



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Personnel Committee —MINUTES

Date/Time:	Monday, July 12, 2021/ 4:00 p.m.
Location:	Meeting held remotely using Zoom
Facilitator:	Bill Perlman, Chair

Representatives Present: (one vacancy)

- Kayce Warren, Deerfield
- Bill Perlman, Regionally Elected
- Jane Peirce, Orange
- Bryan Smith, Erving

Staff Members Present:

- Linda Dunlavy, Executive Director
- Claire McGinnis, Director of Finance
- Rebekah Boyd, Admin Services Coordinator

1. Adopt 12/10/20 Personnel Committee minutes

Bill P. opened the meeting 4:00 p.m. **The motion to approve the minutes of 12/10/20 by Kayce W., and seconded by Jane P. passed unanimously by roll-call vote.**

2. Revising Personnel Policy to include Juneteenth

Linda reminded members that at the previous meeting they discussed adding the Juneteenth holiday, with Linda proposing that employees choosing to take two holidays from three options. Now, after a survey to all staff, and federal adoption of the holiday, she proposes that the committee consider adding Juneteenth as a stand-alone holiday and eliminating another, again endeavoring not to bump the number of holidays up to 14 from the current 13.

The three holidays considered for elimination were Daniel Shays, the Friday after Thanksgiving (both “floater” holidays) and Patriot’s Day. Several staff also asked about letting go of Columbus Day. Linda called the Employer’s Association of the Northeast (EANE), and learned that the October holiday will not be eliminated, but more likely, the name and focus of the holiday will change. Fifty percent (50%) of the staff elected to eliminate Patriot’s Day. Although a large number were eager to remove one of the floater holidays, so they could celebrate Patriot’s Day with family, as it typically falls during a spring break from schools, they came to understand that they would still be able to use one of their floating holidays to take that day off.

Members expressed gratitude for the survey, and the feedback from FRCOG employees.

Jane P. moved to recommend that the Council drop Patriot’s Day from the Personnel Policy’s list of FRCOG-celebrated holidays, and add Juneteenth. Kayce W. seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by roll-call vote.

Council’s first reading of the proposed policy will occur later in the week.

3. Review of Communications Manager job description and hours

Linda outlined the new Communications Position Job description. Working independently and with staff at all levels to ensure a clear and consistent message, the person hired for this role will, among other things:

- Act as the primary media contact
- Develop, implement, and maintain effective public information program
- Set brand and design standards
- Write press releases
- Oversee website and social media platform maintenance
- Create publications, such as the Council Updates and our quarterly newsletter
- Help with the website overhaul in FY22
- Provide staff briefings
- Oversee the COVID After-Action Report

Bill asked if the position will be benefitted full time, or benefitted half time, as originally proposed. Linda explained that they'd built the budget with it as a half-time position, but some on the Council felt it should be full time for an overall cost savings. Linda agrees, and plans to discuss this with the finance committee. Regarding funding the additional hours, she explained that the FY22 budget was built with two estimates that have since decreased: anticipated vaccine clinic costs, and costs for emergency radio system transitions to the state system (CoMIRS). Vaccines ended earlier than anticipated, and the CoMIRS transition is moving along far better than anticipated, making both expenses unnecessary and freeing up money in the existing budget.

Bill reminded members that the recently completed organizational assessment identified agency communications as one area that needs improvement. He expressed his hope that whoever is hired would have knowledge of western MA and strong computer skills. Jane asked about the agency's current Information Technology (IT) positions, cautioning FRCOG to stay abreast of cybercrime issues and to remain protected with strong security measures. Linda described the current relationship with North East IT and the two people in the office who make up the IT team.

In response to push back from a few vocal members at the last Council meeting regarding funding the addition of a new position, staff and members clarified that the personnel committee creates the position, the finance committee approves of the funding, and the Council votes the budget. Staff proposed that position be funded at grade 7, (\$59-80k), in line with the plumbing inspector and senior planners, all requiring a high level of technical expertise and responsibility.

Jane moved that the committee approve of the grade 7, Communications Manager position and job description. Bryan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by roll-call vote.

Bryan moved that the committee recommend to the Finance Committee that the Communications Manager position be full time. Jane seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by roll-call vote.

4. Business not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of meeting

Linda explained that the EANE provides employee salary and classification review services, and asked if the committee felt it was time to start refreshing that work. Before the pandemic, the committee and staff worked with an outside consultant to create a grading system. However, that system only allows for upward mobility when people take on new management responsibilities, but not tasks that require technical expertise. Work during the pandemic made obvious the absence of a way to compensate someone who is skilled at things other than management.

Bill agreed that a discussion was in order; otherwise, employees must become managers to get a raise, and end up not doing what they are good at, and what most benefits the agency. Bryan voiced his sense that it is important for FRCOG to keep the schedule competitive with the market. Although FRCOG experienced some recent backlash, the administration should be sure it has the capacity to take on the naysayers.

Linda will learn how EANE has done this work in the past and report her findings at the next meeting.

Kayce W. moved to adjourn and Jane P. seconded, with all voting in favor by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Documents Distributed:

- Agenda
- Minutes of the 12/10/20 meeting
- DRAFT Communications Manager Job Description briefing slide