



Employees' Advisory Council



to continually improve the Pinellas County classified employees' quality of work life

Employees' Advisory Council – Representative Meeting Minutes

315 Court St, Clearwater, FL, 4th Floor Clerk's Conference Room

Wednesday, July 19, 2023, 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Prepared by Zach Bloomer

Call to Order

The EAC Representative meeting was called to order at 2:34 p.m. by Chair Lisa Arispe. A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes tabled to next meeting.

- EAC Secretary Leena Delli Paoli requested someone else take over role of Secretary of EAC.
 - Discussion; recalled Zach Bloomer had previously mentioned interest.
 - Lora Kyle-Woodall motioned for Zach Bloomer to take position as Secretary of the EAC. Seconded by Jeff Albenzio. Motion carried unanimously.

Comments from Peggy Rowe, Interim Director of Human Resources

- Requested EAC vote to approve updated/streamlined Rule 6 updates to be presented to Personnel Board at upcoming August meeting. Motion for rules update to be updated as presented by Bill Gorman. Seconded by Lora Kyle-Woodall. Motion carried unanimously.
- Requested additional changes to Rule 4:
 - To allow employees that were previously employed by Pinellas County in the preceding three years of hire date to begin accruing leave at the same rate as when they were previously employed. Currently there is no rule.
 - Add "In-service days and mandatory training days" to prohibit uses of personal leave to Rule 4-D.e.
Lisa Arispe motioned for approval of rule changes as presented. Seconded by Bill Gorman. Motion carried: 15 Yes 0 NO
- **Discussion and Vote of 2023 General Increase plan:**
 - **Question** - Why not just give a general increase off mid-point? – The new plan seems to create too much compression. **Answer** - The market is unprecedented. We thought the 4.5% increase based on actual pay would help the long-time employees who are above the midpoint. Fairness does not mean equal.
 - **Question** – This will create the feeling of inequity, anger, and lower morale of long-time employees with deep intuitional knowledge. Many, after being promoted several times will be making nearly as much as the new hires they are training. Why not slow down the new hire / low level compensation increase and move that money into the long-time employees? **Answer** – The market has created competition that we're not used to. Employees care about putting food on the table. The new starting point of \$18/hour will first and foremost prevent the most turnover, which is the priority.
 - **Question:** Ladders are ineffective; those now earning over \$18/hour are hurting. Long-time employees still bitter about the time without getting raises are not going to appreciate it. **Answer:** The 4.5% raise on actual and additional \$0.29 is an attempt at preventing the compression. Although hesitant to call this a formal Phase 1, there's going to be planning

taking place to make this just the first step at restructuring compensation. We acknowledge that it's not a perfect plan and everyone wishes there was more money. We will continue to work with AAs to provide more effective lateral compensation methods.

- Bill Gorman motioned to waive Rule III-E, allowing general increase plan to move forward. Seconded by Charles Toney. 15 Yes, 0 No – Motion Carried.
- Voice Survey is coming August 21st. Questions will be the similar as previously asked.
- **Question** - Are there surveys in place for career fairs, as discussed previously?
Answer - We're working on it, planned to do so.
- **Question** - Can employees who referred new hires check on the status?
Answer - Yes, email or call us. Referral payments are after 90 days and 1-year mark.
- **Question** - When determining to request paid parental leave (PPL), was the idea not yet introduced to have "paid family leave" instead, as now seems to be the consensus?
Answer- When the Benefits Advisory Committee considered this, they thought that paid parental leave was more accomplishable. Kelly Faircloth clarified that FMLA data was able to be used to estimate cost data of PPL.
- **Comment** - A pick-your-plan with choices may be a better design for determining costs.
- **Question** - Is there a limit to amount of leave taken? **Answer** - There is not a county-wide rule. If there is a limit, it would be departmental based on need. – **Example**: Supervisor of Elections may not allow a vacation to extend into preparation going into an election cycle.
- **Question** - If a sick note is attained, how much of their time should be considered unscheduled? **Answer** - The same rule applies for hour for hour, the first half of the time off as requested by the doctor note would be unscheduled, the second half scheduled.
- **Question** – Is there a rule about delaying an employee's change of job to prevent the employee from gaining a general increase that may be higher? In retaliatory measures, managers may seek to delay the transferring of an employee to their new occupation.
- **Answer**: Typically, the customary two weeks of notice is enough. They expect managers to work cooperatively with an existing employee moving to a new role within the county. Report incidences if this isn't the case.
- **Question** - What about an attendance incentive? If not monetary, additional leave time?
Answer – We've proposed that before, the answer was, "No."

Unified Personnel Board Structure

- Introduction to the Unified Personnel Board (UPB): The UPB was created by the Unified Personnel System Act of 1977.
 - The UPB is made up of seven non-employee members: two appointed of the BCC, two by the appointing authorities, two by the employees via the EAC, and one at-large member chosen by the rest of the board.
 - The UPB oversees appeals of termination and the personnel rules, and, with the collaboration of the appointing authorities, oversees the HR Director.
- Barry Burton and the other appointing authorities are planning to introduce an act for consideration by the Florida legislature to undo the portion of the law that allows the UPB to oversee the HR director.
- **Question** - Who moderates the appointing authorities? **Answer** – Themselves, by consensus.
- **Question** - Who, what, when, where? **Answer** – Via legislation in the fall legislative session.
- **Question** – Is there a draft proposal to view yet? **Answer** – Not yet.

Annual EAC Election Bylaws Review

Bill Gorman motioned to keep the same rules and procedures in place for the upcoming election. Seconded by Maggie Miles. Motion carries unanimously.

- Reminder for everyone to regularly review the bylaws and basic rules, such as quorums and Sunshine Law, etc.

EAC Special Representative Vote

- Lisa Arispe is moving to a new role outside of the current BCC Group 3 and requests the council to approve her as Special Representative of BCC Group 3.
- There was no other candidate that ran against Lisa in the prior election.
- Bill Gorman motioned for Lisa Arispe to remain as the EAC Special Representative for BCC Group 3. Seconded by Donna Beim. Motion carries unanimously.

Goals and Discussion

- **Question** - Who oversees the Safe Driver award? Currently, they are given out annually, the January after the date of eligibility, causing up to a 20-month delay at times. Many employees have not received their awards.
Answer - Risk Management authorizes the awards. Departmental supervisors are tasked with distributing the award certificates. HR will review the request. Employees should follow-up with their direct supervisors for the safe driver awards, as well. Note: only those with Pinellas County driver licenses are eligible.
- Charles Toney presented Leave/Time off Committee documentation for review.
 - The 2018 internal Tax Collector Pay & Recognition study found that adding several pre-scheduled holidays would bring many benefits to all direct stakeholders, including executive leadership, staff, and their families.
 - Recommendation to front-load the leave time accrual into sooner intervals to bring Pinellas County more in line with the local governments' leave policies.
 - Recommended to make the proration simpler with new hires. For example, new employees hired in the first half of the year to get their full 2 Personal & 2 Floating Holidays and those hired in the second half of the year to get one of each. New hires at the end of the year do not get any.
 - Recommended to allow the new employees a one-time rollover for their personal days and floating holidays while they work to accrue AL as a buffer.
- **Question** – Why did a health care provider only recently send notices about their cessation of in-network coverage with Cigna? **Answer** – They should have sent notices sooner. The company is playing hardball with Cigna for compensation. Many times, at the last hour, a deal will be worked out, such as with BayCare in the past, however it does not seem like this provider is going to. HR recommends customers/patients request directly to the provider that they consider compromising with Cigna.
- **Question** – How long are with Cigna? **Answer** – We are in the second of a five-year contract with option to extend two additional years
- **Question** – Why is Cigna so terrible about prescription approval? It's always a fight?
Answer – Express Scripts handles the prescription approval. The doctor may need to send in additional documentation and make it clear the medicine being prescribed is "medically necessary." If the doctor makes their case thoroughly, it shouldn't be a problem. You can call us or Cigna on-site rep for more help as it comes up.
- **Question** – Can we have an update next meeting about the audit being conducted as to why the claims were higher? **Answer** – They won't be ready next meeting, but yes.

Bill Gorman made a motion to adjourn at 4:50 p.m. seconded by Zach Bloomer.

*EAC Representatives in attendance at this meeting:

Jeff Albenzio*

Lisa Arispe*

Donna Beim*

Zach Bloomer*

Samuel Chambray*

Leena Delli Paoli*

Katiah Fitzpatrick*

Henry Gomez*

Bill Gorman*

Lora Kyle-Woodall*

Clarethia McClendon*

Maggie Miles*

Willie Roundtree

Robyn Sparrow

Charles Toney*