

LESS CITY WORKERS USING FURLOUGH



In the Wilmington area, there are fewer employees who are using the furlough program. It seems as though the number of employees using the program has continued to decline within the past two years, beginning back in 2010. The information was provided by the human resources director for the city, who happened to notice that the program was not being used by as many employees as it once was. The human resources director, Dan Mongol, spoke to a council earlier on in the week because the Mayor, Randy Riley urged him to do so as a way of speaking up about civil service laws and how the laws affect the way in which the city operates. During the spring months in 2010, there were a larger number of city employees who ended up being laid off. Job cuts were made within a number of different departments, ranging from firefighters to street department staff members and more. Once these individuals lost their jobs, the city started to offer a furlough program which would be available for employees to help increase the possibility of securing their job as a worker for the city. For the first year when it got started, there were about 17 employees who chose to participate, which ultimately helped to save about \$17,000 overall. However, the following year, there were only four employees who participated in the program and during this year; there are only about two employees who have participated. One individual, Linda Gallagher, who actually was in the running for city council back in 2011, chose to attend the meeting because she wanted to know if employees had been asked why they chose not to participate in the program. Gallagher believes employees should be surveyed so that the city can figure out why employees are not taking part in this furlough program and why the number of employees participating has continued to drop over the past few years. Mongold says that one of the main reasons employees are no longer participating in the program is because they cannot afford to do so and do not want to take off days in which they are not paid, especially if they have not received a raise at any point in time. In the meantime, city workers were being urged to actually participate in the program because with their participation, they would be able to help the departments in which they work to save money in the long run. Even with the promise of helping the departments to save money, some employees simply do not want to participate in the program because they cannot afford to take off on days and not be paid for missing out on work for those specific days.