



Human Resources Department

City of Burlington

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Institutions and Human Resources Policy Committee

Minutes

January 29, 2014

Present Councilors: Kevin Worden(K.W.), Sharon Bushor(S.B.), Max Tracy(M.T., arrival at 5:55 pm)

Staff Present: Susan Leonard(S.L.), Stephanie Reid(S.R.)

Others Present: Eileen Blackwood(E.B)

Meeting Called to order: 5:30pm Human Resources Conference Room, 179 S. Winooski

1. Approve Agenda

SB moved to amend the agenda to move the minutes to the end of the agenda. Request granted. KW seconded. Motion passed 2:0.

2. Residency Hardship – Peter Owens

KW briefly updated where the committee was in the process as a result from the last meeting. He explained that Peter was on the road but was able to take calls, if there were questions. Original resolution was forwarded to this committee December 16th for review and comment. A draft/amended resolution includes language as to why Dresden School can be considered a Vermont school and includes the proposed recommendation from SB with a temporary extension of September for the residency waiver due to hardship. SB shared that handling this in open session, in front of others that were not HR professionals, including guests from UVM, was incredibly stressful for her and she believes Peter as well. She wanted to stop the conversation multiple times and ask the guests to leave. In the future, if we had to have a dialogue, she would like guidance as how to handle, since the meeting was an open meeting. EB stated that the committee could have gone into Executive Session to discuss the matter as it was a personnel matter with personal information. Additionally, EB stated that she did have a prior conversation with Peter regarding what he wanted to share at the City Council meeting and she stated that Peter said it was ok to have all of this information public. KW stated the he thought Peter was the most comfortable person in the room.

SB stated that she believes Peter has met with every Councilor, including her. She has not discussed this with anyone except one other Councilor, who does not sit on this committee, regarding the temporary extension. SB also had a conversation with the Mayor. SB explained the reasoning for the temporary September extension and feels it is her responsibility with regards to the personal hardship that those appointed Department Heads are actually able to do their job. Not as an evaluation. Her concern has to do with his availability. KW has concerns about getting into job performance which he doesn't believe the hardship to be about. SB explained her belief does include whether or not he can have those conversations that happen in the hallway. SB doesn't believe she can grant the hardship until his children are out of school but can soften that with going for a year from when it has been acted upon again. This would give time for the

Mayor, the Council, and the public to determine if re-appointment would take place and the Council to confirm. KW disagreed. He stated the requirement is to be a registered voter is the hardship, not the working schedule of Peter. A discussion followed regarding the language of the charter and the intent of that charter. KW stated that those conversations have happened and it needs to be moved along. KW stated that if there were a timeline to the hardship, what would the re-evaluation be based on, performance? That is not what the charter states. EB stated what needs to be done is to determine whether or not he has a personal hardship. Not whether or not his request will impact his job performance. KW stated that there is a time for the Council to weigh in on performance, at the annual appointments. SB stated that is not about performance, it's about ability to do the job; it's actually living close enough to do the job. SB stated that she will lobby the charter-friends as this must be different. SB also stated that she understands that EB has qualified this as a Vermont school, but SB is having a hard time with that because it is in New Hampshire. EB stated that the school is in New Hampshire but the district is in Vermont/New Hampshire. EB questioned if this was about Norwich and the only school in Norwich is in Hanover, would there be the same problem? SB stated this was not meant to allow people to live great distances from Burlington. KW stated that we are challenged with the resolution and a charter and it doesn't say "x" number of miles. At the Council level, it can be 14 different intentions but only 1 becomes the written intention. KW stated there are a couple of options – a change to the original resolution back to the Council by the committee if there is the support or send it back with a cover letter that describes the discussion with the sticking points. In MT's absence, SB stated that he is not in support of granting the hardship. KW stated as chair it will be his responsibility to send something back. SB wishes to have the draft included that was discussed but does not have support. KW wishes to only send one resolution. SB stated then it should be noted that it is coming back with no recommendation from the committee. EB requested clarification for the language in the resolution from the Attorney's office. Discussion followed with recommended language and line numbers. Discussion takes place regarding the sponsor of the action. SB supported the additions/amendments with regards to clarified school district language to lines 40-42. KW seconded. Motion passed 2:0.

5:55 pm MT arrives. KW brings him up to speed.

3. Policy Manual Review

a. Proposed Update of Domestic Violence Policy

SB appreciates the effort by EB. KW questions the terminology HR Generalist and if that's the correct term. SL stated yes, those are current positions within the City and within the HR profession. SB questioned language on workplace safety plan and should language be added to include "may" or "if possible". Also questioned if the manager "believes", should that language be changed, discussion follows and will be changed to "has cause to believe". Wordsmithing work session for the entire policy ensued. SB moved to adopt the policy as amended and refer it to City Attorney for final review. MT seconded. Motion passed 3:0.

6:05 pm EB departs.

4. HR Department Update

SL stated that as mentioned as the last meeting, the Retirement Administrator resigned, which provided an opportunity for much needed cross-training within the department. In the 8 years of her functioning as the Retirement Administrator, she was the sole holder of data information, policy, procedure, Retiree files, much of this in paper format, though valuable to retrieve. The position needs updating. SL proposed a re-organization as referenced in the materials distributed (BoF memo and job descriptions). While SL does not need the committee's approval, she is seeking their support and input. SL outlined the personnel moves that would be involved in the

re-organization, which would include a reclassification of the HR Generalist position. SB questioned if it would be helpful for this committee to concur and to send a brief communication to the BoF in support? SL stated it would be very helpful and would include that language in the BoF memo. SB questioned how the reorganization will ensure the duplicity of information from the Retirement Administrator. SL stated that the reorganization will also include changes to the Retirement Administrator, the HR Generalist and the HR Administrator job descriptions. A review of the job descriptions ensued. Discussion takes place regarding the training budget moved from HR to the different departments. Discussion takes place regarding ensuring policy consistency amongst the HR Generalists. SB moved to have the minutes reflect the support of the committee and that the minutes be sent to BoF. KW seconded. Motion passed 3:0. SB provided recommendations be made to include the financial impact.

5. Department Head Vacation Time

Review of the Proposed Options to Increase Available Vacation Time memo. SL gave background regarding union negotiations, 2 contracts open now, 2 other contracts will open shortly for 4 open contract negotiations and that the current open negotiations do not want the proposed combined time-off (CTO) policy. SL questioned whether we should be creating disparity between the union and non-union employees, if we were to introduce CTO to the non-union employees. SL explained how the policy works for changing a policy in the Personnel Policy Manual. Clarification was made that the change would not be just for Department Heads but for all employees and SL updated the committee on how this proposal came about. Discussion takes place on the options and applied scenarios. SB stated she would be interested in seeing scenarios to build a formula and apply it among current employees with less than 5 years for Option 2. KW stated that we should also look at financial impact. SB stated that she would like to continue the conversation regarding CTO.

6. Approve Minutes

MT moved to approve the minutes. SB seconded. Motion passed 3:0. Discussion on the minutes and the agenda posted to the web. SR explained the issues with the web and the posting process.

7. Future Meeting Dates

Future Meeting Dates: February 20, 2014 @ 6:00pm, HR conference room
March 26, 2014 @ 5:30pm, HR conference room

8. Adjournment

KW made a motion to adjourn at 7:26pm. MT seconded. Motion passed 3:0.