

Minutes of Monday, March 12, 2018, 6:00 PM

Present:

Patrick Hare – District 5
George Cortes – District 2
Greta Kenney – District 5
AiVi Nguyen – District 1
Nicole DiCello – District 4
Florette Willis – District 4

Absent:

Shirley Konneh – District 3

Staff:

Pam Callahan, Human Resources

1. The meeting was officially called to order at 6:00 PM. Greta Kenney, the Chairperson, welcomed all. The Chairperson announced that Kathleen Rentsch has tendered her resignation from the committee due to her time commitment to her personal and professional obligations. The board and staff liaisons thank her for the work she has done for the committee. Two vacancies on the committee are currently available to be filled.
2. The Chairperson called for a motion to approve minutes on 2/12/18. On a motion by Patrick Hare and seconded by George Cortes, the minutes were approved.
3. **Department Presentation: Dori Vecchio, Assistant Director of Human Resources and Nina Galica, Coordinator of Employment of Human Resources**

The Chairperson welcomed Dori Vecchio, the Assistant Director and Nina Galica, Coordinator of Employment from Human Resources, and each of the committee members introduced themselves. Dori gave a brief overview of the HR Department, including the different areas and functions. Dori informed the committee that the hiring of the new Chief Diversity Office role will soon be announced. Diversity and Inclusion may now be under the City Manager's office, but will have a close partnership with the HR Department and will remain a priority of the department.

Dori explained about the need to update and inform all the employees of the Worcester, including the 47 division heads, of the new standardized hiring process, which will help to change the culture in the City. HR staff has led in participating and explaining the new process to departments, and they have had a step-by-step approach in guiding departments through the process. The new process has helped to target and remove unintentional bias, and keep the overall hiring process fair and equitable.

AiVi Nguyen asked why the hiring process, specifically the Civil Service process, was so difficult. Nina explained the Civil Service process, the origin of the system, and the inclusion and exemptions of job classifications within the process. She explained that among all of the employees, approximately 73% of the City employees were Civil Service and 20% of School employees were Civil Service. Nina also explained the types of Civil Service jobs that would be classified under City employment and under School employment. Nina explained basic requirements of Civil Service jobs, including the state examinations for positions with Fire/Police Department. Nicole DiCello asked for the diversity breakdown of the Civil vs. Non-Civil Service jobs. Dori and Nina replied that they can provide that information for the committee at a later date.

Nina explained to the committee about the Civil Service List, which is the list that is referred to when choosing candidates for a Civil Service position in departments such as Police, Fire, and DPW. She explained the process of choosing from the list and the limitations that comes with the process, including the protocol of bypassing candidates on the list, which is managed by the State.

Greta asked if the group could identify the obstacles and barriers to diversity in Civil Service employment. One example was the exam, which was brought up in the previous Fire Department presentation. The connection of race and socioeconomic status was a hindrance to diversity in applicants sitting for the exam, since the cost for the exam was so high. Dori agreed with this example and told the committee that she would recommend to the City Manager a funding pool, but also expressed the need to explain to potential applicants about the waivers. Dori explained another obstacle included the process itself being too lengthy and cumbersome for applicants to follow, which was State mandated and out of the hands of City. She explained the need to do more outreach and educate the community on what positions were part of Civil Service and the steps that are needed to apply to such positions. She also expressed

the need to inform potential applicants about the residency requirement and to advertise about the requirement in advance, so they are prepared.

George Cortes expressed the need to define the difference between the Affirmative Action Policy and the Affirmative Action Plan, and to find a way to merge the DOJ Reporting done by the HR Department and CDO into the Plan. AiVi also asked if there is a way to enforce the Policy within all the departments divisions of the City, and Dori responded that it is enforced and will be continued to be enforced.

Florette Willis commended the City on the upcoming Opportunity Fair, and asked for increasing the number of Opportunity Fairs that are conducting within a year, since it increases the visibility and awareness of opportunities to the community. Dori agreed and mentioned currently that an Opportunity Fair occurs quarterly, but is looking to expand. Florette also asked about the subculture of the City, in regard to the retention of current employees. Pam Callahan responded that the City is looking to the board to provide assistance with Hiring, Retention, and Recruitment when they are working on that part of the Plan.

AiVi Nguyen asked for guidance on main focus areas for the committee, in regard to the Hiring and Retention Plan. Dori mentioned that help with onboarding is very important, including help with building a list serve of contacts for advertising of available positions. Nicole noted that increasing in-person interaction with the community, such as Opportunity Fairs, is important. AiVi made a motion for all committee members to provide from their personal contacts, a list of key individuals from organizations that agree be added to a list serve, which the City could use to advertise about employment opportunities. On the motion by AiVi and seconded by Patrick Hare, the motion were approved.

Patrick Hare suggested bringing back the idea of Department Liaisons, who would be mentors to potential hires, and Greta followed up with asking for a Diversity and Inclusion Liaison from each department, who can be the same person or a separate role.

4. Affirmative Action Policy Sub-Committee Updates:

Patrick explained that there will be an update on next steps in the Affirmative Action Policy at next month's meeting. The preliminary feedback from the HR Department will be considered and the previous document from the last CDO will be incorporated

into the final document. Updates will be brought back to the full board at the next meeting.

5. Announcements:

- Wednesday, April 4th 2018: City of Worcester Opportunity Fair to be held at the First Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 5 Chestnut St, 5:30-7:00PM
- April 11-13th 2018: MA Fair Housing and Civil Rights Conference

6. The Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM

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