

**STATE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
VIA WEBEX DUE TO COVID-19 STATE OF EMERGENCY**

MEETING MINUTES – October 1, 2020

Members Present:

Members present on the Webex for the meeting were: Commissioner-Chair Dekhasta Becton Rozier, Commissioner Ross Beamon, Commissioner Meredith Benjamin, Commissioner Douglas Boyette, Commissioner John Eller, Commissioner Martin Falls, Commissioner April Page, and Commissioner Phillip Strach.

Other Attendees

Other attendees present were: Barbara Gibson, Director, Glenda Farrell, Chief Deputy, and Twanetta Lytle Alston, Deputy Director, Office of State Human Resources; Lars Nance and Christine Ryan, Legal Division, Office of State Human Resources; Denise Mazza, State Human Resources Commission Administrator, Office of State Human Resources; Nancy Astrike, Carol Battle, Andrea Clinkscales, Dominick D’Erasmus, Joel Jordan, Jill Lucas, John Massey, Marcia Nelson, Paige Pavlik, and Kristin Siemek, of the Office of State Human Resources; Margaret Reeder, HR Director of the North Carolina Secretary of State, Jennifer Christeson, Agency HR Consultant of the NC Department of Public Safety, and Flint Benson, Lobbyist for the State Employees Association of NC.

Opening

The Commission convened its open meeting at 9:01 a.m. via Webex Teleconference due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency.

The State Human Resources Commission (SHRC) last convened on August 6, 2020. Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute Chapter 138A and the North Carolina Ethics Act, Chair Dekhasta Becton 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. There were no conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest reported.

There were no additions or corrections to the agenda for the October 1, 2020 meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Approval of the minutes for the August 6, 2020 State Human Resources Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Benjamin offered a typographical correction at the end of Director Gibson’s Director’s Report, to state that unfortunately, Commissioner Benjamin would be unfortunately resigning her position due to a recent workplace reorganization that made her ineligible, not eligible, to continue to serve.

Minutes of the October 1, 2020 State Human Resources Commission Meeting

Motion: Commissioner Eller made a motion to recommend approval of the August 6, 2020 meeting minutes with the proposed correction.

Second: Commissioner Benjamin seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval of the August 6, 2020 minutes with the proposed correction.

Motion carried.

Twanetta Lytle Alston – Exceptions Granted under 25 NCAC 01A .0104 Variances

Deputy Director Twanetta Lytle Alston presented an overview of new exceptions granted by Director Gibson under 25 NCAC 01A .0104 due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency since the August 6, 2020 State Human Resources Meeting. State of Emergency Leave Provision #6 was implemented on August 1, 2020 and State employees were given the ability to use up to 80 hours of expanded Community Service Leave to work with non-profit organizations on related COVID-19 activities. The 80 hours extension ends December 31, 2020.

Additionally, effective August 17th, OSHR extended the Community Service Leave Literacy, Tutoring and Mentoring Policy to allow the hours to vary as long as they do not exceed the 36 hours allotted. It is available to all employees earning leave even though they have used some or all of their regular 24 hours of Community Service Leave for the calendar year. Other clarifications included noting that tutoring or mentoring sessions may be carried out in person or in a virtual setting, changing the definition of “at-risk” in the policy to those who require temporary or on-going support to succeed academically, expanding the definition of “school” to acknowledge the current academic settings, and resetting the current balances for eligible employees.

Finally, to address the needs of many County Boards struggling to recruit an adequate number of poll workers due to the pandemic, a one-time variance to Community Service Leave was authorized to allow up to three days (24 hours) of paid leave for state employees to volunteer as election workers as part of the up to 80 hours of expanded CSL currently available to state employees who volunteer with nonprofits that provide direct services to constituents experiencing COVID-19 impacts. Also, employees may receive pay from the County Board of Elections and are expected to complete a Secondary Employment Form.

Chair Dekhasta Becton Rozier - 2021 Proposed Calendar of SHRC Commission Meetings

Chair Dekhasta Becton Rozier presented the proposed 2021 meeting dates for the SHRC:

- February 4, 2021
- April 1, 2021
- June 3, 2021

August 5, 2021
October 7, 2021
December 2, 2021

Motion: Commissioner Beamon made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed 2021 Calendar of SHRC Commission Meetings as presented.

Second: Commissioner Page seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval 2020 Calendar of SHRC Commission Meetings as presented.

Motion carried.

Business Session Public Comment

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

State Human Resources Director's Report

Chief Deputy Director Glenda Farrell presented the Director's report on behalf of Director Gibson. She first welcomed all attending, noting the upcoming celebration of State Employee Recognition Week – the annual celebration of the more than 82,000 public sector employees working at State of North Carolina agencies and the UNC System that had been postponed from May due to the pandemic. With COVID-19 metrics showing positive signs of stabilization, this week proved to be a great time to thank dedicated employees for their unflagging commitment to their organizations and the people of North Carolina. With so many employees teleworking, and others tasked with mandatory onsite duties, agencies across the state would be exercising great creativity to recognize their workforce this year. At OSHR, for example, Director Gibson would be connecting with employees of the Divisions during “Virtual Coffee Breaks.” These would be informal chats to convey how proud OSHR is of the new ways its team has found to collaborate and achieve during this challenging period.

Farrell noted a new online training COVID-related resources being provided to State employees, “Safe Practices for the Pandemic Workplace.” Developed in collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services, the curriculum addresses a wide scope of safety issues for employees who have been reporting to mandatory onsite roles since the pandemic was declared in March, as well as those who will transition from telework back to their worksites when conditions allow. Additionally, a Child Care and Work-Life Resources guide designed for employees with school-age children who are learning in the virtual setting has also been provided, and, to support students and families, a variance to Community Service Leave has

been allowed to enable parents to use paid leave, with supervisor approval, to provide dedicated tutoring and mentoring.

Farrell then mentioned a few upcoming events that OSHR is coordinating for the benefit of agencies and employees including the completion by many of the rigorous 2020 Certified Public Manager Program; Diversity and Workforce Services Division's presentation of a virtual event on Oct. 13 featuring a keynote address from Senator Tom Harkin in observation of Disability Employment Awareness Month; participation in a Virtual Career Fair; and, finally, the first-ever virtual Governor's Awards for Excellence Ceremony.

The Chief Deputy told of how OSHR had messaged state employees about the importance of getting every North Carolinian counted in the 2020 Census. As the federal court preliminary injunction which reverted the extension to respond to October 31 had been appealed, the legal outcome is uncertain in how the census deadline and counts will be impacted. OSHR also urged State employees to plan to get a flu shot this season. This may be more important than ever, since state health experts tell us there is a greater risk of COVID-19 complications for those who contract flu and the flu shot is part of the broad vigilance necessary to keep COVID-19 metrics low for North Carolina. Additionally, everyone should continue to follow the Three Ws: wear a cloth face mask, wait six feet apart from others, and wash your hands frequently.

In closing, Deputy Director Farrell extended a virtual introduction to John Massey, the new Director of the Talent Management Division at the Learning Development Center, who started with OSHR on August 31 and had already invested considerable time and extraordinary energy in evaluating our systems to provide focused, career-building training to our workforce including the soon to be launched HR EDGE, a curriculum designed specifically to support our state's human resources professionals.

Dominick D'Erasmus - Diversity and Workforce Services: Local Government Iredell County - Petition for Substantial Equivalency

Local Government Manager Dominick D'Erasmus presented Iredell County's request to be Substantially Equivalent in the areas of Recruitment and Selection and Classification and Compensation. All supporting documentation had been provided to the Commission prior to the meeting. Local Government recommended approval of the request.

Chair: There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for a motion to recommend approval of Iredell County's Petition for Substantial Equivalency.

Motion: Commissioner Eller so moved.

Second: Commission Page seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission agreed to recommend the approval of Iredell County's Petition for Substantial Equivalency.

Motion carried.

Christine Ryan - Legal, Commission, & Policy: 2020 NC OSHR Policies Review Project

Assistant General Counsel Christine Ryan presented the non-substantive policies reviewed pursuant to the 2020 NC OSHR Policies Review Project. They included Performance Management Policy for Agencies, Performance Management Policy for Universities, Initial Classification Policy, Extended Duty for Medical Personnel Policy, Technical Adjustments to the Pay Plan Policy, Veteran's Preference/Employment Preferences for Veterans and their Spouses and Statutory Policies, Employment Contracts Policy, and Service Awards Policy. Ryan explained these policies were reviewed by subject matter experts and executive leadership with only small changes, clerical, grammatical or formatting had been made.

Commissioner Falls brought to the attention of the Commission that in the Veteran's Preference Policy at (b), it needed to be inclusive through August 1990 until present.

Ryan explained that the time reference was taken directly from the enabling statute and would need to be updated by the Legislature.

Chair: There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for a motion to recommend approval of the revisions to the 2020 NC OSHR Policies Review Project for the Performance Management Policy for Agencies, Performance Management Policy for Universities, Initial Classification Policy, Extended Duty for Medical Personnel Policy, Technical Adjustments to the Pay Plan Policy, Veteran's Preference/ Employment Preferences for Veterans and their Spouses and Statutory Policies, Employment Contracts Policy, and Service Awards Policy.

Motion: Commissioner Eller so moved.

Second: Commission Page seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission agreed to recommend the approval of these revisions to the 2020 NC OSHR Policies Review Project.

Motion carried.

Adjournment

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

Motion: Commissioner Eller made a motion to make Commissioner Falls make the motion to adjourn.

Motion: Commissioner Falls so moved.

Second: Commission Eller seconded the motion.

Minutes of the October 1, 2020 State Human Resources Commission Meeting

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission agreed to recommend adjournment.

Motion carried. The Commission adjourned at 9:48 a.m.

Executive Session

The State Human Resources Commission did not have an executive session at its October 1, 2020 meeting.

Minutes submitted by:

Denise H. Mazza,
State Human Resources Commission Administrator