



CONCORD PERSONNEL BOARD
MINUTES
FEBRUARY 15, 2023

Attendees: Bill Mracheck, Nancy Crowley, Liz Cobbs Amy Foley

Absent: Kate Ryan, Joe Emeric

Additional Citizens: Mark Howell, Karlen Redd, Terri Ackerman, Stephanie Oliver, Paul Macone, Malysa Simard

AGEDNA: Today is the

1. Call to Order
2. Classification and Compensation Study
 - a. Review critical dates
 - b. Preparation for 2/27th Public Hearing
 - i. Consider approach for Personnel Board's:
 - Review of plan recommendation by GovHR
 - Determination of what to recommend to Town Meeting
 - Communications with Employees & the Public

Note:

These minutes are not a transcript or verbatim – statements have been rephrased & summarized.

Call to Order

Bill: Call to order at 3:03pm. Nancy, Bill, Liz. Joe/Kate not in attendance.

- Thanks for taking the time for this matinee session.
- I did have some constructive discussion with local citizen—and listened to their concerns that there is nothing of substance to put forward. We on the Personnel Board have to factor these concerns into our discussion.
- It is my understanding that for the Personnel Board to get involved, we'd have to have the Town Manager present the whole new plan to us—and without that, we have nothing to consider. So that would mean that there is no Article 5 to entertain.
- So what is the status? Kellie is not here—but the two of you, Amy, have been working together on this project, so you can give us an update?

Amy: So, I will put up on the screen to look at a more comprehensive timeline. Then you can assess whether that is a reasonable process to get to Town Meeting.

- So, I am now sharing my screen. Here is a list with timelines, target dates and launched in August, with preliminary conversations and an announcement to employees to understand the process and to explain the job analysis questionnaire.
- Looked at all job descriptions, including unfilled roles. We also sent out a Job Analysis Questionnaire (JAQ) to collect information from employees.
- Consultants also interviewed anyone that requested an interview.
- Supervisors also commented on the information gathered.
- Comparable communities and benchmark positions were also assessed.
- That was August-September.
- In October, that is when the Sr. Managers were to get back to GovHR with their input on all the positions.

- GovHR did start gathering market data –benchmarked data to apply to salary ranges at the appropriate time. They have that, and preliminary analysis, but they must refine it by groupings and classifications.
- Then, GovHR did a “preliminary job analysis” ... a system with weighted scoring, they did a preliminary weighting. It was important that this was then aligned with the needs of the town and the nature of the positions in Concord.
- They then turn it back over to us and the Management team to look at what might be missing, or things that they are not clear on...we spent considerable time from beginning of December through beginning of January reviewing so that we could get information back to GovHR.
- The Classification and Compensation plan... but ultimately, this is two different jobs; the classification into ranges and then the compensation—the actual salaries.
- All of this was done for Concord.
- Once we had a proposal to GovHR, then they met with Sr. Management to show what would come next.
- That happened February 7th. With that, we are not ready to look at salary ranges yet. But now we are putting things together to look across the departments and we’re at the process of looking across the departments to get back to GovHR with the review.
- We are the final stages of the preliminary groups of jobs. This will be the basis of all the other work.
- February 21st : a save the date meeting was set up. But our consultant has had an accident this week and won’t be able to meet in person. So now we are looking to share proposed titles in the compensation planning—but to do it first by preliminary written communications, but to delay the in-person meeting with GovHR for another week.
- Liz will still meet with GovHR in advance of the Feb 27th meeting to prepare what can be stated.
- So now, we are looking at March 1st /Wednesday as an in-person meeting, with written information to be sent out next week.
- Then, to have a “request for reconsideration” form will be provided to the employees, where they will only be assessing the groupings of positions—and they would have two weeks to review and question the groupings of jobs that they see (pertaining to themselves and others).
- Then, we’d have GovHR recommendations.
- At the same time, we’d put up the groupings for public assessment on a website for citizens to see what is going on.
- Then the 2/27 Public Hearing would introduce the process and share the communication plan.
- Then, it would be clear that there still would need to be a review period.
- Then GovHR would review what they are hearing back from employees.
- After that, we could go forward to understand the compensation part of the work. We have a lot of salary data available, but we need to then combine the market data with enough positions for any grade, along with the internal equity groupings.
- Town Manager would like to build it off the 85 percentiles—so not putting ourselves at the highest range of pay, but we’d be situated at 85% for our employees.
- It won’t mean that any or all positions will be paid out at 85%, but it will depend on competitiveness and other factors, assessed for each position.
- In mid-March, Salary ranges could be applied. Then I have slated weekly Personnel Board meetings to get the reviews done efficiently
- Personnel Board would then have to review the full salary ranges and groupings of jobs.
- That puts us to end of March.
- Right now, we have a placeholder in there vs. actual details on the new plan.

- March 29: Personnel Board Meeting
- April 5th: Personnel Board Meeting
- The Finance Committee meeting and their report—this would be another opportunity to provide more details.
- So, when in March, we could still be discussing employee feedback, citizen comments, feedback from the Public Hearing.... Which then would be printed into the FinCom report (print date:: April 5th)
- Amendments could still be made at Town Meeting via motions, but the intent would be at that point, a good representation of what the new plan is would be available.

Bill: Fin Com needs our information by when?

Amy: March 31st so that they can get it to the printer by April 5th.

- So in March, you would likely need to have weekly meetings to review the entire plan and know what you want to submit.

Bill: I'll ask the first question: if the Town were to postpone this work for some time, what in your view would be the pros and cons from the Town?

Amy: Well, we don't want to have something that is not vetted. That would be dangerous, but by not having something now, then it would be important to understand what would be the steps to bring it forward as soon as possible. As you know there are changes in the Town and in the labor market. It is important that employees know that their positions' have been reviewed. It's important that they have a reasonable system that they fit into. I think employees are going to be upset if this does not happen. Employees are eager to set new ranges as they think they are underpaid. It's important that people understand how the decisions are made.

If this won't go to Town Meeting, it's important to understand what would be next.

Nancy: It's an overwhelming process, just huge to put it all together. I do think employees will be upset if not done on time, but they will be even more upset if it is done poorly. If that is the case, there are other options, such as a special town meeting. Hurrying it through would be worse for all.

Liz: I agree with the comments so far.

Nancy: there is too little time and a lot to review.

Bill: Are there any comments from the public?

Amy: I agree completely. Did I hear that you are concluding it is not feasible to do it?

Nancy: Yes, we can keep trying but I assume at this point that there is too much to cover.

Bill: Looking at the landscape today, I am making a judgement call that we have to be extremely cautious—moving forward could be too risky, without an understanding of how employees, the Town Manager, or the Personnel Board are prepared to understand the plan.

- We as a Board, have a duty to say that we don't have confidence that the work is ready.
- Liz has to present to Select Board at the Public Hearing on 2/27. And it seems awfully optimistic to think that we could have confidence in the report in the next two weeks.

- It would be great if we'd started earlier. But here we are and the bottom line is that we are concerned. And it is likely that we as a Personnel Board are not willing to stand by the Report at this time.

Amy: Is this a decision not to move forward?

Bill: Alternatives to how to bring it forward would be important to understanding that, but we need to explore that further with the Town Manager or the Town Attorney. It seems that there should be other mechanisms—and we need to explore that. Once we know our options then we can understand what needs to be done—with new dates--- with an objective to confirm that citizens, Town Manager, Personnel Board and Employees—all must be confident that the work is “Grade A” and aligns and recognized that our town employees are important and valued.

Nancy: Either way, we'll continue to work on this project. Who knows, maybe we can go forward.

Liz: It would be good to hear from GovHR how these projects are usually taking—18 months? 6 Months? That might impact what we know about alternatives to Town Meeting.

Nancy: What if we go along and it is concluded sometime after April 5th ---but what is it's only a few weeks after that? Would we be able to get into Town Meeting?

Amy: There are several chances to get into Town meeting—with a Town Meeting handout---but that would not allow much time for the review. There was some talk that the Public Hearing (2/27) could be delayed by the Select Board.

Bill: Yes, that would be important to the Town Manager, the Select Board and the Personnel Board to understand.

Bill: The next item on the agenda would be to prepare for the 2/27 Public Hearing. I would recommend answering “what is this, why is this and how”. I would suspect that there is a lot to present, using power point would also be fine.

Nancy: The Power Point last year was well done.

Amy: Yes, I'll be there and then Joellen will also be there to answer questions as needed.

Bill: Article 5 – this would be the separate set of talking points—but the other two articles also will need explanation.

Nancy: Last year, there was not a lot of time---5-10 minutes.

Bill: Ok, I think we've covered it all. There are some open questions that need to be answered. By the next meeting, we will need a charter about what we need to approve—we need our own checklist---

Amy: yes, it would be helpful—

Nancy: Could you please send us the project dates that you presented today.

Bill: And we need to catch up on the minutes, please. It would be helpful to capture for this work, so let's get up to speed there.

Bill: We have not had the 12/21 minutes—there need to be some edits---

Amy: I will look back to see where we are and move things forward.

Bill: No problem, we want to participate on a Board where all the cogs are turning and where we are living our values.

Nancy: All the new GovHR changes would have to be presented to Town Meeting if we are to get there.

Amy: we must have all the data confirmed with employees before we can present it, so the timing is a challenge.

Bill: Citizen Comments?

Paul Macone: I understand that you are in a box—and not a clear way forward. My concern is that perception becomes reality... I'd like to second Bill's comments—that this needs to be top shelf for the employees—they need time to absorb it, speak amongst themselves, well, we could do more harm than good if it is rushed. If employees don't know about it... it might be helpful for the next series of meetings, it would be good to send a timeline to employees, so they can watch and listen to what takes place so that they don't have a wrong perception that this has been rushed when it's not been, for example.

Mark Howell: Thanks for your attention to this. In terms of preparation for the 27th Public Hearing, I'd suggest the timeline ---when will things get done---when employees are informed. I would suggest that the employees and the public can get to all information from a link on the Personnel Board site. I would encourage to be deliberate about these next steps. In the new classification plan, if it is similar or substantially different, it will require more dialogue. And here on 2/15, you don't know which way it will go, as you've not seen it yet.

- In re: to the minutes; it would be great—to put the youtube link in to the meetings in with the minutes.
- In the minutes: it would be good to highlight the decision-making will be taking place at each agenda.
- It would be great not to review all of the materials from start to finish when you are moving at this fast a pace. Also, I just looked back on the meetings and there are no December meeting minutes posted and nothing from January. So it is behind.

Nancy: I motion to adjourn at 4:08pm

Bill: Thank you

Document used at the meeting:

Classification and Compensation Study Project Schedule Last Revised 2/15/23

Minutes approved 3/8/2023