residence*. The real property must be the legal residence of, and be occupied in whole or in part by, the property owner.

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(6) *Owner of record*. The property owner must be the owner of record of said real property as of December 31 of the calendar year immediately preceding the date of making application for the exemption.

(7) *Time when age attained*. The property owner must have attained the age of 60 years by March 1 of the year in which the exemption application is filed.

(8) *Filing applications*. Applications for exemption shall be filed in accordance with regulations adopted by the city council and for cause shown. The city assessor may accept and act upon applications received after any established application filing date.

(9) *Refund.* The city assessor is empowered to refund taxes paid by a qualified applicant who is entitled to an exemption and successfully files for the same.

(10) *Evidence*. The city assessor's office shall be authorized to require any applicant to submit evidence substantiating income reported for receipt of the exemption. The city assessor may deny applications where requested income verification is not submitted by the applicant.

(11) *Denial; appeals*. Appeals from denial of exemptions by the city assessor and any other complaints regarding the exemption process may be appealed by the taxpayer directly to the board of assessment appeals The board of assessment appeals shall have the power to affirm, overrule or remand the decision of the city assessor.

(12) *Interest; retroactive exemptions*. Qualified senior citizens who fail to exercise their property tax exemption shall not be entitled to any interest payments on said exemption amount; nor shall unexercised property tax exemptions be retroactive beyond the current tax year.

(13) *Penalties*. Penalties assessed to delinquent property tax accounts that are eligible for a senior citizen exemption that has not been exercised shall not be excused.

(14) *Council review*. City council will review these numbers at the conclusion of each reassessment.

ADOPTED: *

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SYNOPSIS

This amendment replaces the language “federal civil service retirement” with the current “Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)” and changes the computation of the property owner’s entitlement for the deduction from a dollar amount to a percentage of the Social Security maximum benefit.

Actions History

January 23, 2012 - Scheduled for Review by the Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee

Draft

Hart, Annette

From: MICHAEL SMITH <thoy1@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, October 17, 2011 5:50 PM
To: Hart, Annette
Subject: senior tax reduction

my name is michael l smith, i live at 208 saxondale ln in dover. i'm writng you about my visit to your office and you informed me that my wife and i are NOT entitled to the tax reduction because being retired military is not a federal retirement. you said the city of dover tax assessers office ONLY considers federal retiree's who draw an annuity from the federal gov. i gave you a couple of letters showing you that the method you are using is out of date, and in fact changed 24 years ago. with this in mind i'm asking the tax office to RECONSIDER allowing military retirement to be EXEMPT as salary as federal workers salary is. the current federal worker PAYS SOCIAL SECURITY just as the military does. thank you for giving our request consideration. michael l smith

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS 11/14/2011

Mr. Smith visited our office and requested that we include military pension as an exclusion to income. We requested that he send a letter to be forwarded to the City Council.

There was an Ad Hoc Committee formed in October 2007 to discuss any amendments to this program. The changes made consisted of: adding Federal Civil Service Retirement and increasing the income levels yearly based on COLA. A cap on the Federal Civil Service Retirement was added at a later date. The addition of the Federal Civil Service was based on the fact that this retirement plan was similar to Social Security. The retirees that benefit from this program did not pay into Social Security and do not receive this benefit from that employment. The three exclusions from the income limits are all based on Social Security and "like" programs.

The idea of adding the Military Pension as an exclusion to income was brought up at the meetings. There was a short discussion and no action was taken. Military Pension was not considered similar to the Social Security or Social Security "like" programs that were excluded from the Income Limits. Also mentioned was the fact that military personnel also received Social Security Benefits.

Mr. Smith states that the Federal Civil Service method is out of date and changed 24 years ago. To date we have approximately 40 senior citizens who are on our mailing list that receive an application each year to return to this office who are receiving Federal Civil Service Retirement. Of these 40 Senior Citizens, 28 receive the tax exemption. This exclusion was added to this program because of the similarity to Social Security. From what we understand now, the CSRS (Civil Service Retirement System) is the "old" retirement plan and there are no contributions to Social Security. The "new" retirement plan is FERS (Federal Employee Retirement System), which is a retirement plan and Social Security is contributed.

Mr. Smith does have a valid point, that there is another Federal Civil Service Retirement Plan, which would not fall into the Intent of the Income Exclusion. This is not identified in our ordinance. The Assessor's Office requests that this item be placed on a future Legislative and Finance Committee Meeting for an amendment, to define that the Federal Civil Service Retirement exclusion be CSRS (Civil Service Retirement System). We have verified that the senior citizens enjoying this benefit that have the Federal Civil Service Retirement did in fact have CSRS.

ACTION FORM

PROCEEDING: Legislative, Finance and Administration Committee
DEPARTMENT OF ORIGIN: City Manager's Office **DATE SUBMITTED**: 01-18-2012
PREPARED BY: Scott D. Koenig, P.E., City Manager
SUBJECT: Minority Recruitment Committee Recommendations
REFERENCE:
RELATED PROJECT: N/A
REVIEWED BY:
EXHIBITS: Exhibit A - Minority Recruitment Committee (MRC) Report
TIMETABLE: Undetermined at this time.
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Staff recommends the acceptance of the report and requests the recommendations be referred to staff for implementation at the appropriate time.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Minority Recruitment Committee (MRC) was commissioned by the former City Manager to develop recommendations to improve minority hiring with the City of Dover. The committee held a series of meetings in 2011 and concluded their work in August 2011. The attached report reflects the result of deliberations and recommendations of the committee members.

September 29, 2011

Dr. William McGlumphy, Chair
Legislative and Finance Committee
Dover City Council
Dover, Delaware

Mr. Scott Koenig
Acting Manager
City of Dover
Dover, Delaware

Gentlemen:

The Minority Recruitment Committee (MRC) was commissioned by Mr. Anthony DePrima, former City Manager to develop recommendations to improve minority hiring with the City. The first meeting of the Committee was held on February 17, 2011. Mr. DePrima provided the MRC with a working document that included recommendations brought forward earlier by a Minority Recruiting Focus Group. (Exhibit A).

The attached report reflects the result of deliberations and recommendations, addressing the outlined purpose of the Committee. While Priority # 1 (Current Employee Morale) is not directly related to recruitment, members of the committee felt strongly that it was germane to the issue and must be addressed before they were willing to move forward.

The Minority Recruitment Committee completed its work August 23, 2011. Sincere thanks are extended to Ms. Kim Hawkins for speaking with the group and providing information about employment with the City. Recommendations, addressing four (4) major areas are hereby submitted on behalf of the Minority Recruitment Committee.

Sincerely,

Bobby C. Jones

Bobby C. Jones, Ed. D.
Chair, Minority Recruiting Committee
Member, Legislative and Finance Committee

September 29, 2011
MINORITY RECRUITING COMMITTEE

Priority #1: Employee Morale

Rationale: The prevailing low moral among employees should be addressed before new employees are actively recruited.

Recommendations:

1. Implement mandatory structured training for all employees, including supervisors, managers, others who supervise members of the Bargaining Units. Suggested training topics are Effective Communication Skills, Harassment Prevention (verbal, sexual, etc.), Diversity and Employee Evaluations.

2. Implement a published document outlining procedures for hearing non-bargaining employee grievances.

3. Develop consistent training materials for all employees. Outside training materials should be considered and adapted to the City's needs.

4. Implement an on-going program of activities/communications for all employees to facilitate a sense of pride and satisfaction. For example, holiday city-wide events, in-house newsletter, focusing on staff and their accomplishments. Such activities are very low cost or no cost.

Priority #2: Upward Mobility/ Career Ladder

Rationale: The percentage of minorities employed by the City does not mirror either the percentage of city employees or the minority population in the City. (Exhibit B, Paragraph 1 provided by K. Burns and Exhibit C, provided by K. Hawkins).

1. Implement a "Mentoring" Program to identify employees who may wish to move up the career ladder within the City.

2. Guidelines relative to goals and eligibility should be developed and made available to all employees, via website, newsletter, bulletin boards, handbooks, etc.

3. Develop strategies to recruit minorities for professional positions.

Priority # 3 Enhanced Technology for City Image and Recruitment

Rationale: To attract quality prospective employees, the city's website must be enhanced provide information that is inviting and clearly addresses such topics as Recruitment, Employee Benefits, Commitment to Diversity, and Departmental Goals/ Responsibilities.

Recommendations:

1. The City's website should be enhanced to convey pertinent information that may be of interest to a prospective employee.

2. The City should have links that will give specific information about the Departments.

3. There should be a standard format for information representing departments.

Priority #4: Internship for high school and college students.

Rationale: Provide a well-defined one or two day experience for students who may be thinking of a career in municipal government. A special effort would be made to recruit minority students, including Blacks, Hispanics, and women. Criteria for participation would be jointly developed by the schools and the City.

Exhibit A

Minority Recruiting Committee
DRAFT

Purpose: The purpose of a Minority Recruiting Committee is to 1) implement several recommendations that were brought up during the session held with minority and female employees, 2) attend community events to promote commitment to fair hiring 3) develop new ideas to improve minority hiring that may arise from the group. The list below is the recommendations brought forward that the initial Minority Recruiting Focus Group:

- Develop a mentorship/internship program for students and unemployed persons. Suggested names would be "First Step Program" or "City Academy".
- Visit local graduating classes to discuss employment opportunities and prepare students for employment after high school and college. (If) was expressed that, not only management, but also all levels of employees should go to the schools to talk with students and answer their questions.
- An employee expressed that minorities are not applying due to the perception in the community that the City of Dover does not hire minorities. Improve our image through community events and involvement.
- Develop a City organized Youth Government Day.
- Develop a cover to the City of Dover application with images of actual employees at work, as well as, introductory material on jobs highlights, benefits offered, etc.
- Slideshow on the City of Dover website of employees at work.
- Develop a video advertisement with image of employees at work.

Volunteers: The following employees have volunteered to participate on the Committee and/or to help with the cover of the City application:

- ***Denise Roberson*** has been with the City for 20 years and currently works as an Account Clerk III in the Customer Service Dept and Library Clerk I in the Library (part time).

- ***Kelli Burns*** has been with the City of Dover Police Department for 17 years and currently hold the rank of Police Master Corporal. She is responsible for recruiting at Dover Police Department.

- ***Francis Stevens*** has been with the City of Dover for 3 years and currently works as a Motor Equipment Operator I within the Sanitation Department of Public Services. He previously worked in the Water and Electric Departments.

- ***Kerry Walker*** has been with the City of Dover for 2 years and currently works as a Motor Equipment Operator I within the Grounds Department of Public Services.

- ***Ron Cotton*** has been with the City of Dover for 19 years and currently works as a Lineman 1st Class II within the Transmission and Distribution Department of Public Utilities.

- ***Sharon Duca*** has been with the City of Dover for 7 years and currently works as Water / Wastewater Manager within Public Utilities.

- ***Pattee Luppino*** has been with the City of Dover for 8 years and currently works as Administrative Assistant for Public Utilities.

- ***Tracey Harvey*** has been with the City of Dover for 10 years and currently works as Community Development Manager within the Planning and Inspections Department.

- ***Alicia Rabenold-Connelly*** has been with the City of Dover for 6 years and currently works as a Motor Equipment Operator II within the Grounds Department of Public Services.

- ***Kristen Couden*** has been with the City of Dover for 2 years and currently works as a Custodian I within the Facilities Maintenance Department of Central Services. She performs her duties at the Dover Police Department.

- ***Curtis Scott*** has been with the City of Dover for 21 years and currently works as a Lineman 1st Class II within the Transmission and Distribution Department of Public Utilities.

4/21/11

Exhibit B

Burns Kelli (Dover PD)

From: Utami Lisna (DEDO) [Lisna.Utami@state.de.us]
Sent: Thursday, April 07, 2011 3:55 PM
To: Burns Kelli (Dover PD)
Cc: Saleem Ishaq M.; Bach Stephen
Subject: RE: Dover

Kelli:
Here is the information that you requested. The U.S. Census Bureau (Census 2010) provides the following information for Dover City. More detailed demographics subjects, such as gender and age group, which are necessary for the purpose of your report are not available.

DOVER CITY, CENSUS 2010

Subject	Total	
	Number	Percent
POPULATION		
Total population	36,047	100
RACE		
White	16,443	45.6
Black or African American	14,798	41.1
Others of One Race	1240	3.4
Two or More Races	1,204	3.3
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	2,362	6.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.

I include the following estimate using DemographicsNow®, which provides detailed demographic statistics for the City of Dover. The most current data is Spring 2010.

Dover City Demographics, Spring 2010 Estimate

Population, Total **37,251**

Age Group

Age 20-34

Percent to total = 23.6%

Population = 8,791

Gender

% Male population = 46.60%

% Female population = 53.40%

Exhibit C

Ethnicity of City of Dover Employees
March 2011

Ethnicity	Number of City of Dover Employees
Asian/Pacific Islander	3
Hispanic	5
Alaskan/American Indian	10
Black	43
White	314
Total Number of Employees	375