

LRES (LABOR RELATIONS & EMPLOYEE SERVICES) COMMITTEE MINUTES
County Board Room, Oneida County Courthouse
March 11, 2020, 9:00 a.m.

LRES COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Ted Cushing/Chairman, Billy Fried/Vice-Chairman, Dave Hintz, and Sonny Paszak

LRES COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Scott Holewinski (excused)

ALSO PRESENT: Lisa Charbarneau, Jenni Lueneburg (LRES); Darcy Smith (Finance); Linda Conlon (Public Health); Heidi Chavez (Social Services); Karl Jennrich (Planning & Zoning); Paul Fiene (Forestry); Jason Rhodes (ITS); Brian Desmond (Corp. Counsel); Tracy Hartman (County Clerk); Kris Ostermann (Treasurer); Kyle Franson (Register of Deeds); Crystal Schaub (Medical Examiner); Dan Hess, Jill Butzlaff (Sheriff's Office); Troy Huber (Buildings & Grounds); Mike Romportl, Art Hilgendorf (Land Info.); Brenda Behrle (Clerk of Courts); Tammy Javenkoski (Veterans Services); Rob Jensen, Jim Winkler (County Board)

CALL TO ORDER AND CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Cushing called the LRES Committee to order at 9:00 a.m. in the County Board Room of the Oneida County Courthouse. The meeting has been properly posted in accordance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

APPROVAL OF AMENDED AGENDA

Motion by Fried to approve today's agenda and allow the Chairman to move around the agenda as needed. Second by Paszak. All Committee members present voting 'Aye'. Motion carried.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion by Paszak to approve the minutes of February 19, 2020. Second by Fried. All Committee members present voting 'Aye'. Motion carried.

VOUCHERS, REPORTS AND BILLS

Charbarneau presented bills and vouchers in the amount of \$2,529.63, noting all bills are normal and within budget. Motion by Fried to approve the bills and vouchers as presented. Second by Paszak. All Committee members present voting 'Aye'. Motion carried

2019 LINE ITEM TRANSFERS

Charbarneau provided LRES 2019 line item transfers for the Committee's review and approval, noting that LRES is returning \$3,490 to the General Fund. Discussion held. Motion by Cushing to approve the line item transfers as presented. Second by Fried. All Committee members present voting 'Aye'. Motion carried.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM – DEPARTMENT HEADS

Based on a discussion at the February 19th Committee meeting and suggestions made at the last Department Head meeting, Charbarneau provided a draft memo to County Board Supervisors on the amended Department Head Performance Evaluation procedure. Department Heads had voiced concerns on the length of time it would take to complete an evaluation if a closed session was required with the COJ (Committee of Jurisdiction) prior to the final evaluation being scheduled with the Human Resources Director and County Board Chair. Based on these recommendations, the proposed process was modified. Department Heads are notified six weeks prior to the evaluation due date and must complete and return a self-evaluation to the LRES Department within three weeks of the evaluation due date. The LRES Dept. will send the completed self-evaluation to the COJ for review, requesting that any changes or concerns the COJ members have should be provided to the COJ Chairman prior to the due date of the evaluation. The COJ Chairman, County Board Chairman and Human Resources Director will conduct the evaluation. It is the COJ Chairman's responsibility to bring back

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM – DEPARTMENT HEADS (continued)

any additional concerns or changes made during the final evaluation to the COJ. Once the evaluation is finalized, the COJ Chairman is responsible for reporting to the COJ on the final results. Discussion held. Fried feels updating this process is a step in the right direction in improving communication between the Department Head, COJ and evaluation team. Fried also feels that this new process may lead to some modifications to the performance evaluation forms in the future. Further discussion held. Motion by Hintz to approve the changes recommended in the Department Head Evaluation Process. Second by Paszak. All Committee members present voting ‘Aye’. Motion carried.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK – PAGER PAY

Charbarneau proposed updated language to the Pager Pay section of the Employee Handbook, based on Conlon’s request to add pager pay for her Nurses and CHS (Community Health Specialists) due to starting a weekend on-call schedule. Currently, Conlon is on call 24 hours per day/7 days per week when Public Health issues arise which can be exhausting at times. With COVID-19 now occurring, the potential for more evening and weekend Public Health issues may arise. Therefore, putting an on-call schedule in place is crucial. Conlon notes that ITS and Social Services already have on-call schedules in place and receive pager pay to handle these schedules. Charbarneau clarified that the pager pay would not be for the Public Health Director or Assistant Director, only Nurses and CHS for weekends. Conlon confirms that her COJ has already reviewed and approved this request. Smith notes that the policy doesn’t clearly state weekends only and requests this be added; Charbarneau confirmed that this would be done. Fried inquired and Conlon confirmed that for weeknight calls, the management would still handle these. Charbarneau requests to add to the policy that Nurses and CHS would get paid actual time worked if on-call and then called into work; Committee agrees. Conlon notes that this pay will be grant funded; Smith clarifies that this isn’t new grant funding and could take away from other expenses it could be used on. Smith also voiced concerns on putting this in the Employee Handbook, since it seems to be primarily needed just for the current COVID-19 issues. Cushing feels this should be put into place and the Employee Handbook can always be changed as situations change. Further discussion held. Motion by Cushing to approve, including the language for weekends only. Second by Fried. Fried asked Conlon if it was her goal to continue this process so she doesn’t have to be on-call every weekend; Conlon confirmed yes but plans to take some weekends in order to reduce costs when possible. All Committee members present voting ‘Aye’. Motion carried. Hintz notes that Conlon will be giving a full summary of the current COVID-19 crisis, along with Public Health’s plan of action at next week’s County Board meeting.

CREATE A 380 HOUR LIMITED TERM EMPLOYEE (LTE) FOR PLANNING & ZONING

Charbarneau reports that Michelle Sadauskas/County Conservationist, has applied and been approved for a River Planning Grant, and needs a person to help complete the grant duties. Therefore, Land & Water Conservation is requesting approval for an LTE position up to 380 hours in 2020. Brief discussion held. Motion by Cushing to approve the 380 hour LTE for Land & Water Conservation, based on getting grant funds, and when the funds go away, the position goes away. Second by Paszak. All Committee members present voting ‘Aye’. Motion carried.

CREATE FULL-TIME RSVP COORDINATOR/WAGE SCHEDULE PLACEMENT

Charbarneau states initially she was bringing a resolution forward to create an RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) Coordinator for the ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center) but after she received more information on the position, she is pulling the resolution in order to gather additional wage data. Charbarneau says she will be forwarding the job description to Carlson Dettmann in order to determine an accurate wage for the position. Discussion held. Committee agrees to hold off on the resolution until correct wages can be determined.

RESOLUTIONS – SOCIAL WORKER HIRING FLEXIBILITY

Charbarneau says based on a discussion at the last meeting, the Committee agreed to send a resolution to the March County Board, stating that for one of the vacant Social Worker positions, at most a Social Worker would be hired but at the least, a combination part-time Children’s Services Support Worker and part-time Social Worker would be hired. Charbarneau presented the resolution to the Committee for review and approval. Motion by Cushing to approve the Social Worker Hiring Flexibility Resolution and forward to the County Board for their consideration, with the resolution being a consent agenda item due to no fiscal impact. Second by Paszak. All Committee members present voting ‘Aye’. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION – COUNTY CLERK, REGISTER OF DEEDS AND TREASURER WAGES 2021-2024

Charbarneau states the County Clerk, Register of Deeds and Treasurer 2021-2024 wages were discussed and approved by this Committee at the last meeting, with a fiscal impact of \$27,414. Charbarneau is bringing a resolution to the Committee for approval. Brief discussion held. Motion by Hintz to pass along the resolution involving the County Clerk, Register of Deeds and Treasurer 2021-2024 wages, and to forward onto the County Board for their consideration. Second by Cushing. All Committee members present voting ‘Aye’. Motion carried.

LAND INFORMATION OFFICE REORGANIZATION DUE TO RETIREMENTS

Romportl reports two upcoming retirements in the Land Information Office by Lynn Freimuth and Lynn Houle, who have both been with the county for many years. Romportl has discussed his plans with Charbarneau and a potential reorganization of the office once the retirements occur. Romportl notes he has anticipated these retirements for a while so he’s been considering a succession plan. Romportl requests to have three positions reclassified and says his COJ (Committee of Jurisdiction) has already reviewed and supports his conceptualized plan. Romportl notes that his department’s computer applications will be getting changed which will have huge effects on the office so he is requesting that the reorganization plan be implemented before the software change. Charbarneau notes that job descriptions will be updated and there is a possibility of having three or more positions being sent to Carlson-Dettmann to determine wage changes based on job duty adjustments. As part of the reorganization, Romportl is also looking at changing his employees to a 40-hour work week, with the hopes that this will be a cost neutral change. Cushing feels it’s important to get all positions to 40 hours per week and to do so as opportunities arise. Fried inquired if Romportl plans to not fill some positions; Romportl says he is not planning to reduce positions. Fried also inquired about a possible department merger with Planning & Zoning. Fried voiced concerns about an outside source being hired to assess wages when internal staff could do the work. Romportl notes that his COJ has reviewed department duties and even though only one position is mandated, positions dealing with tax foreclosure and addressing are still in the county’s best interest to have in place. Charbarneau says the question today is whether the wage review should be done internally or externally. Cushing supports the wages being done externally in order to retain consistency and have an unbiased look but feels first the job descriptions and reorganization plan should be laid out first by Romportl before moving forward. Committee agrees that more information is needed before deciding to move forward on the wage reviews.

UPDATE REVIEW OF RESTRUCTURE OF ADRC AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Charbarneau notes that further meetings have been held on the potential restructure, and she will bring figures to a future meeting on what budgets would look like if the two departments were combined.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TOPICS – COMP TIME, OVERTIME AND PTO (PAID TIME OFF)

After the previous Committee meeting, Charbarneau met with Department Heads to discuss possible changes to the comp time, overtime and paid time off structure and policies. Charbarneau says based on that meeting, the following information was gathered:

- Making cuts to comp time and PTO will make recruiting and retaining employees even more difficult.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TOPICS – COMP TIME, OVERTIME AND PTO (continued)

- The Sheriff's Office feels overtime is a "carrot" in recruiting and the usage of overtime is still more cost effective than recruiting additional staff to cover increasing needs.
- Due to many departments not having an overtime budget, comp time is an important tool in covering needs.
- Rhodes says ITS allows use of comp and flex time to cover odd hours and varying needs of the department.
- Conlon feels that what works for one department doesn't always work for another department, especially with deadlines and emergencies, and departments need flexibility in order to meet their unique demands.
- Hess notes that flexibility is needed at the Sheriff's Office and often the need for overtime is out of their control, depending on the situation. For example, if a homicide comes up, in addition to staff needed to investigate the homicide, additional public and Courthouse security is needed, requiring overtime.
- Charbarneau notes that the current comp time policy only allows 37.5 hours to be banked at a time; Hess requests the policy to allow carryover into future years.
- Charbarneau notes that a lot of the current overtime and comp time incurred is for union employees, which can't be changed in the Employee Handbook but rather needs to be bargained in the next union contract.

Charbarneau states that previous concerns from various County Board members were brought up regarding PTO banking and payouts. Charbarneau provided a list of employee 2019 PTO carryover balances, noting that most employees carryover very little PTO each year. Charbarneau says she has done research of what other counties do and has found that no other county allows a PTO carryover of 500 or greater, with many counties allowing PTO carryovers of 325 hours or less each year. Smith clarified that the maximum allowed 37.5 hours comp time is a rolling bank, in which additional comp can be earned as comp is used. Smith notes that many counties only allow a total of 37.5 hours for the year. Smith also notes that the reason for paying comp out rather than rolling it over is so the hours can be paid out at the current year wage. Fried agrees that every department is different and the county needs to be competitive in recruiting, but financial constraints exist and the county needs to manage finances and staff responsibly. Fried feels there needs to be a stronger management of PTO and comp time within departments. Smith notes that there is only funding for 40% of PTO carryover each year. Fried agrees that their goal is not to take away benefits but managing these balances to stay within budgeted amounts is essential, and feels a tighter policy needs to be implemented. Fried feels that implementing new lower carryover balances for new hires, grandfathering the higher balances, and tightening policies, all while not taking away any benefits already earned, may be the best approach. Smith notes that some of the counties with lower allowed PTO carryover do have sick leave banks, which allow for coverage in the event FMLA is needed, while Oneida County doesn't offer sick leave. Hess feels the most important asset to the county is its employees and the current difficulties in recruiting and retaining employee makes cutting benefits a very bad idea. Fried recognized Hess's concerns but wants employees to realize that the County Board has many financial challenges ahead of them, and trying to find the balance of keeping the county financially sound yet recruiting and retaining will be difficult. Hess also notes that before cutting current staff, the county needs to consider cutting some unrequired services. Rhodes also notes that if long-term employees actually took the PTO they earned each year, it could cause service issues. Fried feels PTO is granted to refresh employees, not supplement pay.

Charbarneau says the Committee should first consider taking closure days out of PTO balances, so that PTO balances reflect actual time available for sick and vacation time. Discussion held regarding the previous sick time benefit, and the abuses to the benefit that caused the county to move to the PTO system. Charbarneau notes that changes to policies over the years have artificially inflated PTO balances for long time employees, and employees often save balances in the event they are needed for FMLA. Desmond notes that most of the employees with higher PTO balances tend to be over 40 and making changes to policies to eliminate the higher balances could cause an age discrimination lawsuit for the county. Desmond also notes that since the county couldn't implement the full wage study and wages are still behind, now would be a bad time to cut benefits. Desmond feels the County Board needs to refer back to the 2016 Efficiency Report when considering ways to

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TOPICS – COMP TIME, OVERTIME AND PTO (continued)

save money for the county. Jensen says the Efficiency Study did identify services that could be cut, but the county still needs to ensure that they are spending their money wisely, even for mandated staff, and some difficult decisions may need to be made in the process. Hintz notes that current levy limits make it hard to raise funds needed for current programs, and as costs increase, answers need to be found and hard decisions need to be made to keep the county fiscally sound, even if objections occur from the staff and the public. Jensen suggests going to referendum and feels if the public understands that services will be cut if the referendum doesn't go through, that it could be approved. Cushing notes that the Administration Committee will be starting early this year on budget season due to the challenges ahead of them. Behrle provided additional comment on the need to retain employees and improve employee morale, in which cutting from employees may be the easier route, but it's not the way to go. Cushing asked the Department Heads present if their employees are aware of the financial struggles ahead for the county; Department Heads feel their employees are aware since they are taxpayers too. Cushing thanked the Department Heads for speaking up on the matter and hopes they will continue to do so. Cushing also notes that this topic will be discussed further at future meetings. Moving forward, Hintz recommends Charbarneau research the removal of holidays from PTO and look into other ideas on the topic. Charbarneau notes that many of the departments already have written policies and procedures in place on how to handle time off and PTO. Romportl also notes that as fewer employees have retiree health available, retaining employees long term will be an even bigger issue.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

March 25, 2020 9:00 a.m.
April 8, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.
April 22, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

Comp Time, Overtime, and Paid Time Off
Creation of RSVP Coordinator

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Cushing announced the adjournment of the LRES Committee meeting at 10:45 a.m.

/s/Ted Cushing
Ted Cushing, Chairman

06-10-2020
Date

/s/Jenni Lueneburg
Jenni Lueneburg, Committee Secretary

06-10-2020
Date