

Personnel Study Task Force Agenda
Date: April 11, 2022 Time: 4 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81460444480?pwd=TS9qNHRPdG15bjJWQkxmK1NxZytVdz09>

Meeting ID: 814 6044 4480
Passcode: 240177

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes of March 28, 2022 (by roll call)

Correspondence and/or updates from Members

Review of format for our final report and input from PSTF on first draft of sections

Continuing Discussion of suggested recommendations regarding Bylaws from homework







Bruce: Section 1 and 2 plus 1985 Administrative code recommendations

Paul: Section 5 Classification Plan and Section 6 Compensation Plan Recommendations

Ruth: PPPs

Any New Business that came up after posting of Agenda

Pending meeting dates

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| → Monday, April 25 | 141 Keyes Road (Hybrid)   |
| → Monday, May 9 | 141 Keyes Road (Hybrid)   |
| → Monday, May 23 | 141 Keyes Road (Hybrid)   |

Public Comment

Adjournment (by roll call)

PERSONNEL STUDY TASK FORCE – TOWN OF CONCORD, MA
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 28, 2022

Location: Virtual

Present from the Board: Ruth Lauer (Co-Chair), Anne Rarich (Co-Chair), Claude Cicchetti (Clerk), Paul Macone, Bruce Button.

Others Present: Susan Bates – Select Board, Bill Mrachek – Personnel Board, Kate Hodges – Deputy Town Manager, Erin Mulcahy – Assistant Town Accountant, Kaari Tari – Concord Town Clerk, Malysa Simard – Finance Assistant, Karlen Reed, Mark Howell, Ned Perry, Anita Tekle, Doug Meagher, Joseph O’Connor.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to Order by Ruth Lauer, Co-Chair at 4:20 pm by roll call after some minor technical difficulties.

2. Approval of Minutes

After a short discussion including some amended wording offered by Bruce, Ruth moved and it was duly seconded to approve the minutes as amended.

3. Initial Discussion

Anne noted the correspondence to the PSTF by Ned Perry and very much appreciated his perspective on the past and future of the Personnel Board.

Anne thanked Erin for all of her work on the survey on behalf of the Task Force, noting the very high response rate. Anne clarified that each separate comment represents one person for that question and that the order of the answers for each question is randomized. Ruth echoed the significance of the high response rate.

Anne suggested members of the Task Force use the survey results to inform our responses for suggested changes to the Personnel Bylaw.

4. Bylaw Discussion

Anne talked about how the role of the Personnel function has evolved and how we need to be cognizant of these changes.

Anne started off the discussion of the draft report to the Select Board and the format it might take. Some of the sections are fairly long and complex, so the discussion of these will occur at our next meeting. Ruth talked about Sections 3 & 4 of the Bylaw. Claude offered some additional wording for Section 3, which Ruth supported, as did Paul. Ruth went on to discuss some of the details of the Policies and Procedures that are envisioned by the Bylaw.

Anne talked about the need for Town governance to be nimble and suggested that there might be a number of sections that could move from the Bylaw to Policies and Procedures.

Paul discussed the past practice of having an employee newsletter and how helpful it was for communication and morale, giving a few examples. Ruth concurred, giving a shout-out to Doug Meagher for his work on this newsletter. Anita Tekle mentioned that some of the past newsletters should be on file at the Town House, and Susan Bates explained that some of the most recent ones were available digitally as they had been distributed via email. Susan also pointed out, relevant to an earlier discussion, that Finance Committee normally had an observer to the Personnel Board

Claude talked about how discussion of Sections 7 & 8 of the Bylaw would benefit from the perspectives of the HR Director and Town Manager to see if any changes would benefit hiring or retention. He also spoke about the idea of an “Employee Ombuds” to attend Personnel Board meetings. Paul expressed concern about the need for such a role as well as the potential legal liability.

5. Public Comment

Ned Perry thanked the PSTF for their work and questioned whether it was still practice for the Finance Committee to observe and comment on Personnel Board meetings and issues.

Anita Tekle questioned whether employee concerns are actually brought to the Personnel Board regularly, as her perspective is that past minutes of this committee do not reflect such discussions.

Mark Howell suggested that only those relatively immutable responsibilities should go into the Bylaw and that the best place for a number of other responsibilities should be in the Select Board’s Charge to the Personnel Board.

6. Future Meeting Schedule

The Board affirmed the scheduling of the next meeting.

- Monday, April 11, (Virtual)

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Claude Cicchetti, Clerk

DRAFT-Personnel Study Task Force Report Suggested Outline

(Table of Contents?)

Introduction

Charge to PSTF from Select Board

Methodology

Discussion

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Personnel Board and By Law Review (THIS IS WHERE WE PRESENT Bylaw in one column and Notes next to it.)

Closing

Appendix

INTRODUCTION

The Town Charter approved in 1955 directed the Select Board to appoint several committees including the Personnel Board. In 1985 a document was presented to the Select Board by the Town Manager to establish a Personnel Department. The Personnel By law has been updated several times over the years, most recently in 2017, and serves as the guiding document for the Personnel Board and the Town Manager. However, the current role of the Personnel Board as defined by the 1985 document and the current Personnel By law is outdated and does not reflect the needs of the Town 's 21st century workforce, or the challenges faced by the Town in recruiting, developing, and retaining high quality employee talent.

The Personnel Study Task Force (from here on out referred to as PSTF) was assigned by the Select Board. The members of the PSTF represented a past Select Board member, former Personnel Board member, and an additional three members who are from the public but have some experience in either Town Government or H.R.

Their assignment was to study the Personnel by-laws and Policies and make recommendations to the Select Board on updates to the bylaws and Personnel Policies of the Personnel Board. What follows are the results to review and areas recommended for improvement.

METHODOLOGY

The PTSF members utilized interviews with stakeholders such as: Current Planning Board members, Senior Department managers, Town Manager, Board of Selectman, Citizens, Employees, and H.R. In addition to the interviews, an extensive review of Town documents, comparisons to other town Personnel boards, survey of Employees as well as research on best practices in H.R. through the Collins Center at University of Massachusetts as well as the Massachusetts Municipal Association. Several studies including a recent one done through MIT were also offered for background.

DISCUSSION

The term “personnel” is broad and includes a host of functions. PERSONNEL functions can be characterized as either transactional and/or strategic. “Personnel” has evolved over the years from “personnel” administration to “human resources” management.

Personnel administration is the title formerly assigned to human resource duties. In the 1980s, personnel administration consisted of enrolling employees in benefit plans, processing and distributing pay, and hiring and firing employees. The functions were more a transactional and administrative function of running the town business. Concepts such as human capital or human resource management were emerging as HR began. Human Resource management played a bigger role in strategic direction of the organization. Personnel administration matured into human resources which evolved in two separate but connected ways---strategic and transactional or the Human Resources function.

Transactional human resources are the “traditional” functions of benefits administration, policy development and administration, position descriptions, payroll, worker’s compensation, personnel files, vacancy posting and collecting applications and resumes. The Society of Human Resources Management (H.R. Professional Association) define “transactional” functions as a way of “managing the employment relationship from recruitment and processing employees through retirement”.

On the other hand, strategic human resource functions deal with the strategic direction of the organization and include long term goals. According to SHRM “HR needs to be approached from a holistic point of view encompassing every function of human capital management” and that organizational leadership should work towards “creating an effective human resource infrastructure that supports an employee centric service- oriented strategic human resources organization”. Strategic functions include long term planning, employee relations, training, succession planning, customer service, and talent retention and development.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS