

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Personnel Policy Review Committee
Meeting – November 6, 2014
Swanzey Police Station, 34 Eaton Road, Swanzey, NH

Present at Meeting: The meeting was called to order by Town Administrator Shane O’Keefe at 10:02 a.m. at the Swanzey Police Station. Present were Human Resources and Services Coordinator Edna Coates, Swanzey resident Michael Goldschmidt, Carpenter Home Interim Clinical Coordinator/Caregiver III Donna Allen, Town Administrator Shane O’Keefe, Department of Public Works (DPW) employee Ann Bedaw, Bookkeeper Theresa Louder and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

Absent: Chief of Police Thomas DeAngelis

Others Present:

No others were present at the meeting.

Minutes:

- Meeting minutes of October 23, 2014 were considered. **Motion** was made by Allen to approve the minutes of October 23, 2014. Discussion occurred regarding corrections that needed to be made to the minutes, and which O’Keefe noted. There was a second by Louder. All were in favor except Goldschmidt who voted “nay”. The **motion passed**.

Old Business:

Sick leave pool

There was a brief discussion regarding the sick leave pool.

Review of Current Personnel Policy

The Committee continued its review of the current Personnel Policy.

Health Insurance, Chapter Seven

Item 7.1 - O’Keefe suggested that the specific percentage in reference to the percentage of the premium the Town pays be deleted since that may change from time to time. Louder mentioned that the yearly percentage is usually included in the Board of Selectmen minutes. Bedaw noted that voters might want to know what the percentage is. O’Keefe suggested that a copy of the Personnel Policy might be posted on the website. O’Keefe explained the Board of Selectmen review health insurance options each year in the fall, and then makes a decision based on those options. Deletions were also agreed upon regarding specific insurance company names. There was a brief discussion regarding the difficulties the Bookkeeper might experience with the number of payroll weeks to calculate insurance deductions. Currently the Bookkeeper is using 48 weeks to calculate the deductions.

Item 7.2 regarding election to participate in the Town’s plan was discussed – some typos were noted for deletion.

Item 7.3 – O’Keefe suggested deleting reference to the LGC Health Trust. Louder explained the benefits of being in the health care pool.

Item 7.4 – COBRA - Discussion regarding appendices was held. Louder explained that the appendices reference forms that are provided to employees' and that they are statutory documents. There was a discussion regarding COBRA timing. Louder proposed to add a statement in this section regarding dates for first payment and succeeding payments.

Item 7.5 – This section regards elected officials and what is offered to them. No changes were made.

Item 7.6 – This section covers retired individuals who may choose to continue coverage. There was discussion regarding 7.6.1 and 7.6.2. It was decided to use "a." and "b." instead of 7.6.1 and 7.6.2 respectively. "Either a. or b. below" was agreed upon to be added to a sentence. The Committee decided to remove reference to "Chapter 7.5.2. health plan must be elected at time of retirement from service with the Town" from 7.6.2, which would become Item "c." under Item 7.6. Discussion occurred regarding retirees and retirees with spouses who are still employed and what they pay.

Item 7.7 – Payment in Lieu of Health Insurance section. Goldschmidt asked why full-time employees are required to participate through the Town. Coates said it is the law. She explained that when an employee opts out of insurance the Town is required to report that information. There was a discussion regarding flexible spending plans. Option is for money to be transferred directly into a health account – discussion occurred regarding that being a taxable event. Goldschmidt said he would research what is taxable and what is not in this regard. Louder made a comment to be added to this section about the health benefit payment being received on the third payroll week of the month. Louder also wanted a comment added regarding employees who are terminated early in the month. If termination occurs prior to the 15th of the month, the employee will not receive the health benefit payment.

Proposed new section 7.8 - Louder suggested adding a section for Flexible Spending. Discussion occurred regarding a limitation. Louder said the current maximum for Flexible Spending is \$1,300 per person. Louder offered to write up a draft for this section. Coates suggested that the New Hampshire Municipal Association documentation might provide some verbiage for Louder to consider.

Life Insurance - Chapter 8

Item 8.1 – remove reference to "LGC Health Trust" as the carrier may change over time. A discussion was held about the amount offered. This benefit goes away at termination. O'Keefe said he would do some research in order to update this section.

Short Term Disability Insurance – Chapter 9

Item 9.1 – Discussion occurred regarding the Town not providing Long Term Disability Insurance. Coates said that Short Term benefit as written in this section is generous. She said 26 weeks is a relatively long period of time. There was a discussion regarding the possibility of offering long term insurance and shorten the short term insurance days covered, asking employees to opt in and pay for the premium. O'Keefe said he would research ways to offer both long term insurance and short term insurance and be expense neutral. Goldschmidt asked about a possible municipality pool for disability insurance. Coates noted that when disability insurance kicks in is

determined by whether the cause is an illness or an accident. Goldschmidt mentioned that the incentive should be to use sick days first.

Item 9.2 – no discussion or changes noted.

Item 9.3 – no discussion or changes noted.

Item 9.4 – Louder would like to see changes in reference to the standard work week and how the benefit is calculated. Coates mentioned the Committee will present a proposal to the Board of Selectmen that all full-time employees be 40 hour per week employees. There was a discussion regarding the number of employees to be raised to 40 hours and the overall impact on payroll. There was also a discussion regarding impact on the payroll budget for overtime paid when an employee didn't work a 40 hour week and the time it took to discuss it.

Item 9.5 Louder pointed out that the last line refers to section 9.3 when it should be referring to section 9.4.

Next scheduled meeting: November 20, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. at the Police Station.

Adjournment:

Goldschmidt **moved** to adjourn the meeting, Louder seconded, and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.*** Adjournment occurred at 11:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary

Approved on November 20, 2014