

APPROVED

**CITY OF WAUSAU HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF OPEN SESSION**

DATE/TIME: February 10, 2025, at 4:45 p.m.
LOCATION: City Hall (407 Grant Street) – Council Chambers
MEMBERS PRESENT: Becky McElhaney (C), Terry Kilian (VC), Gary Gisselman, Michael Martens, Vicki Tierney
MEMBERS ABSENT:
Also Present: Mayor Diny, Rick Rubow, Maryanne Groat, Dustin Kraege, Randy Fifrick

The meeting of the Human Resources Committee was called to order by McElhaney.

Approval of December 30, 2024 and January 13, 2025 Minutes.

Motion by Kilian to approve the December 30, 2024 and January 13, 2025 Human Resources Committee meeting minutes. Second by Martens. All ayes. Motion passed 5-0.

Human Resources Report for January 2025.

Gisselman asked about the status of the Assistant City Attorney vacancies. Rubow said that interviews were held two weeks ago without finding the ideal candidate and believes that Jacobson will want to repost. Gisselman said that it is not posted on the career page at this time.

Discussion and Possible Action to Approve the Equal Employment Opportunity Plan and Amend Employee Handbook Section 1.01 – Equal Employment Opportunity.

Rubow explained that the EEO plan is a requirement for the Police Department VOCA grant in order to maintain eligibility for the grant.

Kilian asked if the City would meet LEP requirements. Rubow said that he would check with Anne for an answer on this item. Kilian said that this issue has been brought up for some time and believes that this is something that should be formalized and added to the handbook. McElhaney questioned Kilian's request and asked if she was asking that something be put in the handbook or in the EEO Plan. Kilian asked if limited English proficiency shouldn't be addressed in the handbook? Rubow pointed out section C. on page 3. Kilian said she thought that the City needed an LEP plan like Metro Ride has. Rubow said that he could get back to Kilian on this.

Martens asked if all departments were expected to follow the EEO plan since this came about because of the Police Department. Rubow said it would apply to any departments requesting Federal grants.

Gisselman asked if the City did not have an EEO policy before? McElhaney said this is not new. Rubow explained that we had EEO language in the handbook but did not have an EEO plan that was approved by the HR Committee and Council.

Tierney asked if this needed to be delayed until Kilian's concern was addressed? Mayor Diny said that the City has followed EEO since 2012 according to the file he located. The requirements of an EEP plan came about due to the Police Department's request for a VOCA grant. Diny said that James Henderson created the plan two years ago and it has recently been refined by Anne Keenan. Diny said he feels it would be appropriate to move it along. Kilian restated her question for the mayor regarding an LEP plan to be investigated.

Motion by Gisselman to Approve the Equal Employment Opportunity Plan and Amend Employee Handbook Section 1.01 – Equal Employment Opportunity. Second by Kilian. All ayes. Motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and Possible Action to Approve the Adjusted City of Wausau Part-Time, Temporary, and Seasonal Wage Rates.

Rubow provided an overview of the request to increase these rates due to departments not being able to hire seasonal employees and to be more in line with what surrounding municipalities are offering.

Tierny said that she would like to see the rates of the other communities since this wasn't done at budget time and it would be a budget modification. Dustin Kraege said that he requested this from James Henderson last year and the numbers he provided were from Marathon County. Kraege explained that his department requests 8 seasonal positions and has not been able to fill them the last few years due to candidates finding better paying positions. Kraege said he understands the frustration of this not being addressed sooner, but that he had requested it last year and it was not brought forward until now.

Gisselman asked if the county is able to hire with the proposed rates. Kraege said he has talked with the Parks department and Highway department and they appear to be able to hire more candidates with their rates. Gisselman said the revised rates seem low. Tierny said she respectfully disagreed and that these positions are filled with students looking for summer jobs.

Maryanne Groat explained that seasonal positions are budgeted with an overall dollar amount for the departments and that raising the pay rates will not increase the budget. The departments will need to determine how many positions they can hire and hours they can schedule the employees to stay within the allocated budget, and therefore it would not be a budget modification to approve the rate increases.

Further discussion took place regarding the rates as sufficient, with McElhaney saying that they should know if this helps when seasonals are hired.

Motion by Tierny to Approve the Adjusted City of Wausau Part-Time, Temporary, and Seasonal Wage Rates. Second by Kilian. All ayes. Motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and Possible Action to Approve the Creation of a No Payout Vacation Leave Only Bank and Revise Employee Handbook Section 8.04 – Vacation.

Rubow said that this item was brought forward from a request by the HR Committee in July of 2024 to come up with a plan to deal with employee vacation banks and requests for exceptions to accrue over the maximum amount allowed due to not being able to take vacation because of special projects or time of year. Rubow explained that the new bank would allow an employee to keep accruing vacation, up to an additional 80 hours over the maximum, but it would be put in a bank that could not be paid out if the employee leaves the City.

Tierny asked for clarification if the 80 hours could be paid out. Rubow said it would not be paid out. McElhaney said that it is very important for employees to have a work-life balance and would like to urge everyone to use vacation. Tierny said that she agrees, and her husband's company mandates that employees take one week off per year, and maybe the City needs to put something similar in the handbook.

Groat spoke about the difficulty for her staff to take time off due to reporting requirements and other ongoing projects. McElhaney and Tierny expressed concern for employees getting burned out by continually working long hours. Kilian asked Groat her opinion of what her department needs to happen in order for employees not have to work longer hours. Groat said that she felt they were getting on track but then the vacancies occurred, and the department is still in the implementation phase of software.

Further discussion took place regarding the workload and staffing in the Finance Department. Gisselman said that he would like the committee to look at staffing levels at some point to see if there are departments that need more staff to maintain service to the citizens without overworking employees, and more discussion took place regarding staffing levels and workloads of City employees, with the overall consensus being that something needs to be done so that employees are able to take vacation throughout the year and not be overworked.

Motion by Gisselman to Approve the Creation of a No Payout Vacation Leave Only Bank and Revise Employee Handbook Section 8.04 – Vacation. Second by Martens. All ayes. Motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and Possible Action to Approve Reclassifying the Assistant City Planner Position.

Rubow said that Ffrick brought this item for consideration. The Assistant City Planner position is currently vacant and a review of the job description was done. Ffrick felt that the duties of the position are more in line with the Community Services Analyst position, which is a grade lower, grade 16.

Kilian asked if this was a request to add a position. Rubow said no, that the request is to change the position from grade 15 to grade 16. Ffrick spoke to the committee, explaining that Lynch was promoted to the Economic Development Manager position and upon review of the Assistant Planner position, he explained that it does not manage anyone, is a non-exempt position, and believes it is better classified at grade 16.

Motion by Martens to Approve Reclassifying the Assistant City Planner Position
Adjournment. Gisselman questioned what the motion was. McElhaney said it was to reclassify the position from grade 15 to grade 16. Gisselman asked what position. McElhaney said Assistant City Planner. Second by Tierny. All ayes. Motion passed 5-0.

Adjournment.

Motion to adjourn by Tierney. Second by Kilian. The meeting adjourned.

Rebecca McElhaney
Human Resources Committee, Chair

Video available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSQ0oTQQB0c>