

Personnel Board Meeting
Tuesday, December 5, 2017, 6:30 PM
Great Plain Conference Room, Town Hall, Needham, MA

Minutes

Attendance

Personnel Board

Vivian Hsu, Vice Chair
Joseph Herlihy, Member
Rick Lunetta, Member
Patricia Forde, Member

Staff

Rachel Glisper, Director of Human Resources
Chuck Murphy-Romboletti, Assistant Director of Human Resources

Call to Order 6:34 P.M.

Ms. Patricia Forde called for a motion to open the Personnel Board meeting. Mr. Rick Lunetta made a motion and Mr. Herlihy seconded.

Personnel Policy Review - Education Reimbursement Policy

Ms. Glisper explained the revisions to the current "Tuition Reimbursement Policy". The newly retitled "Education Reimbursement Policy" would increase the amount that would be able to be submit for reimbursement to \$2,000 per course and \$4,000 per fiscal year, subject to approval and budget availability. Additionally, the types of things eligible for reimbursement would be expanded to include coursework towards Certificate Programs and Associates Degrees. Finally, the revised policy included a form that employees would be required to submit and receive pre-approval on, so employees can plan to know if they will be reimbursed prior to enrolling and paying for a course. The reasons for the revision was to make the program more in line with private sector employer benefits and possibly used as a recruitment tool. The Tuition Reimbursement program as currently written, is only utilized by a handful of employees each year.

The Board discussed having a requirement to achieve a minimum grade in order to be eligible for reimbursement. The Human Resources Department felt it not necessary to include a grade requirement, but the Board felt it necessary as the Town would now have "skin in the game" by funding a portion of the education.

The Board also suggested that the policy include:

- A 2-year employment commitment following reimbursement of the coursework.
- That the employee be in "good standing".
- The Budget be centralized in HR, so as not to deter managers from wanting to not spend their own funds.
- The submission of the form be to HR, not the Department Manager.

The Board recommended that their issues be researched further before taking a vote to approve the policy.

Revised Hiring Policy – (Policy #102)

- New Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) – Hiring
- New Employment Application

Ms. Glisper explained that before the Board tonight was a first draft of the newly revised Hiring Policy and corresponding SOPs and Employment Application. It was not the intent to have the Board take a vote on the materials tonight, but for the HR Staff to summarize the materials and collect feedback for revisions and approvals at a later date.

Ms. Glisper explained that the existing hiring policy was written long ago and required a complete rewriting. Therefore, HR Staff undertook a process to evaluate how they wanted to see the hiring process take place and memorialize it into a brand-new Policy. Corresponding SOPs were also drafted, adding specificity to process including adding expected deadlines and “how-to” instructions for hiring managers and other Town staff.

One of the main new aspects of the Policy was the creation of a Waiver of Search and Recruitment process. This would allow Hiring Managers to identify and groom existing staff for future vacancies and once available, provide a mechanism for skipping the full search and recruitment process to recommend that an internal staff member be appointed to the position. The Waiver process was created so that the Hiring Manager would still have to adequately justify why the internal staff member is the best fit for the position, and likely better than any candidates that could be found on the open market during a full external recruitment process. The Waiver would be completed by the Hiring Manager and submit to Human Resources for review and consideration for approval or denial. In addition to encouraging Hiring Managers to identify and develop internal staff for future opportunities, the Waiver process aids in the timeliness of hiring as well.

Mr. Rick Lunetta suggested that when completing an internal Waiver into a position, the two managers (that of the current employee and of the vacant position), sit down and come to an agreement on an exit strategy or transition plan. Because the Waiver could enhance the timeliness of hires, this could cause an abrupt vacancy in a department within Town and disrupt operations. The managers should come to an agreement on what kind of timeline is feasible so as to not shift the burden of having a vacant position while undertaking a full external recruitment process to another department. Ms. Forde added that although the issue of hiring timeliness will be solved for one position, HR will still be under the gun to backfill the new vacant position.

Ms. Glisper also explained the Employment Application had also been revised as part of the process as well and highlighted the changes to make the form more modern, compliant and fillable online by applicants.

Discussion on Pre-Employment Physical Policy #106

Ms. Glisper explained that during the course of the hiring policy revisions, staff had considered whether pre-employment physicals were necessary for all employees. Ms. Glisper asked the Board for their input given their expertise.

The Board discussed which of their own companies or organizations still had pre-employment physicals, which most did. One reason to keep performing the physicals was that it acts as a

deterrent to candidates who cannot physically perform the essential functions of the position. Mr. Lunetta mentioned another reason his company conducts pre-employment physicals is to have a baseline record, in case any work-related injuries arise and to know whether the condition had developed pre- or post-employment. A suggestion was made to check with the Town's Stop-Loss Workers Compensation Insurer, to see if it's a requirement of the application.

Staff would be researching further, including sending a survey out to the Massachusetts Municipal Personnel Association's email listserv, to see what other communities do, and if they do conduct them, if they also include Drug & Alcohol Testing.

Update on Request for Proposals (RFP) – Employee Compensation and Classification Study

Ms. Glisper updated the Board on the RFP Process for the Town-wide Classification and Compensation study. HR and Finance staff interviewed the applicants last week to hear about their proposals and ask questions. The RFP review committee felt the applicants all provided vastly different proposals for projects. Of the applicants one received unacceptable scoring while the remaining were favorable. Unfortunately, during the unveiling of the price proposals, it was discovered that all but one vendor offered price proposals above what the Town had budgeted for the project. The one vendor with the lowest bid, was also the vendor that received an unacceptable scoring, and overall, the Town did not have confidence that the vendor could complete the entire project at the quality level expected, for the low price proposed. Ms. Glisper stated that HR Staff was exploring possibly revising the RFP to be more specific in order to receive clearer proposals, and re-advertising the RFP again.

Adjournment – 7:50 P.M.

Ms. Forde called for a motion to adjourn the Personnel Board Meeting. Mr. Herlihy made a motion to approve and Mr. Lunetta seconded. The meeting adjourned.