

Minutes
EMPLOYEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
August 12, 2014
Mayor's Conference Room
9:00 A.M.

The meeting was called to order by Cynthia Williams at 9:00 am.

1. *ROLL CALL*

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cynthia Williams-Environmental Services
Britt Hubbard-Sewer System Tech.
Jackie Somerlott-Public Works Admin.
Albert Ozuna-Streets
Jeremy Russell-Stormwater
Jorg Stefan Kidd-Building Maintenance
Raymond Brown II-Emergency Communications
Eugene Ross-Landfill
Sir Allen (Chew)-Wastewater Collection

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Cindy Porter-Engineering*

*Excused

**Unexcused

OTHERS PRESENT:

Tiffani Burk-Human Resources
Doug Wells-City Councilman
Tim Wilson-Deputy City Attorney
Bryan Long-City Manager
Sherry Anderson-Assistant HR Director

2. *MINUTES*

A.

Approval of minutes of July 15th, 2014

Motion to approve minutes by Britt Hubbard with a second by Jeremy Russell.

Ayes: Hubbard, Williams, Brown, Allen, Kidd, Ozuna, Ross, Russell
Nays: None Motion carried.

3. OLD BUSINESS

A.

City Bucks Policy 13-16: Cynthia Williams said there was a special committee meeting held. It had representatives from Auditing, Parks & Recreation, IT, Lakes, Revenue Services, License & Permits along with Jackie Somerlott, Cindy Porter and Jeremy Russell from the EAC. They identified several different areas that they would like to have changes made with the policy. Everyone should have received an email from Jeremy Russell with the 7 items that everyone felt would help clarify the policy. With that a revised policy was drafted and was sent to you. Cynthia asked if there were any questions or comments about the revised policy. Sherry Anderson said she noticed that immediate family was added. She asked was it decided that the bucks would be able to be used by family members. Jeremy said yes it could be used for family members. It has to be presented by the employee with their signature but you could use it for the family member. Chew Allen asked if this is going to be an ongoing thing every year or is this just a trial. He said because his department and everyone that he represents do not want it. He said his employees have said they will never use it and it is an insult to them. Cynthia said it is still an incentive for them and a way to encourage them to participate in the things that the City provides. They discussed the employee's possible feelings about the City Bucks. Jeremy asked if they could make sure and let the employees know that this policy in no way has to do with pay or raises. Eugene Ross asked if we are going to be keeping track of how many employees actually use it. Jeremy said yes we will be keeping track. Eugene said it would be nice if they could pay their water bill with it. Britt Hubbard told some of the questions that employees have been asking in regards to this policy. Cynthia said the Print Shop has designed the certificate. They wanted to make sure that it can't be copied. They also wanted to make sure the 3 locations that it can be used is on it and that they have to show an ID to use it. Tiffani Burk asked if the certificate could be sent to her not in PDF form. She will not be able to mail merge with the spreadsheet list of employees. HR does not have a program to convert it to merge with an excel spreadsheet. Tiffani asked about the ledger on the back. Cynthia said they decided not to have a ledger on the back. Cynthia explained the way the bucks can be used. They are going to be in \$5.00 increments and the fee has to be at least \$5.00 in order to use the certificate. They discussed how the certificates will be printed. Sherry said so if the EAC approves it then it is ready for a signature from the Manager. Motion by Jeremy Russell with a second by Stefan Kidd to accept the City Bucks policy and send it to the City Attorney's office for review. Ayes: Williams, Somerlott, Kidd, Brown, Russell Nays: Ozuna, Allen, Hubbard, Ross. Motion Carried

- B. *Consider Revision of Administrative Policy 3-12:* This was tabled until the next meeting.

4. NEW BUSINESS

- A. *Consider Employee Spotlight Nominations:* Jackie Somerlott handed out the nomination form to the members. Cynthia read part of the spotlight policy to make sure that they could accept a group of employees for the award. Britt explained how hard these guys worked on a specific job. They were nominated by Richard Gooch. Britt asked that it be approved. Motion to accept the Sewer Construction Crew (Tracy Fife, Colt Darnell, Donald Dawdy, Arthur Griffin, Robert Camp Jr. & Jeremiah Barksdale) as the Employee Spotlight award winners by Chew Allen with a second by Albert Ozuna. Ayes: Williams, Somerlott, Kidd, Ozuna, Brown, Allen, Hubbard, Russell, Ross Nays: None Motion Carried

- B. *Review August Employee Newsletter:* Cynthia said it is not complete at this time. Jackie said that Cindy Porter said the last page is for notes from the EAC. So if anyone has anything to put there then let her know. Also there is going to be a recipe submitted. Jackie said that she thinks that is all we are lacking for the newsletter to be complete.

- C. *Review of Drug and Alcohol Council Policy 3-2:* Cynthia said this came to light after the Supervisor required Drug and Alcohol class. The policy was reviewed and it was pointed out that the supervisors are responsible for asking employees about medication that they are taking and the employees are responsible for letting the supervisors know what they are taking. Jeremy said the only reason they are bringing it up because we know the track record so far with ADA compliance. This is not a HIPPA thing this is ADA specifically. He said he went to the Department of Labor website, the suggested language at the bottom requiring an employee to give information that might reveal a disability is the issue. It puts the responsibility on the employee and not on the supervisors. Jeremy covered some of what the website says. Bryan Long said you are not the only employee group that has a concern with this policy. The intention is obviously safety. He said any feedback that we can get from the EAC will be helpful. Bryan gave some examples of what kind of issues we have had in the past with the employees not revealing the use of medications. He said we have two facets, the EAP program and Safety. Britt asked if this is something that HR and Legal is already looking at. Tim Wilson said that is actually why he was here at the meeting. He said he is already into doing a review of this

policy. Tim said it is an administrative policy so it is up to Bryan if he wants to take it to the EAC for a review. Bryan said of course he would want input but also it is a safety concern so he wants employee input. They had a discussion about certain circumstances of using medication. Jackie said safety is the concern and protecting the employee's privacy. Tim said the policy is too broad right now. Eugene brought up some concerns about taking some medications at night and then coming to work the next day and getting drug tested. The employee would fail but taking the medication does not affect his ability to do his job during the work day. It was explained to him that he would be excused if he had a prescription for the drug. There were a lot of questions and comments about this policy. Sherry explained that Candy Brown in HR has supervisors that report to her that an employee is taking a certain medication. She then sends a copy of the job description to that doctor. The doctor will then send her the information whether the employee will be able to perform their job duties while on the medication. She will then tell the Supervisor whether it is ok or not. Jeremy asked about disclosing information to HR about medication that you take. He said it will go in your file and that is open to anyone who can read your file. Sherry said HR has a medical file and anything like that goes in your medical file and not your personnel file. Tim said that medical file is not releasable to the public. Britt asked if those employees are open for the employee to review. Tim said you as an employee can see both of your files at anytime. He said and you have to have a reason as a supervisor to see an employee file. Bryan said as an employee, you have a responsibility in driving a city vehicle or operating equipment. It poses a liability to the City of Lawton. Perhaps more importantly it is for your own safety. Britt said the only thing he thinks should be in the policy that prevents the employee from repercussions if they disclose. Tim said if the employee does not disclose and something happens then there should be repercussions. Jeremy said there are several options that an employee is offered by the City to take before you come in to work while under the influence of a medication. Jorg Kidd said it is up to everyone to look after each other. If you see your fellow employee that looks like he is dosing off then you need to step up and tell him to get out of that truck or off that piece of equipment. Bryan said we want to retain employees and not to get rid of employees. Safety is the intention. Britt asked Tim if he had any time frame when he thinks the policy will be completely revised. Tim said hopefully it shouldn't be too long.

5. COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION

- A. They asked the members to please not post the EAC minutes before they have been approved.
- B.

Cynthia asked if they are going to put some kind of notice out to the employees about not receiving the monetary awards for the safety incentive. Jackie said she will say something to Cindy about putting it in the Newsletter.

C.

Jeremy thanked Councilman Doug Wells for attending the EAC meeting. Mr. Wells said he wanted to let them know that he will always fight for the employees. If you have any concerns then bring them to him and he will be glad to address them.

D.

Bryan said thanks to the Council, one thing that you are going to see different is that the EAC is going to have an opportunity to become more active in the budget process or at least to be receiving the briefs ahead of time.

E.

Eugene said some employees that he represents are asking what can they do to help get a COLA. Bryan said keeping doing what you are doing. Employees are doing an outstanding job on expenditures. We had a substantial savings last year. Thankfully we were able to take that this year and roll it back into capital outlay to give you the tools and equipment to do your job. The next natural progression is COLA. Eugene said that would bring the moral up a bunch. Bryan said to give every employee in the City approximately a 3% pay increase will be about 1.2 million dollars. What good would it do to give a 3% COLA only to know that I am going to have to lay off employees a year and a half in the future. He said that will be part of the salary survey that we are getting ready to do. Britt asked if we have any feedback on the job comparisons yet. Sherry said we are just in the beginning stages. Britt and Jeremy both asked if the EAC can get a list of the factors that the person that is doing the salary survey is going to use. Bryan said we may be able to invite a couple of EAC members to the professional services interviews that we will do. We will have different people come in and present what they can do for the City. Ultimately the city council will have to approve that engagement. Doug Wells said as a former city employee and now on the other side of the fence as a councilman. Keep in mind it doesn't matter what a salary survey shows. If the money is not there to give raises then the money is not there. Doug Wells talked about Longevity and COLA. He explained how the longevity started. He talked about the budget and the money situation of the City. He also talked about the increase in personnel over the last few years and the difference in personnel numbers compared to other cities. He said we just don't have the money to fund the number of employees that we have or someone has to come up with ideas on how we can come up with more money. Jeremy said he understands that there is only so much money. He said if he ever mentions thing being looked at to see what is costing the City because that is the way we should think in his opinion. Some people think that they should not have to give up anything. He said he is not for employees getting things cut and he is not for any certain item getting taken away from employees. He is for looking at the whole picture as a group. Do we have the money? What can we do to get a 3% increase? Employees deserve what they have been promised. We can't keep adding on to everything we already get. Where is the money going to come from? Doug Wells

talked about the pay plan. He said he suggested changing it years ago. He thinks it is bad to be maxed out at 10 or 12 years. He said he would like to see longevity started back up for all employees but maybe without merit increases and COLAs. He said the City retirement is good. He said to the council that he would not vote for merit increases this year unless it included general employees and he thinks that you did get them. Bryan said let's be clear, yes you did get merit increases in this year's budget. Jeremy had some suggestions that would include every employee getting the same increase and not divide employees up in groups. Mr. Wells talked about once a week trash pickup and raising water bills. He said it is hard on young families to pay the higher fees and we need to think about those people. He thanked the members for inviting him to the meeting. Jeremy said he is invited to all the meetings and Mr. Wells said to send him a reminder when the meetings are.

6. *ADJOURNMENT*

A.

Motion to adjourn by Jackie Somerlott with a second by Jeremy Russell
Ayes: All Nays: None Motion Carried
Meeting Adjourned at 10:30 am