

Employee Advisory Committee (EAC) Minutes

April 5, 2018

Mayor's Conference Room @ 9:00am

Meeting called to order by Estep @ 9:03am.

Roll Call

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sir Allen (Chew) – WW Collection
Brandon Brierton – Streets
Travis Estep – Planning
Britt Hubbard – Sewer Construction

Alyssa Lydon - Fire
James Peck – Electronic Maint.
Gregg Stallings – IT
Michael Swanson – Streets

OTHERS PRESENT:

Warren Wick – HR Director
Mallory Whitman – Human Resources
Councilman Randy Warren – Council Liaison

Tiffany Vrska – Community Relations Officer
Tim Wilson – Attorney's Office
Denise Ezell – City Clerk's Office

MEMBERS ABSENT:

David Rolando – SWC (Unexcused)

Scott Golden – MPWTP (Unexcused)

Minutes

A. Approval of EAC minutes for February 8, 2018 and March 8, 2018

Hubbard motioned to accept minutes for February 8 and March 8. Stallings motioned to approve both minutes with the exception to correct February 8 minutes to have time changed to 11:00am instead of 11:00pm. Motion 2nd by Lydon. Motion carried with (8 yays, 0 nays)

B. Social Media Policy

I talked with Travis since we implemented the new social media policy. We have had one since 2011, but we needed to be revamped and updated and worked with the City Attorney's office to get the latest and best practices for the policy. The administrative policy was passed last month and a council policy dictating the standards and regulations for the general public that follows the city's Facebook pages. It goes hand in hand and the admin policy is geared toward the employees with stricter policies. It is broken down into to section. One is the official guidelines for employees that administer the city's official Facebook pages. Then there is non-official use and standards for those that are employed by the city. It states how you should conduct yourself online if you are associated with the city. This can be found in Administrative Policy 3-27. I came today to talk about it because Travis had questions from employees that asked about it. According to this policy, even if you are off the clock you can still be reprimanded for posts, so be aware of it. It is talking about how to be mindful of your personal and professional life. When there is a matter of public concern, there is a 3 prong approach where is it a matter of public concern, does it create disruption in the workplace, and balancing your concern as a citizen between the interests of the government as an employee? All of those can be found in section D of the admin policy.

Hubbard asked if the employee does not represent themselves as a city employee and they speak to something as a concerned citizen, do those rules apply.

Vrska responded that if you can be identified as an employee without identifying your place of employment then you can be held accountable.

Hubbard asked at what level of employment that pertains to.

Wilson responded that he wasn't here for this issue, but wished to talk about it and stated that the City Attorney reviewed the document. As public employees we have 1st amendment rights, but we are restricted, because we are public employees. I urge everyone to use caution of what you post. Is there a cut off of department; director; supervisor and there is not? This policy is subject to everyone. Be careful of what you post, because you can be subject to discipline.

Vrska responded there were some miscommunications online and the main purpose of revamping this policy is so we have accurate information posted online and reflect positively online.

Allen responded even if the spouse of an employee can cause the employee to get into trouble by posting something.

Vrska stated we cannot control what spouses post

Franco asked what if someone posts something on your page and you don't respond. Are you held accountable?

Vrska stated no, because you have no control over someone doing that. If it is false or malicious, then just delete it.

Swanson asked what if an employee posts something that is their own political view and someone reports it just to get them into trouble.

Vrska stated that is where the 3 prong approach comes in and you have to weigh everything that is said. It is really at the discretion of your superior if it is reported.

C. 457 Plans

Estep stated he reached out to communities between to 50,000 people to 200,000 people as far south as Abilene, TX and far north as Broken Arrow and to Conway, Arkansas and Lubbock and Amarillo in getting information about their 457 plans. I got the plans for Abilene, Broken Arrow, Enid and Lubbock. Basically what I found is that we are comparable. I don't seem that we are getting a very good deal on our fees and expenses ratios. I did the leg work and found that ours is similar to the other communities.

Hubbard asked how we came about our 457 plan.

Wilson replied that historically when I came on board in 2001 we only had ICMA, and then Nationwide came about within 10 years during Fire negotiating their contract and around 2010 it was opened to General Employees and Police where everyone was allowed to choose ICMA or Nationwide. Then a few years ago a previous HR director talked about going to another exclusively, but that was variable annuities.

Stallings stated in the comparison of the two of those that their fees were not good in either case.

Estep stated that they are comparable to communities.

Wilson stated that he signed up when ICMA was the only plan and he has been very pleased with it and others that are in Nationwide are pleased with it also.

Estep stated from a position to negotiate if we get rid of one, but you have a group that is in favor of one and another in favor of the other. If we went with one, we would be doing a disservice to one of the groups if we entertain that motion.

Stallings asked if he saw anything that has rates that we can renegotiate our rates or are we so close that it would work.

Estep stated yes we are so close that we would probably not negotiate.

Estep also stated that there are some people that didn't know what a 457 plan is. I have people ask how that is different from the pension plan. That is not good. We need to be better in getting information to the employees, so they can make an informed decision.

Wilson stated it is covered in orientation, but you are receiving so much information. There have been instances in open enrollment where ICMA and Nationwide have been present, so there has been more activity.

Hubbard stated with the recent issue of City Council making changes to the pension plan, so the new employees are getting less. It is extremely important that those employees look into funding the pension with the 457 plans.

Estep stated that even the Tier II employees need to look into that also.

Stallings stated that even the employees that are hired on and that are not young and are coming from another job is to make sure they are informed that if you roll your previous plan into ICMA or Nationwide, that money will be there until termination of employment.

D. Health Plan Review

Mallory stated that the balance be \$713,794.22 in the positive. It is about \$100,000 more from the last time.

E. Health plan Concerns

Estep stated that rumor has it that Blue Cross Blue Shield is going to be the waist side.

Wick stated there is BCBS and Healthcare Highways. There were 4 bids and the other 2 didn't come close to what we were looking at. Healthcare Highways has come significantly lower than BCBS. They are very balanced and efficient and proficient in case management. They watch the dollars very closely. I'm not trashing BCBS, I'm just saying there is a difference in how they apply their resources to the wellbeing of our group and what they do for any organization. They work very closely with Comanche County Memorial Hospital and clinics. They are also very good at driving down the fees. On the prescription side, they have showed better numbers. As for the network, they have one that provides for us very well no matter where we are located. The service we have gone through to bid them out. NFP has done a nice job in finding them and we are very pleased.

Hubbard stated one of the things that they also do is we have access to the same things we have access to right now at the same rates. But they have another preferred group on top of that. Comanche county memorial hospital is one of those. Instead of out of pocket expense of \$1000 it would be \$750 on a certain plan. They also go to a 10% co pay instead of the 20% copay existing. There is a cost savings for the employees if they want to use it. Those kind of relationships they have with Memorial, Duncan Regional, OU Medical Center, and Integris,

that is something they have access to. One thing that memorial kicked in was if you need to see a doctor, they will get you an appointment with a doctor the same day or the next day, still it's not like you have to wait a week to get someone. Sometimes it is really helpful for those that do not have a general practitioner. Those were some of the things that were looked at.

Swanson asked is this a local or regional type thing. For example an employee travels to New York or California.

Wick stated they don't fall of the plan. They are covered. We asked that question as well. With that type of savings, we would like to go to the city council and suggest a lowering of our premiums to the city and to the employee by a modest percent and still have a large amount in our reserve if we were to have a catastrophic claim we are able to cover it without burying the plan, so we are planning at the next council meeting on the 24th to present it. We are very optimistic about it. To have a potential savings to the employees and to the city, out is a good thing.

Stallings asked in regards to the procedural steps that we have to go through open enrollment coming up, also we know we have Liazon that needs to be updated. We know those steps need to be done and we are in April. Are these going to have to be done for this enrollment period?

Wick replied yes.

Stallings stated between now and then we would be going to council and be prepared for open enrollment. We have to be key on when we communicate it out. Because I have already had 3 people ask me if we are losing BCBS.

Wick responded that is the recommendation and it would be up to council to approve it.

Hubbard stated that they are dedicating resources and monies to get us to that point.

Hubbard also stated that one thing about Healthcare Highways is that they are a regional group. They are more flexible on how things are handled. They are dealing with us as a group. Our current plan is a custom plan, so we have to make sure can adjust that plan and make it fit which they are promising. Along with the estimated savings they are promising. They have the ability for all the employees to benefit from it, and the City of Lawton to reduce cost.

Brierton asked if they had numbers of the cost savings.

Mallory stated not off the top of her head.

Franco asked if it is comparable to what we currently have.

Hubbard stated that there will be 3 plans. One will match our current custom plan and the other two are the high and low side.

Franco asked what if your doctor or specialist does not fall into that plan and that doctor doesn't accept it. How do you handle that?

Hubbard suggested you go on their website and look.

Franco replied I did and they are not on and searched under all their networks.

Wick said to get with Mallory. We don't want any of our employees to be out of network.

Swanson asked if they are offering HSA with this plans again this year.

Mallory stated that one of the plans has HSA.

Estep asked the middle plan is the one that would have the modest recommended reduction in what the employee pays per paycheck is that an accurate statement?

Mallory stated that is the 750 plan.

Wick stated the overall difference between the BCBS and Healthcare Highways is the double digits savings. So the amount that we can apply to the city and employee is what we can keep in our reserves.

Hubbard stated it also allows us to make sure that what they are promising and projecting is a plus. Also, allow to have a large amount of savings put into reserves.

Allen asked if vision and dental plan would be the same.

Wick stated yes.

Stallings stated that we should just communicate that it is under review and under consideration.

Allen asked when open enrollment will start.

Mallory stated it depends on how it goes with the council meeting on the 24th. Hopefully in Mid-May and it will be the same as last year where we go to divisions and walk them through.

F. Employee Residency

Estep stated that it was brought up last meeting. There is a Citizen's review committee and they are reviewing the charter and discussed various restrictions of where potential employees may reside.

Councilman Warren stated that it originally started where Councilman Tanner wanted all City employees to live within city limits. Now it has gone through 10 generations to a plan where department heads would have to live within a 50 or 60 miles radius. My personal opinion is that I don't see a need for it. I have yet had any one give me an example of how it will help. At one point, it would make you have more pride/ interest in your community. I don't see that way. I would guess that it may not make it out of the committee. I don't see there being any changes. I would fight to say that everyone that is currently employed is grandfathered in. For instance, if you are driving a refuse truck on your first day of work and you live in Chickasha and then the guy hired after it is put into place, then you have a problem, because you have the other one live under different rules.

Estep stated he would like to discuss the prospect of potentially putting together some verbiage of why we don't agree with this assessment. Some of the issues that was brought forward was we are having difficulty in hiring Engineers. Now putting the geographical restrictions makes it even harder.

Stallings stated that you are limiting your prospect pool by doing so.

Councilman Warren replied you are also lowering your qualifications by doing so. You don't have to be the best at your job; you just have to live downtown. You don't want your superior to be hired because he lives in town, not because he can do the job. You don't want the person underneath to be hired because he/she lives in town.

Estep asked if there is any thought or feeling about presenting something to the Citizens committee. Do we want to approach that subject?

Hubbard stated I don't think there is anything that council would want to know or the committee would want to know.

Estep stated is it something that the EAC needs to be present for and communicate to the committee stating this is our concerns. Just so they can make an informed decision.

Councilman Warren stated that he doesn't think it will hurt but you will have to make it pretty quick. I don't see it going much longer. More than anything it will have to be citizens and they will have to put that forward.

Swanson stated that we can put it out to our groups and give them the option to go talk to them as a concerned citizen.

Estep stated it is also may be beneficial to not speak on the matter, but have bodies present in the crowd.

Hubbard stated that is something you as Chair can send out an all employee email and remind the other employees that this issue is out there and whether they are pro or con, they have the opportunity to speak and tell them when the meeting is.

Councilman Warren stated let's say it makes it out of committee and it goes to council, that is when you need to make the phone calls and make their voice heard to the council.

Hubbard asked as for that committee is there any other changes going to be made to the charter.

Councilman Warren stated that is the only thing that has been brought forward.

Ezell stated the she was the one that wanted this item to be put on the agenda because it affects her. She is a 20 year employee, that if this goes into effect, she will not have the right to apply for her boss's job. I agree with Councilman Warren and I believe that this will not go anywhere, but just because it doesn't make it out of committee doesn't mean that it can't still go to council. Councilman Tanner is adamant about this, so he will place this on the agenda as an agenda item. My request to you (EAC) is that you fill that chamber that night. I think we need to get Police and Fire on board. I spoke with a fireman about it and he said it will not affect them. If you are a driver and you live out of town and you want to be chief someday it will affect you. He said the union will protect him, but the Fire Chief is not union. Neither is the Police Chief. We need to advocate involving everyone. It may not affect you, but that person standing beside you who is on that trash truck and becomes your next city manager; he is going to remember you didn't fight for me when he needed your fight. I ask you to consider it. I agree with Warren that it won't go anywhere, and after speaking with several council members this week, but it still doesn't mean we don't need to fight. Our voice needs to be heard.

Councilman Warren stated if we fill the chamber and it's an hour and a half of people's time. I won't see it happening for sure.

Lydon stated that regardless the decision that the committee or council makes or even the vote of the people if it gets to that. It is already an issue. The Fire Department is in the hiring process and I received a phone call asking if it is a requirement to live in Lawton, and I said no. Then they asked if I get hired will I have to live in Lawton and I said as of right now, no. We are already scaring people away from applying based on what it going on.

Stallings asked if there are other cities that do this.

Ezell stated Oklahoma City tried and ended up in court.

Councilman Warren stated they lost the court battle.

Estep stated that Wichita Falls requires employees to live within a 30 minute drive of their office.

Councilman Warren stated he couldn't find a reason to do that. There are in public safety positions where you need to have response times, but at the same time you have be careful when you start requiring people to live within a certain distance, that you are making them be on call, which requires you to pay them for being on-call. My argument is if you are the police chief and you have to live within a certain distance, you can't take a vacation. That is why you have a 2nd in command. None of the arguments pan out. I believe it will be a non-issue.

Estep stated he will be at the Monday Citizen's Committee meeting.

Hubbard restated that the Chair has the ability to send an email out to encourage employees.

Councilman Warren stated that it will help if you send it out for this upcoming committee meeting and if it does make it out of the committee, or when it shows up again, that next email will have that much more weight behind it.

Councilman Warren stated that if he can get a copy of that email he has no problem in posting it on Facebook.

Estep asked the committee to send him an email of any issues you may have, so he can put it together.

Hubbard made a motion to allow the Chairman of the EAC to send out a Notice of Meeting on Monday concerning employee residency and ask for employees to show up and express their concerns pros or cons. Motion 2nd by Stallings. Motion carried with 8 yays; 0 nays.

G. Chapter 17 Discussion

Estep stated that the bereavement leave for regular part-time employees was presented to Council by Mr. Ihler and it passed unanimously. The other item regarding comp-time cash out, we are awaiting additional information.

Hubbard clarified the purpose of this item for Councilman Warren. Hubbard stated that we have multiply policies among the different employee groups. Over the past several years we have been trying to close that gap. You have been a part of those votes. This is one that the general employees where they only have 120 hours, where the other groups have 200 hours and the other groups also have the cash out option. The cash out option is for only 40 hours and this would bring the general employees in line with the other groups. The comp

time is overtime that has been earned, that the employees have put into that bank. It will encourage employees to save some of that time.

Wick stated that we changed the line from 120 hours to 200 hours. I highlighted the portion of not going below 100 hours. The question is why we came up with a 100 hours.

Estep stated that the commentary of it was that it matched Fires. Our response was to match them and to sync up.

Wick wanted to make sure that it what was wanted.

Hubbard responded that way if it is changed then it can be changed across the board.

Lydon responded that the 100 hours doesn't match Fires, it may match Police. I know that apart of the sick leave policy is they are allowed to accept donated leave regardless of what you have in your leave back.

Hubbard stated that is we are matching police and they do come together no matter which way they go we can go with that other group, that way the city can have a unilateral policy.

Wick stated he would get a qualification on the 100 hours

Lydon stated it is the Police policy and she recites it from their contact.

Hubbard asked which one we should match up to as a council member.

Councilman Warren stated that simplicity says to go with what Fires has. As far as council, is it easier to make changes with two small jumps or one big jump.

Swanson asked if Mr. Wick had any idea of when it will be presented to council.

Wick replied that he has to have it to legal 3 weeks in advance before council meeting. I'm trying to make it to the last one in April or the first one in May.

H. Discounts for OKC Thunder / OKC Dodgers games

Estep stated it was brought up about the question if we could get special tickets to the games at discounted rates.

Wick stated that he just got a phone call from the Dodgers. I will follow up with them and find out. It would be kind of nice to have a caravan.

Stallings stated that those discounts do a lot for morale.

Wick stated a possibility is we do out as a group where everyone chips in a few bucks and rent a bus to drive them up there and back.

I. Employee Spotlight

Estep asked if anyone had anything to comment on this after reviewing this nomination.

Hubbard stated that he is doing something above what his job is. He's doing it and expanding it. Recycling has been an issue with the City of Lawton, because we had such a hard time to get it to happen. If we can recycle

things with in the city offices, and it shows we are making a positive impact. I think it goes to Michael for being a good employee and a good citizen. I make the motion to accept this nomination and give him the award. Swanson 2nd the motion. Motion carried with 7 yays, 1 abstained.

J. Communication

Swanson asked about the updated paycheck online. It was supposed to be kicked off in January, then in April. Are we now to July?

Stallings stated that it is happening. The city is getting a new payroll software system. The new system is where you can enter your time from your phone, or any computer. It is cloud-based. It is a project that Chase took to council and council approved. It's been in the works for some time. They started last year and it went for 6 months, then we had the computer virus that pushed the project to the side. Then the project was pushed back from October 1st to January 1st, then to April 1st. Then each I was added to the team and the tentative slated target is July 1st. What is going on with the project, we are in the configuration and discovery phase. There is a third party there that takes us through the implementation. Then we do business with the actual company that owns the software. We are working diligently to get everything in place, to get the training in place, the configuration in place, and the testing. We have on site resources coming on. Warren's staff, IT staff, and Finance staff has been working very hard, trying to make this service it needs to be. It's a good thing for us is because we are actually doing is in addition to replacing one software with another is simplistic. What we are doing is taking away these paper timesheets and getting them to where they are re not this data entry task that goes on every payroll. We have to have over 900 paper timesheets; we have to have 2 to 3 people eyeball and data entry every pay period. It is cumbersome, it is inaccurate. It's chaotic. This is going to lay the foundation to bring that chaotic environment into something we can look at and see. The only thing that needs to be mentioned is that it is a tremendous task. Just the status of where we are. From the standpoint of the EAC, the project is still going on; we are still on for July 1st. We are underway, and we are in the configuration and training stage for the staff. When we are completed with that, then we will take it out to the general population. That is the status of it is right now.

Councilman Warren stated that the July 1 start date is awesome. Simply because, I like to know if we do have a problem, it's easy to identify and we are starting the new fiscal year with it.

Stallings stated that he is looking forward to comparing the general ledger after we are done to after we have gone live. Overtime, you should be able to go back to the first system and this new system and compare if it is exactly the same.

Allen asked is the training going to be at the divisions or the banquet room.

Wick stated it is going to be by your department, supervisor, so that you are fully knowledgeable about how the system works so when an employee comes to the supervisor, then the department. If there is an issue then it would come over to HR. The critical path we have is that we need to understand it and know how to correct those errors. It's a great system where you have time clocks or go on the computer. And to be able to fill out a form online for time off and it goes to the supervisor. The paper goes away. It's a great time efficient system once we know how to use it.

Stallings stated we are working out how things are routed through the system. If you have concerns we need to know so that we can deal with them.

Allen asked who is installing the time clocks.

Stallings replied IT.

Brierton asked how we are going to do the on-call services.

Stallings replied we haven't gotten to that yet.

Brierton wanted to know how we are going to put our time in when we are in the field.

Allen stated that we were told your time doesn't start until you clock in. You would come to the shop and clock in.

Stallings stated the Chase said a year ago that time doesn't start until you clock in.

Estep asked does it have to be live or can it be retroactive.

Stallings stated that is something that we will have to be able to do. That is where the routing to the supervisor comes in.

Stallings stated that we have officers that want to data entry their time. We had to fight with the company to push it to Wednesday and they wanted it done by Tuesday. Come to find out their process of processing payroll is done by 9 am. As for the on – call part of it, you should be able to enter your time.

Stallings stated it is happening and you will be hearing from us with some training news. We knew those questions were coming. We are going to make it as much as our time entry, except it is not on paper.

Estep asked is July 1 a reasonable time frame.

Stallings stated yes we have to be done by July 1.

K. Adjournment

Motioned to adjourn by Allen, 2nd by Stallings. Meeting adjourned at 10:48am.