



Employees Advisory Council



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

APPROVED BY THE EAC

Employee Advisory Council – Delegate Meeting Minutes

Extension Services, 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo, FL Thursday, January 23, 2014, 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Call to Order and Pledge

The EAC Delegate meeting was called to order with pledge at 8:06 a.m. by Chairman, Charles Toney.

Guests Introductions

The chairman introduced our guest speaker, Ken Burke, CPA, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Pinellas County, and Camille Evans who replaced Peggy Sellards. Camille is our new EAC liaison.

Comments from EAC Chairman – Charles Toney

The chairman gave the results of the previous EAC Advisory Council election. Group I, Charles Mangio, Solid Waste Management; Group II, Randy Rose, Real Estate Management; Group VIII, Clare McGrane, Purchasing; Clerk North, Jennifer Gundel, Civil Court Records; Property Appraiser, Mike Powell; Supervisor of Elections, Dawn Grasso; and Group VI, Lisa Wombles, DEI, Financial Reporting. The new 2014 EAC Officers are Charles Toney, Chairman; Richard Carvale, Vice Chairman; and Hazel Lane, Secretary.

Personnel Board updates - County Attorney Jim Bennett gave an overview of the Personnel Act at the Personnel Board meeting in December 2013. The Personnel Act, Unified Personnel System, Personnel Board, and Employee Advisory Council, were established by the Laws of Florida and cannot be changed without going through the State.

Comments from Director of Human Resources – Peggy Rowe

There were over 100 listening sessions conducted in 2013. Many issues were brought forth and many were solved. There will be a new application and recruitment process. It will be more user friendly. We will be recruiting for positions, not classifications. The new register will identify where the position is located. There will not be a register that's live for two years. You can apply for a specific position. If a position is in a different location, it will be reposted. You will be able to start an application, stop, and restart it later. Human Resources has revised how new employee orientation is handled. There is an award program at three months, notice card, and a six months gift. If you recommend a candidate and the individual is hired, you will receive eight hours administrative leave. The eight hours is not available to supervisory staff. Questions: What if a position is open now and you apply for it now. Then, the position comes available again three to six months later. Can one reapply? Yes. It depends on the timing. You can go into the register and indicate that you are interested. If an opening is in North County and you did not apply previously for a South County position, will it be posted? The position will be announced again if it is a different position or in a different location. Employees will have opportunity to apply. How can a Senior Office Specialist's career ladder be implemented in a department? Contact Jack Loring in Human Resources. Does funeral leave cover domestic partners? It covers anyone who lives in the household. When an employee submits a PAQ and it is denied, why does it go back to the same board for appeal? The appeal could bring different information for review and it may be an area that we take to the Personnel Board, if it affects pay. Why can't the age to enter DROP be changed to age 60 or 62 for employees who have over 30 years but their retirement age isn't until 65 or 67? Dave Blasewitz explained with 30 years of service you can defer entering DROP to the age of 57, and that this likely came about because it allows employees to use all 5 years of DROP and get to Social Security early retirement at age 62.

Camille Evans gave an overview of the employee blog – Our Space – which is one way to communicate with employees. You can post work-related information and noteworthy personal information. Camille asked for our help in getting the word out to our coworkers. There is a link to the blog on the Intranet home page, or you can bookmark the link at <http://sharepoint1-vm.co.pinellas.fl.us/HR/OurSpaceBlog/default.aspx>

Laura Berkowitz – Employee Survey results - Excellent feedback was received from the survey that was done in November 2013. Overall, 74% of employees responded. The survey will be given to the managers. Survey results were

compared with other cities and counties. The survey will be done every two years. The survey results are also on the employee blog (see January 17 entry).

The Unified Personnel System and the Appointing Authorities will review areas for improvement such as the employee performance evaluation. Positive comments were received from the survey. However, we do have areas we can improve. 48% responded favorably (Excellent – Good) that they felt the EAC is supporting their interest with upper management and the Personnel Board.

Health and Wellness Update – Dave Blasewitz

We have a new Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Behavioral Health provider, ComPsych. ComPsych is honoring previous referrals received before January 1 through March 14. Contact Benefits for additional information or the Human Resources/Benefits website. The question was asked if there could be one universal ID card that includes all of the different medical providers like United Healthcare, Express Scripts, Eye Med, ComPsych, MetLife, and Cigna. This idea will be taken into consideration. Multiple announcements were sent out about the new FMLA provider, Standard. The only change is Standard will determine if your absence is approved under FMLA. A poster will be posted in the work place. Standard is an insurance company which administers leave benefits such as short and long term disability, as well as FMLA.

Special Guest – Appointing Authority – Ken Burke – Clerk of the Circuit Court

The Clerk of the Circuit Court is funded by the State and the County. There are six different budgets and the employees are paid out of a different budget. There are over 1,000 Florida Statutes that governs the Clerk's Office. Mr. Burke's department makes sure all rules are followed. The Clerk's office has an Employee Communication Committee that will look at their survey results and look for positive suggestions. Two major items implemented this past year by the Clerk's Office are Oracle and Odyssey in the Court System. The Clerk's Office will not be able to commit to a Board Reporter at every EAC meeting. However, if a reporter is needed at a meeting, the Clerk's Office will make every attempt to provide. Questions: Using OPUS, was it a good decision to have all invoices go through the Clerk's Office? Centralization of invoices has been a challenge. However, it is a better system. Are you still keeping a lot of paper work? There are still some problems getting people to use the electronic files. However, we should focus on change. Was there an issue with the Clerk's Office being taken over last year? No take over. What are some of the positive changes made since being elected to office? Customer Service has increased. The Clerk's Office has a Customer Information Center. There is also a Self-Help Center to assist with legal issues. Attorneys give advice for a minimal fee. The center is available at different locations in the County. More information is available on the Clerk's website. Are you still performing weddings on Valentine's Day? Yes. The group weddings will be at the Botanical Gardens.

Committee Reports

Legislative - There is a Legislative meeting January 27 at the Gus Stavros Center. The meeting will start at 9:00 am. The speakers will address legislative issues. FRS is in good shape.

Advocates - Lisa Wombles is leading the Advocates Committee.

Personnel Rules Committee – a draft of proposed Personnel Rule Changes will probably be ready for review by mid-year. Hazel or Charles will attend the Committee meetings. Drafts of the Personnel Rules will go to the EAC, Appointing Authorities, and the Personnel Board for review and discussion prior to any official changes.

Open Discussion

Several past items will be coming up for review in conjunction with the Personnel Rules review: Raises for employees based on the mid-point and the % increases for the number of pay grades for promotions. The EAC requested "Sunset" dates on several benefit changes, meaning they will be reviewed at the specified date (example 2-years). Instead of the Personnel Board saying a change is final, the "Sunset" item(s) will then be re-visited within the specified time frame. The recent Sunset items will be reviewed this year with the Personnel Rules review.

Upcoming Meetings

Personnel Board Meeting February 6, 2014. EAC Rep Meeting February 19, 2014 and the EAC Delegate Meeting is March 27, 2014.

Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.