

MINUTES
Cuyahoga County Human Resource Commission
Wednesday, April 18, 2012
Lakeside Place Building
323 W. Lakeside Avenue, Suite 400
5:00 p.m.

1) CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wolff called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m. Commissioner Palmer made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 4, 2012 meeting. Commissioner Wolff seconded the motion. All were in favor; no objections.

2) ATTENDANCE

Chairman Robert Wolff, Commissioner Kathleen Palmer, Commissioner Angela Simmons, Administrator Rebecca Kopcienski, Coordinator Jessica Vezina, Assistant Prosecutor Sara DeCaro, Assistant Law Director Amy Marquit-Renwald, Councilwoman Yvonne Conwell, Human Resources Director Elise Hara, Karen Campbell (HR), Jason Sobczyk (HR), Jonathan Edmund (HR), Leigh Harris (HR), Lisa Durkin (HR) and Albert Bouchahine (all from Human Resources), Deputy Chief of Staff Norberto Colon (Justice Services), Keith Hurley (Deputy Clerk of Courts), Public Works Director Bonnie Teeuwen, Holly Hegedus and Ben Smith.

3) PUBLIC COMMENT – Nothing Submitted.

4) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Proposed Charter Amendments – Councilwoman Conwell addressed the Commission to explain the background of the proposed amendment to change the responsibility for appointments to the HRC from the Executive to County Council. Discussion ensued. Councilwoman Conwell stated the proposed change is to ensure the HRC functions as an independent body. She clarified the proposed change would take effect after the current Commissioners' appointments expired. Chairman Wolff stated the HRC has established their independence without leaning toward the Executive or Administration, and noted the Administration has not tried to influence them in their actions. Commissioner Palmer stated that political differences on the Commission lend credibility to their process. Chairman Wolff offered to come before the Rules Committee to address the issue when the matter is considered.

b) Proposed Guidelines – Administrator Kopcienski informed the Commissioners that the final draft of the Hearing Guidelines would be available at the next meeting.

Chairman Wolff stated a question had been raised as to the procedure for hearings when no appellant shows. Discussion ensued. Chairman Wolff clarified that the Commission did not expect the Hearing Officers to require a full day of testimony, and that the Appellee should make a proffer on the record explaining the Appellee's position in these situations, and Hearing Officers should not engage in asking questions of the Appellee or their legal counsel.

Chairman Wolff stated some Hearing Officers had been advised that the Appellee's legal counsel had not been available to schedule a pre-hearing conference for some appeals. Discussion ensued. Chairman Wolff stated the attorneys for the Appellee should make someone available so the pre-hearing conference can move forward and he suggested a rule should be imposed to limit the time between the case assignment and the pre-hearing conference.

Chairman Wolff stated he was aware there was still some question as to procedure for deliberations on R & R. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Palmer suggested the Commission should consider a procedure that includes voting at the meeting subsequent to the one wherein questions are asked of parties. Assistant Prosecutor DeCaro advised that HRC Administrative Rules specify when the Commission should take action on an R & R. Chairman Wolff stated the procedure for deliberations would include the Commissioners having an opportunity to ask the parties questions, then deliberate and then take action, and noted that the Administrator should move forward with proposed revisions to the HRC Rules to address the need for a period for deliberation after questions are presented and answered by the parties.

5) NEW BUSINESS

a) Proposed Rule Change –

i) Classifications – Public Works

Discussion ensued. Albert Bouchahine stated the proposed classifications represent work performed by the Engineer's office employees who have been absorbed into Public Works because of the Charter. Commissioner Wolff asked whether any jobs were proffered for abolishment as a result of these proposed classifications. Director Hara stated all Directors were instructed to ensure employees were in correct classifications before they assessed their staffing needs, and that layoffs and/or salary reductions may occur after Director Teeuwen has assessed her staffing needs based on the new classifications.

ii) Classifications – Clerk of Courts

Discussion ensued. Director Hara clarified that the proposed classifications represent work performed by the Clerk of Courts and because it too is being absorbed into Justice Services, and employees would be assigned to the proposed classifications based on their 2011 CPQs. Chairman Wolff stated any letters to unclassified staff should include notice of rights to appeal the unclassified status to HRC. Commissioner Palmer asked if these proposed classifications are not additional jobs, but based on employees' CPQs; Albert Bouchahine stated, yes, 2011 CPQs were used to develop the proposed classifications. Director Hara clarified that if the assignments resulted in pay reductions, employees would be notified of their rights to request a job audit under the Pay Ordinance. If the reassignment does not result in a pay reduction, the employees would be informed of their rights to appeal to HRC.

b) Administrator's Report –

Administrator Kopcienski provided an updated report on the status of appeals and hearings. She informed the Commission that she had begun the informal process for

collecting bids for transcription services, and that Hearing Officer training with representatives of SPBR had been held on April 17, and the training was well received by all involved.

c) Appeals – Hegedus R & R

(The Commissioners reopened the appeal hearing record to ask questions of the parties; the session was recorded via digital voice recorder.) Chairman Wolff made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 p.m.; Commissioner Palmer seconded the motion. All were in favor; no objections.

(Commissioners exited to deliberate on R & R.)

Chairman Wolff made a motion to reconvene the meeting at 6:20 p.m.; Commissioner Simmons seconded the motion. All were in favor; no objections.

Chairman Wolff made a motion to affirm the Hegedus Report and Recommendation; Commissioner Palmer seconded the motion. All were in favor; no objections.

6) EXECUTIVE SESSION – Procedural Questions

Commissioner Palmer made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss Procedural Questions with the HRC's legal counsel APA DeCaro; seconded by Chairman Wolff, approved by unanimous vote.

7) PUBLIC COMMENT– Nothing Submitted

8) OTHER BUSINESS– Nothing Submitted

9) ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Palmer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 p.m. Chairman Wolff seconded the motion. All were in favor; no objections.

Next Human Resource Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 2, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. at Lakeside Place (323 W. Lakeside Avenue, Suite 400)