



HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

City of Burlington

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AGENDA

Human Resource Policy Committee

December 16th, 2022

Human Resources Conference Room/ Zoom Meeting
Human Resources Conference Room, 200 Church Street, Suite 102
10:30 am to 12:00 pm

- 1) **Agenda**
- 2) **Approval of Minutes from June Meeting 06/24**
- 3) **Public forum**
- 4) **Policy Discussion**
- 5) **Adjournment**

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/94820907375?pwd=ZWdzWk5KTGp5K29vZ1dEd2dLaU9jQT09>

Meeting ID: 948 2090 7375

Passcode: 616429

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MINUTES

Human Resource Policy Committee

December 16th, 2022

Human Resources Conference Room/ Zoom Meeting
Human Resources Conference Room, 200 Church Street, Suite 102
10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Present: Councilor Sarah Carpenter (SC), Councilor Gene Bergman (GB), Councilor Joan Shannon (JS), HR Director, Kerin Durfee (KD), and HR Coordinator, Jessie Anderson.

Meeting called to order by SC at 10:35 am.

1) Agenda

SC opened the meeting and moved to approve the agenda. GB moved to amend the agenda to include conversations about employees' experiences when seeking services from State facilities. CS moved to amend the agenda, GB, JS seconded. GS moved to adopt new agenda, JS, SC, seconded.

2) Approval of Minutes from June Meeting 06/24

SC took a motion to approve minutes from HRPC Meeting on June 24th, 2022; JS moved to approve the minutes, GB seconded.

3) Public forum

No members of the public were present for comments.

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4) Policy Discussion

Grievances:

This discussion started with a focus on grievance processes.

KD stated that HR is working with AFSCME and other unions to formalize the City grievance processes and forms associated to make the process run more smoothly. She added that standardizing the process will allow everyone to be on board about how the process works.

KD asked the HRPC committee if they prefer to get communications about employee grievances in a specific way and timing-related concerns.

SC shared that it depends on the immediacy of the grievance. She shared that the monthly schedule the HRPC currently have works well to accommodate grievances if they get to the point where they need to be presented to the HPRC committee.

KD agreed and added that sometimes grievances get resolved and only need to be discussed further with HR.

JS added that we need to standardize the process so that it is easy for councilors to follow it, better support the HR director and employees, and decrease misinformation.

KD added that we can always move things around to accommodate grievances depending on their immediacy, and she will continue to check in case anything changes. She also shared that it will take time to get everyone on board since new people have joined the unions.

Policy Updates:

The policy updates shared by KD focused on City Employment Types, Language in the Policy Manual, Remote Work Policy, and Leave approvals. KD is working with the new REIB director and the City Attorney's Office to modify the policy manual before sending it to the Unions for approval.

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GB emphasized that it is essential for the City to have clear policies and processes that make sense to employees and councilors. He also added that KD should reach out to the Unions and ensure they are a part of conversations.

KD shared that she and the REIB director, Kim Carson, has been looking at the language in the policy manual. She added that they had discovered some language that is not inclusive and will need to be changed as edits are made.

KD mentioned that the City is also struggling with employment types. The City currently has nine employment types. She shared that we need to make sure the language in the Comprehensive Policy Manual describes the different employment types so people can understand.

KD stated that we need to develop an internal process to track employment types and employee years of service to ensure people are in the correct status and are being offered the proper benefits.

KD added that she and Kim Carson has been looking at racial demographics with employment types to ensure we are working with temporary employees and retaining them for full-time positions if they are interested.

JS said it is great to hear about the work on employment types. She also added that this is a racial quality issue that needs to be resolved on a systemic level because if not, it will be up to employees to advocate for themselves.

JS mentioned that some employees might not speak up because of language barriers, the process might be too much work, or they don't even know what to ask for.

KD added that she has worked with some employees to resolve some of these issues, but there needs to be a plan/policy in place for employees affected by employment types to get what they need and be retained within the City.

KD mentioned that we need a pathway for those with language barriers, new Americans, and other diverse individuals to have opportunities to work for the City.

GB added that we need to have conversations with stakeholders that write budgets, the unions, department heads, and other employees to determine the most effective way forward.

CS strongly agreed. She shared that we need to pay people and offer them the benefits they deserve for their work.

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KD added that the differences in the employment types also make it harder for payroll to track employees. Working on this will benefit current and new employees to come.

KD went on to share the last part of the policy updates, which focused on two new policies going into the manual: the remote work and social media policy.

KD added that the new Family Leave Policy announced by the Mayor will also be added to the manual for Non-Union and AFSCME employees. She shared that there will be more attention put into looking at the family leave policy in terms of equity and inclusivity.

CS mentioned that KD should keep the committee updated on how they can support changes. She also stated that regarding the remote work policy, we should have a communication plan in place so that when Burlingtonians/Constituents call, they can get services and their needs met.

KD agreed with CS and shared that she will continue to work and ensure that employees coming into work feel valued as much as those working from home.

GB added that we could become a model employer with our remote work policy. He also suggested that we should work with department heads and other leaders within the City to make sure constituents' responsiveness is a priority.

KD agreed and shared that we need to hold employees accountable when implementing the remote work policy.

5) Employees Interacting with State Offices

KD shared about a City employee treated poorly at a State facility.

GB offered to follow up with the employee and urged that the HRPC committee think about a systemic way to deal with such situations.

KD, GB, JS, and SC shared a few ideas to support employees, such as writing a letter to Governor's office, calling those in office, etc. No specific decisions were made for moving forward.

KD added that the course of action would be determined by the employees giving their consent and the nature of the incident.

GB added that we should not leave things up to the State regarding the poor treatment of City employees at state facilities.

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KD mentioned that we as a City should work to put a plan in place and have a front-facing role for situations where employees get treated poorly, so they know where to go.

SC added that we should make our Employee Assistant Program (EAP) well-known to employees to help with such issues. She mentioned that we need to know what the problems are to help make things better.

GB mentioned that we keep this agenda item continuous as we figure out what to do.

KD and SC agreed.

6) Adjournment

SC mentioned a tentative meeting planned for January 26, 2022, at 8:30 am. GB moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:42 am; SC seconded.

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