

**CUYAHOGA COUNTY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE MINUTES**

COMMITTEE NAME: HUMAN RESOURCES, APPOINTMENTS AND EQUITY

DATE: February 23, 2011

Called to Order: 10:15 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Yvonne Conwell, Chair and Michael Gallagher

MEMBERS ABSENT: Julian Rogers

Council Member Dave Greenspan also attended part of the meeting.

STAFF: Joanne Gross, Senior Policy Advisor

VISITORS: Elise Hara, Director of Human Resources; Matt Hawes, Human Resources; James Boyle, Special Assistant to the County Executive

- I. **Comment:** Council Member Dave Greenspan used this time to request that the ethics ordinance itself be noted in the personnel policy and procedures manual; the proposed ethics ordinance references the Human Resource Commission as responsible for training and enforcement of policies; the Inspector General has investigative authority and will turn findings over to the HRC for enforcement. Training should be live for new employees; the annual refresher course could be on-line.
- II. **Approval of Minutes – The minutes of February 9, 2011 were approved unanimously.**
- III. **Presentation - Ordinance re Personnel Manual** - Elise Hara, HR Director reiterated the need to distribute a single policy manual to all agencies under the executive. Simple clarifications were made for consistency with the Charter; e.g., references to SPBR are now HRC. New Director of Communications now mentioned in appropriate sections of the manual. Ms. Hara would like to be able to reference websites in the printed manual so that employees can access additional policies; e.g., entire ethics ordinance, travel and public records. Ms. Hara has confirmed that all employees have access to web-based information via kiosks. Ms. Hara also commented on the need to have additional information about criminal background, particularly concerning certain crimes.
- IV. **Committee Discussion of HR Personnel and Policies Manual**

The committee discussed issues with the ordinance itself; specifically, the ordinance notes that “the County Executive will adopt permanent policies...” and the Charter gives

that authority to the Council; another section authorizes the Human Resources Department to make changes in the manual and that too is a Council responsibility.

It was also noted that Council Member Miller wants to ensure that the manual requires departments to handle public records requests on-site with notice to the Communications Director

Discussion followed about the substantive changes requiring applicant and employee disclosure of arrests of certain crimes. Concerns were raised about the legality and fairness of requiring such a disclosure and the distinction between requiring disclosure of applicants and current employees.

Noted too was the fact that these are major substantive changes; had the manual been presented for approval in its existing format, these questions would likely not be raised

It was recommended that the Committee Chair seek some clarifying information from Ms. Hara about some of these major changes. Council should also be aware of the intersection of the ethics policy and some of the noted manual changes.

- V. **Mission Statement for Committee** – Ms. Conwell distributed a Mission statement for the Committee; asked members for input once they have had a chance to review.

VI. **Discussion - Appointments to Boards and Commissions**

Several appointments to boards and commission have been referred to the committee. Council needs to discuss and distinguish between those major boards that may require more in-person vetting and those boards and commission members who could be confirmed upon presentation of background materials and committee recommendation to Council.

Jim Boyle, Special Assistant to the County Executive was asked to address some of these issues. Mr. Boyle noted that the charter requires certain actions concerning certain boards and commissions; others that are not clear; the Commissioners sat on some boards; now need to determine who sits on those boards, who appoints and/or confirms. Mr. Boyle noted that dealing with Boards and Commissions has been a challenge; some are more active than others. The County Executive is exercising a level of scrutiny to these appointments; resumes and qualifications are being reviewed before sending them on to Council.

Mr. Boyle was asked to provide information about each of the boards and commissions, when and how many appointments are to be made. Ms. Conwell would be scheduling a meeting with Mr. Boyle to follow up.

It was noted that the individuals presented could easily be referred out of the committee today. **A motion was made, seconded and approved that Carol Dayton's appointment to the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging and Karen Butler's appointment to the HIV Regional Planning Council be recommended for approval by Council.**

Also approved was a motion recommending that the Human Resources Commission appointments be forwarded for Council approval on the condition that the per diem recommendations also be ready to move forward.

VII. Public Comment

Kathleen Palmer –an HRC appointee was in attendance, introduced herself and was welcomed by the Committee.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.