

LABOR RELATIONS & EMPLOYEE SERVICES (LRES) COMMITTEE MINUTES
County Board Room, Oneida County Courthouse
May 6, 2020, 9:30 a.m.

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

ALSO PRESENT: Lisa Charbarneau, Jenni Lueneburg (LRES); Joel Gottsacker (ADRC); Grady Hartman (Sheriff); Jacob Syndergaard (Cottingham & Butler); Darcy Smith via phone (Finance);

CALL TO ORDER AND CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Cushing called the LRES Committee to order at 9:30 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 AGENDA

Motion by Paszak to approve today's agenda. Second by Hintz. All Committee members voting 'Aye'. Motion carried.

ELECT VICE CHAIR

Cushing asks for nominations for Vice Chairman of the LRES Committee. Motion by Holewinski to nominate Billy Fried as Vice Chair of the LRES Committee. Second by Paszak. No other nominations made. All Committee members voting 'Aye'. Motion carried.

BENEFITS CONSULT/AGENT OF RECORD – COTTINGHAM & BUTLER

Charbarneau introduced Jacob Syndergaard with Cottingham & Butler. Syndergaard discussed his previous presentation to this Committee last year regarding the benefit analysis he completed for Oneida County. Syndergaard would like to work with Oneida County as a benefits consultant agent to help pursue different ideas to help reduce health insurance costs. Syndergaard notes that many of his current clients are planning on going out for RFP (Request for Proposal) for their 2021 health plan. Syndergaard summarized the four different types of coverage available to government employers including Employee Trust Fund coverage, fully insured plans, coverage through a trust, and self-funded plans. Syndergaard says he works with the top seven insurance carriers in the state including WEA Trust, Security Health and Group Health Trust. Discussion held on the various health insurance companies available, the county's previous efforts to be self-funded and the cost savings found when the county switched from self-funded to a trust plan. Charbarneau feels it is a good idea to go out for bids, and to look at all options available. Charbarneau noted her concerns about switching back to self-funded due to the higher claims experience of the current health plan participants, but notes that the purpose of hiring Syndergaard is to find the best option based on research and gathering of information. Syndergaard notes that when a plan moves to self-funded, initially there is a lot of cost savings due to a two to three month lag on claims coming into the new plan. Therefore, the first year of being self-funded is referred to as an immature year but the following years can show greater costs due to more realistic claim numbers. In-depth discussion on the current plan design, frequent employee confusion on the how the plan works, and potential changes to help clear up the confusion. Syndergaard discussed a timeline for going out for an RFP on the 2021 health plan, with the final numbers and suggestions being available to the Committee by August. Syndergaard suspects that he will be able to get some competitive pricing but wants to make sure to identify the plan that will not have big cost savings in the first year to secure the county's business, then price hikes in future years to make up for the first year. Syndergaard reassured the Committee that he would be able to gather all the information possible in order for the Committee to be able to make an educated decision on what is best for Oneida County and its employees. In-depth discussion held on costs and retainer fees. Syndergaard confirms that there would be no cost at this time to Oneida County but a "per employee" commission would be charged once the RFP is completed, if Oneida County pursues his suggested changes. Syndergaard gave a rough estimate of \$30,000-\$40,000 for commission. Syndergaard guarantees full transparency on commissions

BENEFITS CONSULT/AGENT OF RECORD – COTTINGHAM & BUTLER (continued)

and retainers through the process. Hintz feels the county should proceed with Cottingham & Butler as an agent to help find cost savings given the very difficult 2021 budget season ahead of them; Cushing concurs. Holewinski clarifies that if Syndergaard goes out for RFP and the county doesn't proceed with any of the new ideas presented, no retainer or commission needs to be paid; Syndergaard confirms this is correct. Discussion held on the insurance companies' uncertainty of COVID-19 claim costs and effects on future year premiums. Motion by Cushing to have Jacob Syndergaard/Cottingham & Butler as Oneida County's agent, to explore health insurance plans and costs for 2021 with no additional cost to Oneida County at this time. Second by Fried. Fried asked if any other consulting agents should be considered; Charbarneau says she is not aware of any better options. Charbarneau notes that the county had a good experience when Cottingham & Butler during the benefit analysis and many of the surrounding municipalities and counties, including Langlade County and City of Rhinelander, have used Cottingham & Butler with much success. All Committee members voting 'Aye' on motion. Motion carried.

ONEIDA COUNTY COVID-19 PLAN

▪ **OVERVIEW/UPDATE:** Charbarneau reports that she has been working on a COVID-19 plan with Hintz. Hintz discussed his concerns, noting that COVID-19 is a very serious problem, and how we open is becoming more controversial than how we closed. Hintz discussed various options and notes that the Onward Oneida County Committee has been established to come up with a strategy for reopening. Currently, the Wisconsin Supreme Court is reviewing the lawsuit regarding the governor's extended reopening date of May 25th. Hintz notes that currently the state is getting ready for Phase 1 of the reopen where 10 or less people are allowed to gather. Hintz says that the percentage of positive COVID-19 tests needs to continually decline before the state will move into Phase 1 of the reopen.

▪ **FURLOUGHS:** Department Heads were previously required to submit a closure plan and furlough as many employees as they were able to do so. Charbarneau notes that the furloughed employees will be able to collect UC (Unemployment Compensation). Discussion led by Charbarneau on the cost savings generated by furloughing employees. Charbarneau notes that some employees are partially furloughed and some are on full furlough but a total of 21 full-time equivalent employees are furloughed. Charbarneau confirmed that benefits are being continued for furloughed employees. Fried discussed his disagreement with continuing benefits for furloughed employees, noting that the federal government issued the additional \$600/week payment to help for pay for things like lost benefits. In-depth discussion on UC and benefit continuation. Fried notes many private sector companies are making their employees pay for their benefits received during furlough once they return to work and the county should consider doing the same. Lueneburg states that the furloughed employees are still required to pay their portion of the benefits, and the Finance Department has been issuing statements directly to furloughed employees on the portion they need to pay to continue benefits during their furlough. Fried voiced further concern about the employees not having to pay both the county and their portion of their benefits while furloughed. Hintz notes that this current plan is in place as a short-term solution and as a way to save the county some money on wages during the closure. Holewinski inquired on the cost savings for furloughing employees; Smith says she will be calculating that once the final UC costs come in but in the meantime, she can provide a rough estimate at Monday's Administration Committee meeting.

▪ **HEALTH CHECK AND EXPOSURE ASSESSMENT:** Charbarneau says health assessments will be discussed further at the Department Head meeting. Charbarneau created a form with the help of Mary Rideout/Social Services Director and Mike Romportl/Land Information Director for employees to use at the start of each workday to determine if they may be COVID-19 symptomatic or not. Employees will have the ability to certify they are healthy based on these guidelines either during their computer login each day, or by signing a paper form if computer access is not available.

ONEIDA COUNTY COVID-19 PLAN (continued)

▪ **RECRUITMENT REPORT:** Lueneburg provided a handout regarding current vacancies and recruitment efforts for the county since the start of the Governor’s “Stay at Home” order on March 25th. Lueneburg notes that based on direction from Hintz, she has only been conducting recruitments for vacancies in departments deemed “Essential Services”. Lueneburg summarized recruitments being done for the Sheriff’s Office, Highway Dept., Social Services and Public Health. Recruitment efforts are on hold for vacancies in Planning & Zoning and Register of Deeds. Hartman commented on the recruitment numbers provided, noting his plans to move some Corrections staff to dispatch to help cover the shortages in that department.

RSVP (RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM) COORDINATOR POSITION

Charbarneau provided a fiscal statement to the Committee. The ADRC has received a grant to hire an RSVP Coordinator position, which will organize and train volunteers for the ADRC programs. Charbarneau has been working with Carlson Dettmann to establish an appropriate wage for this position based on the job description created. Charbarneau notes that Gottsacker removed some requirements from the job description, and Charbarneau had concerns that removing those requirements wouldn’t meet grant guidelines. Gottsacker has checked and confirmed that the updated job description will meet grant guidelines. Gottsacker discussed the position duties further, noting that the ADRC has the largest number of volunteers of any Oneida County department and this position will be important in organizing and training volunteer workers properly. Charbarneau clarified that due to this being grant funding, if the funding ends, the position ends. Charbarneau says in order to do anything further with this position, a resolution needs to go before the County Board. Holewinski voices concerns about the Social Services/ADRC merger presentation that did not occur in March, and asks when decisions will be made on the merger. Charbarneau says they are still looking into whether a merger is appropriate and in the meantime, the ADRC staff and volunteers are stretched to the limit regarding home delivered meals and such. Further discussion held. Hintz discussed the difficulties of having a County Board meeting with members located in different rooms, and says he does have the ability to sign the resolution on behalf of the County Board for the time being. Further discussion held.

RESOLUTION: CREATE RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Based on discussion above, motion by Holewinski to approve the resolution creating an RSVP Coordinator position and forward onto the County Board as presented. Second by Paszak. All Committee members voting ‘Aye’. Motion carried.

Cushing left the meeting at 10:57 a.m. and handed the meeting over to Vice Chairman Fried.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Fried, second by Paszak to go into closed session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes Sec. 19.85(1)(c) for considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which this body has jurisdiction or responsibility. (Topics: Telecommunicator Compensation)

Roll call vote taken with all voting in the affirmative. Motion carried. Committee went into closed session at 10:57 a.m.

Staff present in closed session: Charbarneau, Lueneburg, Hartman

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Motion by Fried, second by Paszak to return to open session. Roll call vote taken with all members voting in the affirmative. Motion carried. Committee returned to open session at 11:09 a.m.

In closed session, a motion was made and approved as follows:

Motion made by Fried to approve Step 1 for the start of the new Telecommunicator, then to Step 8 once training is passed, and approve the resolution to grant the new Telecommunicator PTO (Paid Time Off) of 31 days at hire in lieu of the normal PTO granted to new employees and set her at year 10 on the PTO scale. Second by Paszak. Roll call vote taken with all voting in the affirmative. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION: TELECOMMUNICATOR O’CONNOR COMPENSATION PACKAGE

Based on closed session motion, resolution signed by Committee and forwarded onto the County Board for further review.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Fried announced the adjournment of the LRES Committee meeting at 11:13 a.m.

/s/Ted Cushing
Ted Cushing, Chairman

06-24-2020
Date

/s/Jenni Lueneburg
Jenni Lueneburg, Committee Secretary

06-24-2020
Date