

**STATE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
VIA WEBEX**

MEETING MINUTES – October 19, 2023

Members Present:

Members present on the Webex for the meeting were: Commissioner Dekhasta Becton Rozier, Chair, and Commissioner Andrea Allard, Commissioner Ross Beamon, Commissioner Doug Boyette, Commissioner April Page, Commissioner Philip Strach, Commissioner Tye Vaught, and Commissioner Tracy Webb.

Other Attendees

Other attendees present: Barbara Gibson, Director, Glenda Farrell, Chief Deputy, and Twanetta Lytle Alston, Deputy Director, Office of State Human Resources; Anna Perkinson, Assistant General Counsel and Lockhart Taylor, Director of Government Relations, Legal, Commission and Policy Division, Office of State Human Resources; Denise Mazza, State Human Resources Commission Administrator, Office of State Human Resources; Ronnie Condrey and Peggy Oliver, retired, State Human Resources Commission; Nancy Astrike, Carol Battle, Susan Beasley, Felicia Bridges, Andrea Clinkscales, Lorence Crossett, Chris Drew, Linda Forsberg, Scarlett Gardner, Creshaye Graham, Clara Hazzard, Jennifer Harrison, Christine Hofer, Stephanie McFadden, Devon McGarvey, Davita Morant, Susan Reeves, Deyla Tharrington and Kimberly Whitaker, of the Office of State Human Resources; Kieta Cannon, HR Director, NC Auditor's Office; Pam Hess, HR Director, Cashaunda Holman, Amy Summerlin, and Leigh Ann Woodside, NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; Dr. Donnell Adams, HR Director, Tylisa Finley, Vibha Goel, Lauren Scott, and Michael Shumsky, NC Department of Administration; Andrea Porterfield, HR Director, and Melody Isaak, Deputy HR Director, NC Commerce; Magnolia Lugo, HR Director, NC Community Colleges; Glenda Ellerbee, HR Director, Office of State Controller; Shannon Myers, NC Department of Environmental Quality; Karen Gerald, HR Director, Andrea DeSantis, and Shannon Boatwright, NC Department of Health and Human Services; Keia C. Parker and Vanessa Voight, NC Department of Information Technology; Jerry Daniels, HR Director, NC Department of Insurance; Kristen Bierline, HR Director, Francis Beckman, and Tina Wong, NC Department of Justice; J Renathe Cotton, HR Director, Stacey Thompson, and Beth Benson, NC Department of Labor; Meredith Weatherman McBrayer, N.C. Department of Public Safety; Janet Devane, HR Director, NC Department of Public Instruction; Acting HR Director, Jennifer Christeson, Mike DeLuca, Tricia Guzman, Dan Hill, NC Department of Revenue; Patricia Garcia, HR Director, Office of State Budget & Management; Ty Holmes, NC SBI; Ebony Pittman, NC Department of Transportation; Debra Thomas, HR Director, Josephine Stith, Erin Slaughter, and Marianna Whitt, NC Office of the Treasurer; and Hollie Thornton, HR Director, NC Wildlife.

Opening

The Commission convened its open meeting at 9:01 a.m. via Webex Teleconference.

The State Human Resources Commission (SHRC) last convened on September 21, 2023 for a special meeting. Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute Chapter 138A and the North Carolina Ethics Act, Chair Rozier asked all Commissioners if there were any conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest with respect to any matters coming before the Commission. No conflicts were presented.

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There was one edit requested by Director Gibson, switching the order of consent agenda items 2 and 3 in the current draft agenda for the October 19, 2023 meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Chair presented the draft minutes for the August 7, 2023 and September 21, 2023 State Human Resources Commission meetings.

There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for a motion to recommend approval of these minutes as provided.

Motion: Commissioner Beamon made a motion to recommend approval of the draft minutes for the August 7, 2023 and September 21, 2023 State Human Resources Commission meetings.

Second: Commissioner Page seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval of the draft minutes for the August 7, 2023 and September 21, 2023 State Human Resources Commission meetings as provided.

Motion carried.

Exceptions Granted under 25 NCAC 01A .0104 Variances

Deputy Director Twanetta Lytle Alston reported that there had been one new exception granted by Director Gibson under 25 NCAC 01A .0104 since the August 7, 2023 State Human Resources Meeting. OSHR approved the one-time exceptions for the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) request to pay overtime to certain FLSA exempt staff, in specific job classifications in three critical service areas: the Division of Health Service Regulation (HSR), the Office of Chief Medical Examiner (OCME), and the NC Office of Vital Records (NCVOR). Each office is currently backlogged, impacting even the most basic services for many North Carolinians across the state due to very high vacancy and turnover rates. The identified staff are responsible for services related to issuing and amending vital records including birth and death certificates, determining the cause and manner of death in medical examiner cases, and conducting inspections and complaint investigations in NC's licensed healthcare settings. DHHS may also provide a one-time payout, of current compensatory leave, at a straight-time rate not to exceed \$15,000 for the same employees. These exceptions apply only during the time period September 2023 to June 2024, unless extended by OSHR.

State Human Resources Director's Report

Director Barbara Gibson greeted the Commissioners and everybody attending, and introduced the SHRC's newest commissioner, Starla Tanner - a highly accomplished professional with 27 years of experience in the fields of government relations, policy and operations strategy. She currently serves as the manager of intergovernmental affairs for Mecklenburg County government.

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Director Gibson noted that Team OSHR had been busy since the Commission last met and offered the following highlights of some of the most prominent activities.

The state's Budget became law on October 3rd, impacting agencies in multiple areas. They include:

1. State employees who received a 4 percent legislative Increase this year, which will be retroactive to July 1 of this year and will be represented in the October paychecks and a 3% legislative increase will also be provided next year.
2. The labor market adjustment reserve was funded again this year. Agencies will receive funding in the amount of a 1.5 percent to use for up to 25 percent of their employees.
3. The Budget includes \$5.6M which will enable OSHR to move forward with the planning and design of a new Human Capital Management Solution. This is great news since the state critically needs a Human Capital Management System capable of providing agencies with comprehensive, real-time data.

Director Gibson shared updates over the last year and a half on the work that OSHR had been doing to assess needed enhancements and work closely with agencies to understand their challenges with the current system. All this preparation will help OSHR tremendously to plan and design the Human Capital Management System. The Commission will be updated on this progress in the months ahead.

Director Gibson then mentioned the federal government shutdown that was evaded with a temporary measure on October 1. This measure allowed the government to fund projects at last year's levels for 45 days, while a permanent Budget is discussed. In anticipation of the potential October 1 shutdown, the team at OSHR created and shared resources with agencies that were designed to help HR Professionals and federally funded employees navigate their benefits, pay and time in the case of a government shutdown. OSHR will continue to monitor the situation closely with OSBM and keep agencies informed and remain ready to offer support.

Director Gibson gave a shout-out to the OSHR Talent Acquisition team and other OSHR employees who put their heart and soul into hosting an exceptionally well-received first-ever State of North Carolina Career Expo at the McKimmons Center near downtown Raleigh. She shared her own experiences walking around the event noting a full parking lot with cars also parked in the grass and people walking to the event from nearby shopping centers. The event was packed full of job seekers talking to representatives from every agency and many of the UNC institutions. Everyone from college students looking for their first job to retirees looking for temporary employment came out to join OSHR. Several human resources directors approached Director Gibson and expressed sincere appreciation for the work the Talent Acquisition team did in creating this event. The Department of Adult Correction, an agency with one of the highest vacancy rates in our state government, held on-site interviews and made conditional offers for some of their hardest positions to fill - parole and correctional officers. Director Gibson stated she was incredible proud of the team, was excited by the stacks of resumes received and thanked the state employees from other agencies that assisted OSHR in the event.

Director Gibson then spoke about the Oliver-Condrey Award and OSHR making this award official as a policy in the decades ahead to recognize other long-term human relation employees.

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She closed her remarks noting that the week before she gave the welcome remarks for the 2023 Women in North Carolina Public Service Leadership Summit. The theme of the summit was Owing Your Voice, and she shared a few personal stories in her presentation about how important it is to advocate for yourself in the workplace. Director Gibson was proud to say that the entire OSHR team advocates for fellow state employees every day. In the most recent Budget, the OSHR team worked closely with agency leaders and legislators to provide resources containing solid HR data-driven reasons to support increases for state employees. OSHR will continue its work to drive success in human resources efforts throughout the state, as seen in several changes submitted for the Commission's approval in various policies with topics ranging from improving the ways that we utilize the potential of state government applicants to requests for additional continuous posting authority.

Proposal to Move December 14, 2023 State Human Resources Meeting to November 30, 2023

SHRC Administrator Denise Mazza presented the proposal to reschedule the current December 14, 2023 SHRC meeting to Thursday, November 30, 2023 to allow temporary rule 25 NCAC 01E .1903 "Eligibility for Paid Parental Leave" proposed in the October 19, 2023 agenda to be timely processed through temporary rulemaking – allowing review and approval by the SHRC and Governor after public hearing and public comment, and submitting it to the Rules Review Commission for their December 14, 2023 meeting.

There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for the Commission to recommend approval of the proposal to move the currently scheduled December 14, 2023 SHRC Meeting to November 30, 2023 for the reason presented.

Motion: Commissioner Allard so moved.

Second: Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval of the proposal to move the currently scheduled December 14, 2023 SHRC Meeting to November 30, 2023 for the reason presented.

Motion carried.

Proposed Meeting Dates for 2024

SHRC Administrator Denise Mazza presented the proposed 2024 SHRC meeting schedule the State Human Resources Commission Meetings. Meetings will be held on the third Thursday of the designated month, except December which would be the second Thursday of that month. Those dates are as follows:

February 15

April 18

July 18

October 17

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December 12

There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for the Commission to recommend approval of the proposed SHRC meeting 2024 schedule.

Motion: Commissioner Webb so moved.

Second: Commissioner Vaught seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval of the proposal 2024 SHRC meeting schedule for the State Human Resources Commission Meetings f as presented.

Motion carried.

Changes to N.C.G.S. § 126 and Other State HR Laws

Director of Government Relations Lockhart Taylor presented several significant legislative changes to Chapter 126 of the General Statutes contained in the Budget bill that went into effect on October 3rd. They include the following:

- In March the OSHR Agency bill, House Bill 223, was introduced with the hopes of providing agencies with additional assistance in recruiting and retaining employees. Although the bill passed the House of Representatives unanimously, the Senate failed to move on the bill even though we could not find any opposition to any of its provisions.
- Fortunately, the Budget Conferees included two important provisions that OSHR requested in the bill. Section 39.3(a)(1) of the Budget Act, which allows applicants the option of having their application considered for future job postings at the same agency and at other agencies. OSHR referred to this provision as pooled hiring. Pooled hiring authorized by this policy does not override the posting requirement, since the bill provision refers to future job postings. But if an applicant selects the option of having their application considered in this way, one application could be placed in the pool of applicants for other posted jobs.
- The other provision that was included in the Budget is in Section 39.3(b) that includes a provision authorizing agencies to make job offers that are contingent upon satisfactory reference checks and, if required, satisfactory background checks. Although OSHR is not aware of any contingent job offers that were made at the Career Expo on October 4, OSHR was told the Department of Adult Correction conducted 32 onsite interviews with attendees of the event.
- One of the most significant provisions contained in the Budget related to the State Human Resources Act is also contained in Section 39.3. This provision established a 2-year Pilot Program for Fiscal Years 2023-2025 that grants agencies total authority in setting salaries and classifications without approval from OSHR or the Commission. The provision gives agencies the ability to do 2 things: First, it allows agencies to classify or reclassify their positions as long as the employee meets the minimum requirements of the classification. It also allows agencies to set salaries for their employees within the salary ranges for the respective position classification. Although agencies are granted the ability to set salaries and classifications for their employees, they still must

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stay within the ranges and classifications set by the Commission. Cabinet Agencies may have a few guardrails on this flexibility, but that is currently under review.

As members who have been serving on this Board for several years are aware, OSHR and the Commission have expanded Agency authority over Classification and Compensation actions. In March 2023, OSHR delegated salary and classification authority to agencies except in the highest classification levels. That authority allowed agencies to make decisions independent of OSHR in about 97% of all HR actions. None of the provisions of the pilot program change the authority or responsibility of OSHR to support agencies to ensure their decisions are within the guidelines established by this Commission.

- The last provision is contained in Section 29A.2.(a) of the Budget. This section amends the language of N.C.G.S. § 126-6.3 regarding Temporary Solutions. The language in the Budget is language that was introduced in Senate Bill 607 that passed the Senate in April by a vote of 30-18, but was not acted on by the House. The Budget mandated the following:
 - 1) Allows the Director of OSHR to grant temporary exceptions extending the 11-month maximum length of temporary employment to no more than 22 months before the temporary employee must take a mandatory 31-day separation from their temporary assignment.
 - 2) Requires Temporary Solutions to separate any temporary employees from BEACON who are employed for more than 11 consecutive months unless an exception applies. The separation must take place no more than 2 weeks following the 11- or 22-month period.
 - 3) Requires OSHR to file quarterly reports to the General Assembly identifying any temporary employees that exceeded the 11- or 22-month period without a break in service.
 - 4) Prevents agencies from utilizing the services of Temporary Solutions if the agency has an outstanding account balance over 90 days that exceeds \$200,000.

Each of these provisions had an effective date of the Budget which was October 3, 2023.

Business Session Public Comment

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Benefits & Awards: Oliver-Condrey Award Policy

Health/Wellness, Recognition and Awards Manager Carol Battle presented the new Oliver-Condrey Award Policy. OSHR proposed formalizing the award that has been informally provided in the past to employees who have completed more than 40 years of outstanding state service in Human Resources roles. This award has been given one time in the past to Peggy Oliver by former OSHR Director Ron Penny. Ms. Oliver retired after more than four decades of serving state agencies in Human Resources. Director Penny called this informal recognition the "Oliver Award." Recently, OSHR employee Ronnie Condrey retired after more than 40 years of service in Human Resources to state agencies and was presented with this award.

Human Resources employees serve an essential role in supporting all parts of state government. This is especially true when employees serve state agencies in human resources for many years and build

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incomparable institutional knowledge through dedicated service. The recognition program under this policy is designed to acknowledge and express appreciation for outstanding Human Resources contributions in state government for more than forty years. In light of the service of Peggy Oliver and Ronnie Condrey, OSHR proposed that the award be formalized and named the “Oliver-Condrey Award.”

Commissioner Starla Tanner commented that she met Ronnie Condrey twenty-six years prior, while working for Commissioner Jim Long at the Department of Insurance, where he was the Human Resources Director. Commissioner Tanner noted how helpful Condrey had been to her professionally and that she was honored to be on the Commission at the time of this award to him.

Commissioner Tracy Webb brought to the Chair’s attention that HR Director Deborah Thomas had put a question in the Chat if this award was for Cabinet and Council of State employees since it reads only as executive? Director Gibson answered that the award is meant for any outstanding human relations employee in the executive branch which does include Council of State.

There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for the Commission to recommend approval of the New Oliver-Condrey Award Policy as presented.

Motion: Commissioner Tanner so moved.

Second: Commissioner Page seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval of the New Oliver-Condrey Award Policy as presented.

Motion carried.

Diversity and Workforce Services: Immigration and Employment of Foreign Nationals Policy Renamed Form I-9 and Employment Eligibility Verification Policy

Division Director for Diversity and Workforce Services Nancy Astrike presented revisions to the Immigration and Employment of Foreign Nationals Policy. She noted first that the title of the Policy had been changed to Form I-9 and Employment Eligibility Verification Policy to more accurately identify what the policy is addressing. The updates to the controlling federal Immigration Reform and Control Act states that the employer must hire only United States citizens or aliens who are authorized to work in the United States. Accordingly, all North Carolina State agencies, departments, institutions, community colleges, and local education agencies must verify, in accordance with the E-Verify Program after hiring the individual, each individual’s legal status or authorization to work in the United States.

Astrike pointed out that the three areas in the policy with the most significant changes were in the advisory note on page 1, Section 2 and Section 6. These changes update the policy to be consistent with changes to the federal Form I-9 and to include reference to the new remote verification option allowed by the Department of Homeland Security. The updates also include information about the requirements for electronic storage of Form I-9s and associated documents.

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There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for the Commission to recommend approval of the Form I-9 and Employment Eligibility Verification Policy, as renamed and revised.

Motion: Commissioner Vaught so moved.

Second: Commissioner Webb seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval of the Form I-9 and Employment Eligibility Verification Policy, as renamed and revised.

Motion carried.

Talent Acquisition: Recruitment & Posting of Vacancies Policy

Assistant General Counsel Anna Perkinson presented the revisions to the Recruitment & Posting of Vacancies Policy. Perkinson noted she was presenting on behalf of Manager Kristen Siemek who was not in attendance. Revisions were proposed to update the policy in accordance with the 2023 Appropriations Act and included the sharing of applications within the agency, at the option of the applicant, and a reference to the Pilot Program authorized by the 2023 Appropriations Act.

Changes to this policy include:

- Where a new posting is not required, references to trainee status and completion of apprenticeship programs by trainees. The Administrative Code identifies that a person entering into an apprenticeship program shall receive both a regular training appointment and, on successful completion of an apprenticeship program, receive a permanent appointment.
- Apprenticeships are not the only kind of training progression as noted in the footnote added to Section 8 and further discussed in the Appointment Types and Pay Administration Policies.
- Added Section 11 entitled "Intra-Agency Applications Sharing Pilot Program," states that agencies may offer an option to applicants to have their application considered for other positions posted within the agency that are within the same or comparable classification for which the applicant applied and was qualified. OSHR plans to provide further guidance on this provision no later than January, 2024. That change was made due to the addition in the 2023 Appropriations Act. Section 39.3.(a).(1) of the 2023 Appropriate Act, NC Session Law, 2023-134 to the Sources of Authority.

There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for the Commission to recommend approval of the Recruitment & Posting of Vacancies Policy as revised.

Motion: Commissioner Beamon so moved.

Second: Commissioner Page seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval of the Recruitment & Posting of Vacancies Policy as revised.

Motion carried.

Talent Acquisitions: Selection of Applicants/Employment Offers/Applicant Reference Checks Policies

Assistant General Counsel Anna Perkinson presented revisions to the Selection of Applicants, Employment Offers, and Applicant Reference Checks Policies as a result of the changes made to the Form I-9 and Employment Eligibility Verification Policy and Recruitment & Posting of Vacancies Policy.

1. Employment Offers Policy

This policy outlines internal procedures that must be followed by state agencies and universities prior to making an employment offer, including following posting and screening procedures and obtaining funding and salary approval prior to the offer.

Updated the policy by deleting language that referenced policies and procedures which are no longer in place. Added a section on Accelerated Hiring and Contingent Job Offers, consistent with the 2023 Appropriations Act.

2. Selection of Applicants Policy

All agencies shall select from the pool of the most qualified persons to fill vacant positions. Employment shall be offered based upon the job-related qualifications of applicants for employment using fair and valid selection criteria and not on political affiliation or political influence. Nepotism is not permitted. This policy sets out procedures for identification of the pool of the most qualified applicants and selection of the person for the position.

Updated the policy by deleting language that referenced policies and procedures no longer in place. Added a section on Accelerated Hiring and Contingent Offers, consistent with the 2023 Appropriations Act.

3. Applicant Reference Check Policy

To provide consistent guidelines for required reference checks, employment verification and background checks (as applicable) of a selected applicant during the hiring process.

Updated the policy to reflect that contingent offers may be made to the selected applicant prior to the completion of reference checks. See Summary Sheet for detailed information on changes to policy.

Commissioner Ross Beamon asked if, based on the statement in the Selection of Applicant Policy that employment is offered on job related qualifications and not political affiliation and political influence, had political affiliation become an issue in the hiring process and if so how if that knowledge should not be known or asked, and how that language had come about being inputted into this policy.

Perkinson noted that asking political affiliation was not allowed by State law or code.

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Commissioner Andrea Allard offered that during the legislative session there was a Bill put forward that prohibited asking personal questions such as political affiliation during the interviewing process.

Perkinson stated that the revisions being offered at this meeting did not include to that statement and that this statement had been in this Policy for some time.

Director Gibson confirmed that the statement had been in this policy for some time and was probably meant as a reminder that it should not be considered in the hiring process.

There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for the Commission to recommend approval of the Employment Offers, Selection of Applicants, and Applicant Reference Check Policies as revised.

Motion: Commissioner Tanner so moved.

Second: Commissioner Page seconded the motion.

Commissioner Tanner brought to the Commission's attention a comment in the chat asking if this was more about having to hire someone because of outside pressures and not so much about the applicant's political status. There were no comments in reply.

Commission Administrator Mazza reaffirmed that this vote was to recommend approval of all three policies - Employment Offers, Selection of Applicants, and Applicant Reference Check Policies - as revised.

Commissioner Tanner agreed that was her motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval of the Employment Offers, Selection of Applicants, and Applicant Reference Check Policies as revised.

Motion carried.

Total Rewards/Classification and Compensation: Revised Classification Specifications Revision to 51 existing class specifications for the Statewide Compensation Plan.

Classification and Compensation Manager Felicia Bridges presented 51 classification specifications listed below and revised to align with EO278 "Recognizing the Value of Experience in State Government Hiring." Revision of existing classifications focusing on whether experience can substitute for education, mindful of Executive Order 278.

Corrections Job Family

- Chief Probation and Parole Officer
- Juvenile Court Counselor Supervisor
- Juvenile Court Counselor

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Engineering Job Family

- Architect I

Finance and Business Job Family

- Accountant II
- Banking Manager II
- Budget Analyst II
- Business Director
- Business Officer I
- Business Officer II
- Business Services Coordinator I
- Banking Executive

Human Services Job Family

- Rehabilitation Program Manager II
- Residential Life Director
- Residential Life Trainer

Information Technology Job Family

- Applications Systems Analyst I
- Applications Systems Analyst II
- Applications Systems Manager II
- Applications Systems Specialist
- Database Administrator II
- Information Technology Architect
- Information Technology Business Relationship Specialist
- IT Business Systems Analyst I
- IT Business Systems Analyst II
- IT Enterprise Planning Analyst
- IT Project Program Portfolio Director
- IT Project Program Portfolio Manager
- IT Strategic Sourcing Specialist
- Network Manager I
- Network Manager II
- Operations Manager
- State HRIS Analyst I
- State HRIS Analyst II
- State HRIS Analyst III
- State HRIS Manager
- Web Design Developer

Institutional Services

- Food Services Director II

Medical and Health Job Family

- Administrative Dietitian Supervisor
- Clinical Dietitian
- Clinical Dietitian Supervisor
- Dental Director

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- Dental Supervisor
- Deputy Chief Medical Examiner
- Nutrition Program Consultant
- Nutrition Program Director
- Nutrition Program Supervisor
- Nutritionist
- State Health Director

Natural, Historical, Cultural Resources Job Family

- Archaeologist Supervisor

Safety and Inspection Job Family

- OSHA Safety Officer I
- Pesticide Inspector II

The revisions presented have several possible changes as set out in the agenda item documentation.

One classification, Residential Life Director, added the statement “or equivalent combination of education and experience” like OSHR had added to a number of classification specification at the last SHRC meeting . The remaining classification revisions involve revising the class concepts, knowledge, skills, and abilities and revising the minimum education and experience in order to clarify and improve the consistency in the language used to facilitate recruitment as directed in the Executive Order.

The OSHR class and team also identified 14 specifications which included an equivalency statement in error. These classifications require a degree because licensing or certification requirements include a specific degree. In these jobs in the Correctional, Institutional Support Services and Medical Health Job Families, the equivalency statements no longer applied and OSHR requested it be removed. These changes help improve the clarity in class concepts and help provide consistent knowledge, skills and ability levels.

Bridges requested the proposed changes to these class specifications be approved by the Commission.

Commissioner Tye Vaught asked if when removing the equivalency statements and supplementing experience for a degree or certification, is there still in the posting itself a specific equivalency to the position. As an example he offered if a position calls for a bachelor's degree and 3 years experience, as opposed to a masters, can education be used in lieu of experience or is it tailored to each request?

Bridges responded yes. That additional education would not penalize the applicant. The documentation provided indicated the legal required degree and specific code that requires degrees or minimum education in those cases. Bridges then noted that there was also a question regarding the juvenile court council and juvenile court counselor supervisor. Those classifications legally require a bachelor's degree.

Commissioner Vaught confirmed that answered his question, noting that while in some cases experience cannot be submitted by degrees, in others it can.

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Bridges responded to an additional question from Meredith Weatherman from the Department of Adult Corrections, that when the equivalency statement is removed, can the applicant with a unrelated bachelor's degree still be considered. Weatherman stated that currently the Department of Adult Corrections is using the equivalency statement to qualify applicants who have an unrelated bachelor's degree.

Bridges suggested that this current presentation move forward as provided and that Weatherman submit a request to consider unrelated degrees for this job classification so OSHR can investigate and process the request accordingly.

There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for the Commission to recommend approval of the 51 Classification Specifications as revised.

Motion: Commissioner Beamon so moved.

Second: Commissioner Page seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval of the 51 Classification Specifications as revised.

Motion carried.

Total Rewards/Classification and Compensation: 3 New and 6 Revised Classification Specifications

Classification and Compensation Manager Felicia Bridges presented 3 new classifications and 6 revised classification listed below based on agency requests

Finance and Business Management Job Family

- Agency Chief Financial Officer I - New
- Agency Chief Financial Officer II - New
- Agency Chief Financial Officer III - New
- Agency Chief Financial Officer IV

Law Enforcement and Public Safety Job Family

- ALE Assistant Special Agent in Charge
- ALE Special Agent in Charge

Medical and Health Job Family

- Medical Laboratory Technologist I

Program Management Job Family

- Veterans Service Officer
- Veterans Service Office Manager

For the Finance and Business Management Family, based on requests from several agencies, OSHR created three new classifications - Agency Chief Financial Officer I, II, and III - and one existing classification - Chief Financial Officer classification is being modified and re-titled as Agency Chief Financial Officer IV.

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On behalf of the Department of Public Safety, OSHR recommended revisions to two agency specific classifications in the Law Enforcement and Public Safety job family. The recommended changes are substantive and include changes to the minimum education and experience requirements to align with current recruitment requirements, practices, and internal promotional policy which requires ALE experience specifically.

On behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), OSHR Classification and Compensation recommended changes to the Medical Laboratory Technologist I classification's minimum education and experience to align it with the entry level work performed which has created recruitment challenges for this job class.

Lastly, on behalf of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, OSHR Classification and Compensation presented changes to two classifications, Veterans Services Officer and Veterans Services Office Manager I. The agency requested removal of the necessary special requirement: "Must be an honorably discharged veteran who served on active duty in the armed forces during the period specified in Section 101, Title 38, U.S. C., and as required for membership in certain veterans' organizations. This requirement authorizes Veterans Service Officer employees to examine the Veteran Military files which are classified confidential and do not imply knowledge and skills needed for the performance of work. Must be accredited with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, NC Division of Veterans Affairs within six months of hire." It is the agency's position that because civilian workers occupy this same position in the federal Veterans Administration, this classification at the state level should not require the employee to be a veteran.

Commissioner Andrea Allard requested a proposed amendment, at the request of NC DMVA Chief Secretary Brian Pierce, to include in the proposed Education and Experience Requirements a statement that previous experience as an accredited veterans service officer be added to the Veteran Service Officer Manager I classification.

Bridges clarified the position was the Veteran Service Officer Manager I classification and asked if that statement should be associated with the four years of experience in that classification.

Commissioner Allard stated that the request was not time limited but just previous experience as an accredited veteran service officer.

Bridges stated that normally that would be structured to say "four years of experience in veterans' service work including experience as an accredited veterans service officer."

Commissioner Allard confirmed that would meet the request.

Bridges stated OSHR was willing to accept that proposed revision.

There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for the Commission to recommend approval of the 3 new and 6 revised Classification Specifications including the revision for the Veterans Service Officer Manager I as presented.

Motion: Commissioner Allard so moved.

Second: Commissioner Vaught seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission except for Commissioner Webb recommended approval of the 3 new and 6 revised Classification Specifications including the revision for the Veterans Service Officer Manager I as presented .

Motion carried.

Talent Acquisitions: Request for Continuous Postings for 2 Requests: Department of Administration – Architect II and State Treasurer Office – Accountant III

State HR Consultant III – Lead Talent Acquisition Consultant Clara Hazzard, MA, presented the requested continuous postings from the Department of Administration and the State Treasurer’s Office.

Section 126-14.3 of the General Statutes states that the Commission shall require “that a closing date shall be posted for each job opening, unless an exception for critical classifications has been approved by the State Human Resources Commission.” When the Commission approves continuous posting for positions at an agency, the agency may begin filling positions as soon as they become vacant (rather than posting each position number separately for five business days), and applicants need not apply to multiple postings to be considered for each position.

Hazzard, on behalf of these agencies, stated that a continuous posting would allow these agencies to leave the posting open to screen and interview the applicants as they apply to fill critical positions as they become vacant. This way, each vacant job would not have to be posted separately and closed before the applicant can be screened and interviewed and applicants do not have to apply and interview for multiple postings. It would allow agencies to screen applications quickly and efficiently.

Hazzard presented the following requests:

- Department of Administration – Architect II for the State Construction Office. Due to retirement rates and education and experience requirements, there had been a 50% turnover rate for this position.
- State Treasurer Office – Accountant III. In the past few years, filling these positions in the State and Local Government Division have been difficult. Qualified candidates must be highly skilled analysts who have experience in governmental auditing.

Commissioner Vaught, noting that given the critical nature of these positions and the screening time being the most critical time of this process, asked if this process was monitored? i.e. when will applications be screened? Is there some requirements for agencies to make sure they are being continuously screened?

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Hazzard stated that there was nothing in writing as to how often screening takes place when there is a continuous posting and that each agency handles that in-house.

Commissioner Vaught stated that the benefit of continuous posting is lost if the screening is not timely taking place.

Director Gibson thanked Commissioner Vaught for his comment and stated it would be taken under advisement.

There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for the Commission to recommend approval of the Continuous Postings for Two Agencies request: Department of Administration – Architect II and State Treasurer Office – Accountant III.

Motion: Commissioner Webb so moved.

Second: Commissioner Vaught seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval of the Continuous Postings for Two Agencies request: Department of Administration – Architect II and State Treasurer Office – Accountant III.

Motion carried.

Total Rewards/Salary Administration: Temporary Rules 25 NCAC 01E .1903 Eligibility for Paid Parental Leave

SHRC Administrator Denise Mazza presented the new temporary rule for 25 NCAC 01E .1903 Eligibility for Paid Parental Leave. N.C.G.S. § 126-8.6, became effective on July 1, 2023. OSHR proposed and submitted temporary rules as directed by the legislature. Those temporary rules were adopted on August 25, 2023. Then, Section 7.83(a) of the 2023 Appropriations Act (N.C. Sess. Law 2023-134) included new language requiring the Commission to adopt rules clarifying the requirement that employees have worked for the previous 12-month period or at least 1,040 hours to be eligible to receive paid parental leave. The revised temporary rule proposed at this meeting follows the new statute.

The revised temporary rule provides that the 12-month or 1,040-hour limits are counted aggregating employment at “(A) the State of North Carolina agencies, departments, and institutions, including The University of North Carolina; (B) public school units that provide paid parental leave in accordance with G.S. 126-8.6; and (C) community college institutions of the State of North Carolina.” The new language specifies that the 12-month limit is counted aggregating employment at any of these employers.

There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for the Commission to recommend approval of beginning the Temporary Rulemaking Process for 25 NCAC .1903, Entitled “Eligibility for Paid Parental Leave,” and the presentation of this rule to OAH for publication.

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Motion: Commissioner Tanner so moved.

Second: Commissioner Page seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval of beginning the Temporary Rulemaking Process for 25 NCAC .1903, Entitled "Eligibility for Paid Parental Leave," and the presentation of this rule to OAH for publication.

Motion carried.

Total Rewards/Salary Administration: Paid Parental Leave Policy

Time and Leave Consultant Stephanie McFadden presented the revisions to the Paid Parental Leave Policy as a result of the ratified Appropriations Act on October 3, 2023.

The policy provides paid parental leave to state agency employees as required by new N.C.G.S. § 126-8.6. Paid parental leave is designed to promote families' physical and mental health, increase worker retention, and improve worker productivity and morale.

The Appropriations Act charges the SHRC to adopt a policy that provides a period of minimum service for an employee to become eligible for Paid Parental Leave. The revisions indicate that to be eligible for Paid Parental Leave, qualified employees must have worked for the previous twelve months and at least 1040 hours. The minimum period of service may be met aggregating employment at any of the following entities:

- State agencies, departments, and institutions, including The University of North Carolina
- Public school units that provide paid parental leave in accordance with G.S. 126-8.6; and
- Community College institutions of the State of North Carolina.

These changes will help provide clarity when employees transfer between State entities.

There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for the Commission to recommend approval of the Paid Parental Leave Policy as revised to align with the requirements of the 2023 Appropriations Act.

Motion: Commissioner Webb so moved.

Second: Commissioner Tanner seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission, except for Commissioner Strach who had to leave the meeting for business purposes, recommended approval of the Paid Parental Leave Policy as revised.

Motion carried.

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Adjournment

There being no further discussion or questions, Chair Rozier called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Commissioner Tanner so moved.

Second: Commissioner Page seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission, except for Commissioner Strach who had to leave the meeting for business purposes, agreed to adjourn the October 19, 2023 SHRC meeting.

Motion carried.

The Commission adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Executive Session

The State Human Resources Commission did not have an executive session at its October 19, 2023 meeting.

Minutes submitted by:

Denise H. Mazza, State Human Resources Commission Administrator