



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, February 21st, 2024, 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Prepared by Zach Bloomer

Call to Order

The EAC Representative meeting was called to order at 2:32 p.m. by Chair Lisa Arispe. A quorum was present.

EAC Representative Resignation / Appointment of Replacement

- EAC Representative Maryssa Campbell was replaced by Clarethia McClendon with a motion by Maggie Miles, seconded by Leena Delli Paoli. Unanimously approved. Motion carried.
- Newly appointed EAC Representative Clarethia McClendon was conferred voting rights with a motion by Lisa Arispe, seconded by Michael Polizzi. Unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- The January 17th, 2024 Representative meeting minutes were approved with corrections with a motion from Michael Polizzi, seconded by Donna Beim. Unanimously approved. Motion carried.
- The January 25th, 2024 Delegate meeting minutes were approved with corrections with a motion from Zach Bloomer, seconded by Michael Polizzi. Unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Comments from Peggy Rowe, Interim Director of Human Resources

- Human resources clarified that the ULearnIt sign in issue discussed at the delegate meeting last month was not a universal issue and services are now restored.
- Discussion about Incentives Services. For non-retirees and non-Okta accounts, off-site employees can discuss Wellness Rewards with Jane Grannis and Service Rewards with Irena Karolak.
- Parking assignment discussion; largely departmental based; HR will reach out to see if any reallocation needed at higher level and pass along ideas on how spaces can be better utilized.
- Reminder that health care plan premium can be adjusted for tobacco users once a cessation course is taken or after 90 days of attesting to quitting; A reminder form is being sent out.
- Pop-up style FMLA and ADA supervisor training will be taking place.
- MyLearning through LMS365 will be active in April, 2024.
- Supervisor Boot Camp is winding down. Congrats to graduating class.
- Learning Hero event coming up at end of February, 2024. The topic will cover differences between career paths and career ladders.
- There have been three Suggestion Awards approved:
 - 1) One maximum award of \$2,500 given for a one-time savings of \$31,000
 - 2) One Award of \$1,000
 - 3) Two individuals splitting an award of \$1,400 (approved, awaiting distribution)
 - There are additional Suggestion Award recipients are under consideration.
- **The Pen employee newsletter formatting update discussion:**
 - Human Resources is actively gathering feedback on the new formatting of *The Pen*.
 - Previewed the February, 2024 edition, including the new "printable PDF" in email body.
 - At 23 pages, the pdf format includes the most popular articles and excludes most graphics.
 - The next edition will have a feedback form included in the email.
 - HR stressed the hassle regarding impact of timelines in relation to *Pen* contributors with the PDF version, whereas the online version can be updated quickly.

- HR appreciates the ability to readily update any errors or omissions in the online format.
- Discussion of HR's start of online format discussions with working groups in July, 2023 and initial announcement in September, 2023 *Pen*; HR acknowledged the EAC should have been included directly with the transition discussions.
- HR and Lisa Arispe, respectively, will be gathering feedback for *Retiree Connection* edition.
- Discussed possible options for future *Pen* editions:
 - 1) Compiling entirety of the newsletter into a single printable text document.
 - 2) Inclusion of concise "printable" PDF version (such as February, 2024 version).
 - 3) Reversion back to previous version as full featured PDF edition.
- EAC expressed concerns with placement of communications about *The Pen*, whether informational notices or feedback requests, being in the body of the main *Pen* emails.
 - Users are used to seeing the email and immediately going to newsletter.
- Requests for additional "Employee Spotlights" features.

Permanent Human Resources Director

- Wade Childress begins his role as Director of Human Resources on March 11th, 2024.
- Mr. Childress will be attending the next EAC Representative & Delegate meetings on March 21st, 2024 (pending date change approval) and March 28th, 2024, respectively.
- Suggestions to release an informational "about me" / "get to meet" video and to conduct Teams meetings for opportunities to interact and get to know employees.

Meeting date and location changes

- A motion was made by Leena Delli Paoli to change the date and location of the EAC Representative meeting on March 20th, 2024 at the Annex to March 21st, 2024 at the Courthouse, 4th Floor Conference Room, seconded by Donna Beim. Unanimously approved. Motion carried.
- A motion was made by Leena Delli Paoli to change the date and location of the EAC Representative meeting on April 17th, 2024 at the Annex to April 18th, 2024 at the Palm Room, seconded by Lora Kyle-Woodall. Unanimously approved. Motion carried.
- A motion was made by Lora Kyle-Woodall to change the date and location of the EAC Representative meeting on June 19th, 2024 to June 12th, 2024, seconded by Jeff Albenzio. Unanimously approved. Motion carried.

UPB / EAC Meeting Agenda / Unified Personnel Board

- Request for questions or topics of discussion for meeting with the Unified Personnel Board.
 - Have ideas ready for proposal and discussion at the March 21st, 2024 EAC Rep meeting.
- Do the UPB members have goals for the new HR Director?
- The termination appeal scheduled March 7th, 2024 has been moved to April 3rd, 2024.
- Discussion on delegated authorities from the UPB to HR Director, such as job reclassification.

Question: Should the delegated authorities granted to the new HR Director be reconsidered for the time being? **Answer:** No. The constraints of the UPB schedule make this impractical.

New Business / Open Discussion

- A Friend in Need (AFIN) discussion
 - AFIN prerequisite includes use of all leave in bank and applied for FMLA and short-term disability, if applicable.
 - Can't be used for care of others or well-being of self unless falling under an approved category or medical condition under FMLA.
 - Request for formal clarification of AFIN rules to aid employees in usage.
 - Employees should exhaust all departmental options from bottom-up and speak with direct supervisors and HR Benefits & Wellness directly to help solve problems.
 - The county is highly limited as to what monetary assistance can be offered.

- Discussion ensuring inactive duty returning employees are brought back on board with full level of earned benefits accrual.
- Confirmation of timeframe for former employees of the Unified Personnel System to retain their benefit accrual level as three years, regardless of the extent of prior service. Only FRS time is excluded from the three-year limit.
- Complaints about unequal treatment of various valid situations where ADA accommodations should be made.
 - Employees need to make formal request for accommodations and escalate to HR if they are not appropriately or adequately met by supervisor.
 - The upcoming pop-up FMLA & ADA supervisor training will address these types of issues.
- There have been no known discussions on renewed retention bonuses. None are expected.
- Food truck vendor application and information request, contact information will be forthcoming.
- **Question:** What information can be given for employment verification by a supervisor? **Answer:** A county representative can only give factual information while serving in their official capacity.
- Self-directed wellness changes: A change to county contract was mentioned by a Cigna coach. HR says there have been no changes to the contract; it may have been an internal contract.
- On-site Cigna representatives, Brittany Hartup and Shannon Parks can make appointments too.
- HR is offering the EAC Representatives an opportunity to be a part of new hire orientation.
- Formal one-on-one benefits appointments, similar to the retirement planning appointments, will be starting February 26th, 2024. Both, in-Person and MS Teams appointments to be available.
- Reminder to have delegates submit their approval forms for the 2024 term.

Zach Bloomer made a motion to adjourn at 4:54 p.m., seconded by Lora Kyle-Woodall.

*EAC Representatives in attendance at this meeting:

Jeff Albenzio*

Lisa Arispe*

Donna Beim*

Jordan Blendinger*

Zach Bloomer*

Samuel Chambray*

Cierra Chin*

Leena Delli Paoli*

Katiah Fitzpatrick*

Gretchen Keehn

Lora Kyle-Woodall*

Clarethia McClendon*

Maggie Miles*

Michael Polizzi*

Willie Roundtree*