



## TOWN OF CONCORD PERSONNEL BOARD –MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 12, 2023 5:15 p.m.

Select Board's Room, Town House & Zoom Video Conference

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88955873148?pwd=VHRZaTI3MHBMU0FEWXdKeUVWR05ZQT09>

Dial: 833 548 0282 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 889 5587 3148 Passcode: 35212

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Mrachek, Nancy Crowley, Liz Cobbs, Joe Emerick (arrived 5:20pm), Kate Ryan (via zoom). Also in attendance in the room: Kerry LaFleur (Town Manager), Amy Foley (HR Director), Kellie Hebert.

MEETING MATERIALS: materials will be available at: [www.concordma.gov/452/Personnel-Board](http://www.concordma.gov/452/Personnel-Board)

List of Materials include:

- Minutes of 3/22/2023 Meeting
- Public Hearing/Fin Com Report Draft Plan
- Draft Motions/Handout
- Draft Town Meeting Presentation Slides/Script
- FY23 Salary Increase Policy
- Performance Evaluation Forms
- Class & Comp Study Reviews & Reconsiderations Status Update – 4/12/2023: Slides presented by HR Director Amy Foley

**1. Call to Order: 5:18pm** with quorum (Joe arrived just after start of the meeting).

**2. Approval of Minutes – Discussion Summary & Follow-Up Actions:**

- a. March 22, 2023. Minutes approved [ Nancy C. made a motion to accept the Minutes for March 22, 2023. Kate R. seconded all voted to accept]
- b. Serious concern raised that November Minutes for Personnel Board meeting that we sent for legal review, have not yet been returned and no comments have been received. Town Manager/HR Director to investigate the situation and resolve it.
- c. Comment re: December 5<sup>th</sup> Minutes of the presentation to the Select Board. Our executive summary is not aligned with the Select Board draft minutes and Personnel Board seeking confirmation of agreed-upon objectives to be posted with the Select Board minutes of that presentation.

**3. Classification & Compensation Study/Personnel Board Warrant Articles**

- a. Public Hearing Follow-up
- b. Motion Drafts

- c. Status of Employee Requests for Reconsideration
- d. Town Meeting Presentation Preparation
- e. Public/Employee Comment

**Item 3- Discussion Summary & Follow-Up Actions:**

- Discussion began with a presentation of the requests for reconsideration.
- Slides summarize the following points:
  - The volume and type of request registered with HR Department
  - Two altogether new positions are expected to be put in the new C&C Plan— Public Nurse and Aquatics Manager at Beede Ctr. Currently, Aquatics Director is in the plan, but it would change to Manager. The Aquatics Manager has not been a filled position, so no individual is impacted by this change. Expect these positions to be added to the town Meeting Handout.
  - Types of Changes:
    - Grade reassignment (23 of these).....1-1 meetings are taking place to understand –Dept heads and/or the immediate supervisors are also involved (~ 3 people per meeting).
      - Some of the 23 have been managed by email alone, with Dept. Heads involved by email.
      - Some of the 23 are still in process.
      - Some of 23 have had face-to-face meetings.
      - 6 of 23 Grade Assignment reviews
      - 6 of 23 involve title changes
      - 4-5 are these 23 are fully “done.”
  - HR goal was to turn around all requests within 30 days; still on track for that deadline, prioritizing requests that would impact the new C&C plan. Remaining requests for reconsideration will have to be handled after Town Meeting. Goal is to make any/all revisions that would impact the C&C plan before Town Meeting. There is a longer-term appeal process, that would be followed after Town Meeting. 6 of the 23 cases are expected to be managed after Town Meeting.

Questions on the presentation:

- What is the flavor of the grade assignment change requests: Does it reflecting more (upgrades) i.e., and identification of job responsibilities that were overlooked in the study? If pre-requisites for jobs are not changing, then is it experience or skills that will impact the grade?
- Who makes the final decision on changes? Town Manager? HR? GovHR? Response: HR Department makes recommendations; GovHR reviews from their set assessment criteria. Final decision is Town Manager Kerry LaFleur, who then would bring that recommendation to the Personnel Board. From there, Town Meeting would ratify.

- Concern raised that whatever changes to grade that occur will also bring up questions about equity—i.e., why one position was changed and not another position? These are important questions to clarify in order to comply with the Mass Equal Pay Act.
  - Recognizing that there are shifts with the new C&C plan; one systemic shift was more alignment across blue- and white-collar work. There are some changes as a result that are not fully understood.
- Personnel Board (PB) requests a full list of recommended amendments for review at the next PB meeting on April 26<sup>th</sup>. At that time, expect to vote on these amendments and confirm what will be in the handout for Town Meeting on 4/30.
- Process for the lead up to Town Meeting:
  - Article 4 is on the consent calendar, with slides prepared in case it is taken off the consent calendar. List up of all new/revised positions that have come before the Personnel Board are included.
  - Article 6: A draft motion is ready to go, in case Article 5 does not gain approval.
  - Article 5: the Draft motion is to be passed as per what will be in the handout prepared for Town Meeting. Handouts are common practice when there have been changes after the Warrant is printed.
- Personnel Board will not vote today (4/12) but will expect to vote at our next meeting on the Handout for Article 6 and all changes within after we review at that meeting (4/26).

**Public Comments on Item 3:**

- Mr. Ned Perry: I have questions re: people who've been involved; Kellie Hebert has been involved? Is she still on board and helping? Is GovHR actively involved or only re: appeals? Will they be consulted in the process going forward?
  - Response: Kellie is still involved in the process—and giving priority to job description updates. Joellen from GovHR is still involved and available for questions; she is looking to finalize the “draft report” asap.
  - Note: the 3% range increase that was applied to the C&C draft plan as recommended by GovHR has been applied evenly across all positions?
    - Response: yes, across all positions.

**4. Next Steps for Implementation/Parking Lot Issues**

- a. GovHR Recommendation for Merit Plan/Current Tools
- b. Gender Equity Alignment

#### **Item 4- Discussion Summary and Follow-Up Actions:**

- The goal is to apply the new plan across the system, However, there are some folks are well below the minimums and they will need to be brought up. Then, there are no people who have a salary above the range for the grade their role is in.
- Ongoing commitment to a 3% increase across the board –but above that, it’s not yet clear what we have for budget. Once we know, then increasing salaries come to a discretionary piece. Some of all these changes will take a multi-year approach.
- (From Town Manager): Last count, there are 25 employees who would be below the minimums, so not a lot of work to change it. We do have many long-time employees (tenured) who will in some way reach high marks on the ranges. We’d like to get your advice on how to manage these valued, long-time employees. Our goal is to bring all 25 up to the minimum by May 1<sup>st</sup>, looking again at July 1<sup>st</sup> to increase as possible.
- As implementation goes forward, we will also have to compare not just to the range but to each other—it is important re: Mass Equal Pay act that we review by gender. We have to pull actual salaries, perhaps looking over multiple years to consider gender equity. Differences may well occur, but we must be clear on where things stand, and why.
- In terms of the Merit assessment for salary increases, we are concerned that there is no consistent use of a process/forms to ensure merit is provided appropriately.
  - Expect that the 2024 Fiscal year salary increases would be based on satisfactory performance. We will try to apply uniformly the current evaluation forms (see packet), understanding that the pandemic years were difficult to track uniformity of job performance evaluations.
  - Personnel Board would like to use all available resources-GovHR, State-level support—to update the job performance assessment process. Understanding that more discussion and training will be required to improve uniformity across departments.
  - Job performance evaluations must be aligned with clear, consistent and transparent annual objectives for each positions’ responsibilities.
- Recognition awards for long service—10, 20, 30 years: these financial awards have not been increased in decades, to the point where the low amount seems more a criticism than a reward. This recognition system requires an update.

#### **5. Next Steps for Personnel Bylaw and Charge Discussions**

- Personnel Board must next turn to the Bylaw and the Charge for this committee. We recognize that the PB Charge should come next, as the Bylaw can only change at Town Meeting. This issue will be taken up at our next meeting, and will become our priority as soon as we get through Town Meeting on 4/30.

**6. Adjournment:** Joe- I motion to adjourn; Nancy: I second. Bill: all in favor—Liz: Aye, Kate: Aye, Bill: Aye.

*Minutes approved 4/26/2023*