

LRES (LABOR RELATIONS & EMPLOYEE SERVICES) COMMITTEE MINUTES
County Board Room, Oneida County Courthouse
September 30, 2020 9:00 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); Darcy Smith via Zoom (Finance); Myles Alexander, Art Lersch, Carly Harrison, Merry Lehner (UW-Extension); Jason Rhodes (ITS); Mary Rideout (Social Services); Joel Gottsacker (ADRC); Grady Hartman, Erin Bjorkman, Jill Butzlaff (Sheriff's Office); Tracy Hartman (County Clerk); Robert Thome via Zoom, Russ Fisher (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 AGENDA

Motion by Paszak to approve the September 30th agenda. Second by Holewinski. All Committee members voting 'Aye'. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Holewinski to approve the September 17th minutes. Second by Fried. All Committee members voting 'Aye'. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments made.

VOUCHERS, REPORTS AND BILLS

Charbarneau presented the bills and vouchers to the Committee for review. Motion by Hintz to approve the bills and vouchers. All Committee members voting 'Aye'. Motion carried.

AFFORDABLE EMPLOYEE HEALTHCARE COMMITTEE UPDATE/RECOMMENDATIONS

Hintz reports that the AHC (Affordable Employee Healthcare Committee) met on September 28th to make some preliminary decisions on what budget amounts should be used for the 2021 health plan. Benefits consultant Jacob Syndergaard (Cottingham & Butler) took Oneida County's plan out to bid and gathered figures for self-insured, fully insured and trust options. Hintz briefly explained the difference between the three types of plans. Syndergaard found that a self-funded plan is not a good option for Oneida County at this time due to the risk based on current claims history. The county's current carrier, Group Health Trust proposed a 9% increase to premiums over the 2020 rates, which will cost the county an additional \$350,000. Bids were gathered from Security Health, Aspirus HMO and WPS, with several other companies declining to bid. Aspirus HMO came in the lowest at a 3% increase over 2020 premiums, which would cost the county \$120,000 in additional funds. The Aspirus HMO plan also lowered family deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums, and would include the Priority Medical Partners/Erdmann near-site clinic. Aspirus did also provide a bid of 0% increase if the Erdmann near-site clinic wasn't included, but Hintz feels the near-site clinic is a valuable asset to the plan. Hintz discussed Syndergaard's commission options which include either a straight 1% commission included in the premium or a pay per enrolled employee option. Based on costs for the Aspirus HMO plan and near-site clinic memberships, an estimated additional \$150,000 would need to be added to the 2021 budget. Fried feels the AHC Committee still has a lot of work to do to find additional cost savings and plan design changes. Hintz agrees but notes that the AHC Committee's initial goal was to provide budget numbers for the 2021 budget by this week and feels that goal was met.

AFFORDABLE EMPLOYEE HEALTHCARE COMMITTEE UPDATE (continued)

Discussion held regarding asking the County Board to continue the AHC Committee past the October 1st end date. Motion by Cushing to continue the AHC Committee to the end of October 2020. Second by Paszak. All Committee members voting 'Aye'. Motion carried. Further discussion on health plan networks and plan design for 2021, with Charbarneau noting that four plan options will potentially exist for 2021.

UW-EXTENSION AGENT CONTRACT 2021

Art Lersch/UW-Extension Regional Director discussed the January – December 2021 contract between UW-Extension and Oneida County. Lersch notes some language was changed in the contract regarding volunteers and the contract amount is \$1,800 more than 2020's contract. Fried feels due to severe 2021 budget constraints, this contract should not be renewed and added to the proposed 2021 budget at this time. In the event, more funds become available during budget hearings, the Administrative Committee could consider renewing the contract at that time. Smith notes that renewing the contract would cost the county \$182,977 plus \$14,000 in rent, which is included in the Buildings & Grounds budget. Motion by Fried to not renew the 2021 UW-Extension contract. Second by Holewinski. Rhodes provided input on technology and connectivity costs for UW-Extension staff. Discussion held. Fried clarifies that his motion was to hold off on renewing the UW-Extension contract. All Committee members voting 'Aye'. Motion carried.

Hintz left the meeting at 9:25am

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES TOPICS

- **ADRC/DSS ALLIANCE:** Charbarneau referenced the written comments and minutes from the September 10th Public Hearing regarding the ADRC/DSS Alliance. Based on the information provided, this Committee needs to decide whether to forward with the proposed alliance to the County Board. Fried asked about grants and AMSO (Agency, Management, Support and Overhead) funds reducing; Rideout confirmed that to the best of her knowledge, no grants or AMSO reimbursements are being reduced for either department. Fried asked both Rideout and Gottsacker if they feel there will be a cost savings to this Alliance and if any services will be reduced or removed as a result of the alliance. Rideout says she can never guarantee a specific cost savings but based on preliminary numbers, it appears a cost savings can be found by the Alliance. Rideout says Social Services strongly supports ADRC services and is not in favor of cutting any ADRC services since they are greatly needed in the community. Gottsacker says the ADRC is contractually obligated to provide services and the service costs do continue to go up. Fried noted that the Alliance would then be even more beneficial in offsetting increasing costs; Gottsacker said finding a way to cover increased costs is important. Holewinski notes that Rideout has previously said there will be a learning curve but none of the changes occurring will be noticed by the public. Paszak feels unless there is a confirmed cost savings, he is not in support of the Alliance and likes the departments separate the way they currently are. Rideout provided further comments regarding the combining of some positions due to efficiencies found, all while services remain the same or better with the Alliance. Holewinski asked Paszak if he was aware that no services would change and questioned why the county would overlook a potential \$140,000 cost savings; Paszak says he is still not in support of the Alliance. Motion by Holewinski to move forward with the combining of the ADRC and Social Services, and forward onto the Administration Committee for 2021 budget review before being forwarded to the County Board. Second by Fried. Roll call vote taken with Holewinski, Fried and Cushing voting 'Aye' and Paszak voting 'Nay'. Motion carried.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES TOPICS (continued)

- **PAID TIME OFF:** Charbarneau discussed previous conversations by the Committee regarding separating closure pay from PTO balances. This change would ensure employees don't exhaust portions of their PTO balances intended for closure days, prior to the closure days occurring. Charbarneau says the Sheriff's Office would need to be exempt from the rule due to their 24-hour operations. Smith feels separating closure pay from PTO balances will be difficult to implement for the Finance Department systems. Charbarneau discussed a PTO balances report. Discussion held with comments provided by Tracy Hartman and Mary Rideout. Grady Hartman notes that his department is short-staffed so employee use of PTO is limited at this time, not by employee choice. Grady Hartman feels the PTO carryover balances need to remain in place otherwise he will need additional staff to cover the staff on PTO due to their 24-hour operations. Hartman states the county already saved a lot of money by implementing the PTO process years ago and adding limitations to PTO would further hurt employees. Charbarneau explained the PTO payout process which currently allows staff with 500 or more hours in their PTO banks as of the beginning of November, to get PTO paid out. Discussion held regarding funding of PTO payouts at retirement or termination, which comes out of department budgets. Smith notes that some funds are set aside to cover annual PTO payouts but usually the funding isn't sufficient. Fried voiced concerns about paying PTO at the current rate of pay; Charbarneau says some counties convert unused PTO to a dollar amount at the rate of pay the year it is earned, then put into a PTO account for use or payout in future years. Charbarneau reminded the Committee that employees are encouraged to save some PTO for medical leaves, especially since sick leave banks no longer exist. Holewinski feels the PTO policy does not need to be changed right now; Cushing agrees. Fried feels the county needs to better budget for PTO and other options need to be reviewed in regards to payouts and carryover. Grady Hartman says the employees feel demoralized every time the County Board looks to remove more benefits from employees. Rhodes provided comments about long term employees receiving increased PTO as their service years increase and allowing long term employees to use all their PTO would hinder department operations, yet having the PTO banks is crucial for medical needs. Rhodes agrees with Hartman that poking away at the PTO benefits is a morale reducer to employees who have stuck out employment with the county over the years.

TELECOMMUTING POLICY

Charbarneau provided a draft policy titled Telework to the Committee. Charbarneau discussed the policy's content which covers time tracking for exempt and non-exempt employees, plus procedures for employees not complying with the policy. Fried voiced his concerns regarding accountability of staff working from home, and feels if staff is working from home, maybe the county no longer needs those positions. Charbarneau feels many departments have found their employees to be more productive on certain tasks when working from home due to less interruptions. Rideout reports 50% of her staff work from home in order to reduce COVID-19 exposures and many positions (such as Economic Support) can perform their call-center duties anywhere due to not meeting with the public in person. Rideout says even before COVID-19, many of her staff were required to keep 100% time study so there is high accountability. Rideout also noted that her staff is fully aware that when working from home, they need to be prepared to be called into the office at any time. Rideout agreed with Charbarneau's comments about staff being more productive in some work functions at home, such as paperwork, and feels that the work-from-home option has been a great way to retain employees and deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. Charbarneau noted that several departments are separating staff to reduce COVID-19 exposures, which in turn reduces the need to shut down whole offices. Charbarneau recommends bringing the draft policy to Department Heads for the October meeting for further input; Committee agrees.

FML (FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE) FOR PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

Charbarneau reports that it has been the practice of Oneida County to prorate benefits for part-time employees. Since the start of the COVID-19 FML policy, full-time and part-time employees have been approved for 12 weeks of FML but Smith has questioned whether this benefit should be prorated for part-time employees as well. Smith provided further input on the need to prorate, otherwise part-time employees technically get more FML than full-time employees. Charbarneau feels this should not effect FML requests that have already been approved but moving forward, the practice should change. Discussion held. Committee agrees to prorate part-time FML requests from here on forward.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Fried, second by Holewinski to go into closed session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes Sec. 19.85(1)(f) considering financial, medical, social or personal histories or disciplinary data of specific person, preliminary consideration of specific personnel problems or the investigation of specific charges, which, if discussed in public, would likely have a substantial adverse effect on the reputation of the person referred to in such data. (Topic: Public Health Nurse Leave of Absence and ADA Requests)

Roll call vote taken; all members voting in the affirmative. Motion carried. Committee went into closed session at 10:27 a.m.

Staff and others present in closed session: Charbarneau, Lueneburg

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Motion by Holewinski, second by Fried to return to open session. Roll call vote taken with all members voting in the affirmative. Motion carried. Committee returned to open session at 10:33 a.m. No motions were made in closed session.

The following motion was made upon return to open session: Motion by Holewinski to allow the Leave of Absence for the Public Health Nurse as presented in closed session for up to 12 weeks. Second by Cushing. Roll call vote taken with all Committee members present voting in the affirmative. Motion carried.

Cushing notes that an Americans with Disabilities Act request was discussed and no actions were taken.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

October 14, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.
October 28, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.
November 11, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.
November 25, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

Telework Policy
2021 Employee Benefits

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public present for comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Cushing announced the adjournment of the LRES Committee meeting at 10:35 a.m.

Ted Cushing, Chairman

Date

Jenni Lueneburg, Committee Secretary

Date

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