



# Employees' Advisory Council



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

APPROVED BY THE EAC

## **Employees' Advisory Council – Delegate Meeting Minutes**

Extension Services, 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo, FL

Thursday, March 26, 2015, 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

### **Call to Order**

The EAC Delegate meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Chair, Lisa Wombles.

### **Guest Introduction**

Ken Burke, Clerk of Court

### **Comments from EAC Chair – Lisa Wombles**

Lisa spoke of her visit to Hillsborough County and stated that she is happy to be with Pinellas County. Hillsborough County is about half and half with union and non-union employees. There is no advocate program. The only employees with representation belong to the union.

### **Comments from Director of Human Resources – Peggy Rowe**

- Listening Sessions still going on, and HR is getting great ideas from the employees.
- Can raises for maxed-out employees be deposited directly into the 457 deferred comp account? Dave Blasewitz said yes, you can sign up at any time for deferred comp and contribute any amount up to the IRS limit.
- Merit Raise: how will that be determined? And how much can it be?
  - The general increase will happen at one time, in October with the new budget. There will be a separate amount for the merit increases. The criteria is being developed now and may include an employee's progress toward goals, performance within, and contributions to the organization.
- The budget is ongoing. Currently there can only be plans for increases. The Board of County Commissioners has to approve the budget first.

### **Health and Wellness Update – Dave Blasewitz**

Questions

- How many reach maximum Out-of-Pocket? Dave will check and report back.
- Are there discounts for fitness center memberships? Yes. [ [See www.pinellascounty.org/hr/health\\_wellness/pdf/wellness-facility-discounts.pdf](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/health_wellness/pdf/wellness-facility-discounts.pdf) ]
- Update on the clinic: About three months before it opens
- Can you use HSA monies for massage therapy? Contact Benefits at 464-4570 or email [employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org](mailto:employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org)
- How can this happen: cost for copay with insurance is \$15 while purchasing full price without the insurance is \$12? Who is making the profit? When the cost of the medicine is less than the copay, the lower cost is charged and not the copay.



## **Open Discussion**

### **Issues brought to meeting by Delegates:**

- Why aren't vitamins eligible for Flexible Spending Account? IRS rules apply to eligibility.
- Mandatory Pension deductions from our paychecks don't qualify for the Saver's Credit. IRS Rules apply. [ Visit: [www.irs.gov/Retirement-Plans/Plan-Sponsor/Types-of-Retirement-Plans-1](http://www.irs.gov/Retirement-Plans/Plan-Sponsor/Types-of-Retirement-Plans-1) for plans that qualify.]
- Deferred Comp / Leave Exchange / cash / 457/ Withholdings - all are covered by Federal law What can the County control? Please direct any questions to Benefits at 464-4570 or email [employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org](mailto:employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org).
- Maintenance Meds: Should be a 90 day prescription and NOT 30 day or you pay a 50% penalty. This has been the case for over 10 years and not in connection with the recent pharmacy plan changes. Very few employees have paid this penalty. Express Scripts or the HR Benefits staff can assist in transitioning the employee to a 90 day prescription.
- Coupons: The coupon may not be accepted by the drug company. Within the insurance plan, the County pays for the coupon. OUTside the insurance plan, the drug company pays for the coupon. Mail order – no coupons accepted.
- Sometimes the doctor needs to call ExpressScripts to work out an issue with a prescription. Benefits staff are available to assist at 464-4570 or by email at [employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org](mailto:employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org).
- Some pharmacies have clinics / clinicians.
- Check at the doctor's office, using the Health4me mobile app, to see what drug is covered under the plan.
- Issue: Employee is on maintenance drug; past history: generics were tried, without success. He and his doctor already know that the generics don't work properly for him. Still denied.
  - With most management programs, the employee has to try other drugs before using the brand name.
  - The FDA approves drugs for specific uses. Even though the drug may be useful for other medical problems, the prescription will not be covered under the plan.
  - At this point, the doctor can speak with the pharmacist, and maybe work something out.
- Alternative Medicine: A few are accepted with limits such as acupuncture and chiropractic care. Massage therapy must have a specific clinical prescription. UHC makes the decision.
- Out-of-Pocket Maximums now include prescriptions.
- Use WageWorks to lessen the impact. The employee does need to be careful estimating. All requests for reimbursements must be in by March 31<sup>st</sup> of the year following. For example, reimbursement requests for medical expenses incurred in 2014 must be submitted by March 31, 2015. (A maximum of \$500 may be rolled over to the next year.)



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- Mental Health/EAP Program - Out-of-network providers from previous plan – dropped by new plan; network plan only
- Is the EAC involved in the RFP process for the health insurance contract? No. HR uses the resources of its professional consultants in conducting the RFP process, and an evaluation team of County staff review the proposals and make recommendations.
- “Cadillac Tax” is a federal excise tax beginning in 2018 if an employer pays more for health care per employee than the federal government minimums. The tax could be \$375,000 in 2018 but the county hopes to avoid or reduce the tax by helping employees be healthier and use preventive care.

## **Speaker – Ken Burke, Clerk of the Circuit Court**

- Happy to say that here are no FRS bills in Tallahassee this legislative session. The leadership seems to have finally got it, at least until next year.
- Clerk's new program: [Cover Your Assets](#). The Property Fraud Alert Subscription Service enables you to be alerted any time a lien or action is placed against your property. Some can be fraudulent.
  - Example of lien on property: Notice of Commencement (NOC) by a contractor for roofing. The NOC should be removed upon completion of job and full payment to contractor. An NOC will also auto-lapse after one year.
  - Another example: Warranty Deed. Bank sells mortgage to another financial institution without notification to the homeowner.
- Pay raises – Appointing Authorities think the employees deserve it. We need to reward our hard working employees. Clerk's staff is funded mostly by the State. Real estate is looking good with a 3% increase in 2014; hopefully 4% in 2015
- 2014: First year in seven that funds have been added to the General Fund
- State employees have had no raises in seven years, and will have none again this year.
- Five Constitutionals Meeting – March 25, 2015: Discussion on keeping employees; they need to be paid well.
- Challenge: Let's market ourselves as employees to members of the community; provide vignettes of employees; talk about dedication of employees, including their community activities (such as Rotary and other groups and clubs); perhaps start each BCC meeting with an employee highlight. Idea about articles in local newspapers.
- Comment cards on Clerk's employees are about 90% good
- Charter Review Commission will reconvene this August (meets every eight years). Let's try to have an EAC Representative at each meeting. The Commission is made up of nine citizens, one Constitutional Officer, one member of the BCC, one member of the Legislative Delegation and one municipal representative. [ See [www.pinellascounty.org/charter](http://www.pinellascounty.org/charter) ]

## Questions:

- Last year's budget: Where did the dollars from fuel savings go? Prices dropped drastically from anticipated/budgeted prices. Answer: Unused appropriations within an Appointing Authority's budget may be moved to another funding area.



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- What kind of issues does the Inspector General's Office find? Answer: Guardianship Fraud - the professional guardians are good; the family members guardians are not all good, some were very bad. Two cases were actually sent to the State Attorney's Office for prosecution.
- What about the 3% that we have to contribute to FRS each year? In 2011, the savings to the County mitigated cuts, since then FRS rates have gone up every year.
- State employs the most FRS employees, School Boards are next. With their FRS employees chipping in, the State saved money for their budget. Each year actuaries provide the percentage necessary to fund the pension. It is possible for the politicians to change that.
- Each traffic ticket has its own schedule of what percentage goes to what fund. There is a schedule for each type of ticket. Florida State Statutes dictate ticket fees. There are also four tiers for payment plans. "Wipe it clean" – Pay all collection fees – saved/received \$250,000.
- Investment plan employees now contribute 8% instead of 9% - mandated by the Legislature. Rates set for three years, with changes allowed every year, by the Legislature.

## **Committee Reports**

EAC Advocate meeting attended by Joan Vecchioli who explained what the Personnel Board needs to hear and understand at an appeal hearing.

## **Upcoming Meetings**

Lisa Wombles will meet with County Administrator Mark Woodard next week.

Appointing Authorities meeting with the EAC is on April 24, 2015.

The upcoming meetings are:

- Personnel Board Meeting is April 2, 2015.
- EAC Representative Meeting is April 15, 2015.
- EAC/Appointing Authorities meeting is April 24, 2015.
- EAC Delegate Meeting is May 28, 2015.

## **Adjourned**

Meeting adjourned at 9:49 am.

*Charles Toney	*Randy Rose	*Clare McGrane	*Joshua Chance	Chuck Mangio
*Richard Carvale	*Lisa Wombles	*Steve Yeatman	*Richard Castle	Mercedes Pearson
*Hazel Lane	*Mike Powell	*Jennifer Gundel	*Dawn Grasso	*Peggy Poole

\*EAC Representatives in attendance at this meeting.