



CITY OF MERRILL
PERSONNEL AND FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES • TUESDAY AUGUST 15, 2017

Special Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

5:00 PM

I. Call to Order

Alderman Schwartzman called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Ryan Schwartzman	Aldersperson - Third District	Present	
Tim Meehean	Aldersperson - Eighth District	Present	
Paul Russell	Aldersperson - First District	Present	

Also in attendance: City Administrator Dave Johnson, Finance Director Kathy Unertl, Alderwoman Kandy Peterson, Dave Graveen, Diane Wais and City Clerk Bill Heideman.

II. Agenda items for consideration:

1. Continue consideration of Personnel Policies/Handbook revisions.

Alderman Meehean questioned whether a decision has been made whether sick or vacation hours used should be counted as hours worked when calculating overtime. He was told that this would be a separate item for consideration at a future Personnel and Finance Committee meeting.

The following sections of the Personnel Policies/Handbook were then discussed.

Section 22-3: Handling Sexual Harassment

Alderman Meehean suggested that, if the City Administrator or City Attorney are the accused in a sexual harassment case, they should not be the contact person. It was suggested that, in that case, the Mayor should be the contact person. Alderman Russell suggested that, in all alleged sexual harassment cases, someone other than the City Administrator or City Attorney could be assigned this responsibility.

Section 12-12: Vacation Donation Policy

Alderman Meehean stated that he was not in favor of this policy. After discussion, it was agreed that each employee would be allowed to donate one working day annually, based on the definition of a working day in their department.

Appendix A: Family and Medical Leave Policy

A question arose as to whether the Federal "length of leave" period and the State "length of leave" run concurrently. Diane Wais will research this question.

Section 12-3-10

Finance Director Unertl suggested that the paragraph at the end of this section be moved to the end of Section 12-3-7.

Section 12-2-10:

Alderman Meehean suggested that language be added to specify that, once the transition period is over, any vacation hours over the carryover maximum are forfeited.

Section 7-4: Overtime/Compensatory

Alderman Meehean stated that it is not standard practice to include “nonproductive” hours when calculating overtime. However, he added that he would not be opposed to this unless it became a financial issue for the City.

Section 6-10: Longevity

Alderman Russell had questions related to the proposed changes to this section. He was told that the purpose of the proposed changes is merely to “clean up” old language.

Section 3-2: City Administrator

City Administrator Johnson suggested that language be added to stipulate that the City Administrator serves as the City’s Chief Administrative Officer.

Section 5-6: Notice of Rejection

City Administrator Johnson reported that, depending on the circumstances, employment rejection letters are not sent to all people who complete job applications. That policy will continue.

Section 5-8: Interview Expense

City Administrator Johnson reported that, in some cases, it is not possible to obtain timely Personnel and Finance authorization for employee candidate interview expenses. He is requesting that the City Administrator be authorized to approve such expenses and then report them in the City Administrator monthly report.

Section 6-8: Annual Compensation Review and Adjustments

City Administrator Johnson recommended deletion of this entire section. As an alternative, Alderman Meehean suggested deleting a portion of the first sentence. Also, it was recommended that the word “Annual” be deleted from the section title.

There was agreement to delete Section 6-7 (Part-Time Employee Compensation Adjustments) and instead place permanent part-time employees on a pay schedule.

Section 9-3: Annual Compensation Review and Adjustments

It was suggested that references to Section 12-2-10 and Section 12-3-9 be added, as they relate to vacation and sick leave payouts.

Section 16-1-31: Negligent Work Performance

Although this section is deleted in the proposed revisions, City Administrator Johnson is of the opinion that it should remain. Agreement was reached to retain the section, but to amend "Department standards" to City standards".

Section 17-2-2: Discipline Action Policy

The steps in the employee discipline policy should be retitled. The current steps are: Internal Discussion, Counseling, Reprimand and Termination. The steps should be: Counseling, Reprimand, Suspension and Termination.

Section 18-2-2: Grievance Procedure (Impartial Hearing Officer)

City Administrator Johnson recommends that the City Attorney, not the City Clerk, be the official who selects the impartial hearing officer in cases involving grievance hearings.

Section 23-21: Non-Union/Non-Exempt Personnel - Call-Time & Shift Differential

Agreement was reached that non-exempt employees called in outside of their normally scheduled hours should receive a minimum of two hours call time, regardless of the length of time actually worked.

Section 23-11: Inclement Weather

Finance Director Unertl suggested deleting the last sentence of the section.

Section 23-16-3: Reporting Taxable Travel Expense Reimbursements

Finance Director Unertl suggested deleting the last sentence of the section.

Section 12-5-4: Paid Holidays, Personal Days

Finance Director Unertl asked for clarification on this section. Alderman Meehean stated that, initially, the section was changed based upon a request from the Street Department employees. It was later learned the Street Department did not want the change, so the policy reverted back to the former policy. It has now been learned that the Parks and Recreation employees want something different. Alderman Schwartzman and Alderman Meehean both stated that they were not aware of this latest request from the Park and Recreation employees. Prior to a decision being made, Finance Director Unertl will discuss this with Parks and Recreation Director Wendorf.

Section 12-3-10

Finance Director Unertl and Diane Wais will continue to work on this section.

Section 23-8 and Section 23-9

Diane Wais reported that Section 23-8 (Use of Personal Cell Phone/Mobile Devices) and Section 23-9 (Computer/Electronic Use Policy) have been added.

Section 23-16: Meals

Alderman Russell suggested that the meal per diem rates be standardized with the state and/or federal rates.

Discussion on the revisions ended.

At the August 29th, 2017 Personnel and Finance Committee meeting, the draft version of the revised handbook will be considered. Potentially, the handbook could then be referred to the Common Council and considered at the September 12th, 2017 Common Council meeting.

III. Establish date time & location of next special meeting, if necessary

Scheduling a special meeting is not necessary at this time.

IV. Public Comment Period

None.

V. Adjournment

Motion (Meehean/Russell) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 6:15 P.M.