

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

MEETING MINUTES – October 7, 2021

Members Present:

Members present on the Webex for the meeting were: Chair Commissioner Dekhasta Becton Rozier and Commissioner Ross Beamon, Commissioner Doug Boyette, Commissioner Courtney Cooper-Lewter, Commissioner John Eller, Commissioner Martin Falls, Commissioner April Page, and Commissioner Philip Strach.

Other Attendees

Other attendees present: Barbara Gibson, Director, Glenda Farrell, Chief Deputy, and Twanetta Lytle Alston, Deputy Director, Office of State Human Resources; Blake Thomas, Legal Division, Office of State Human Resources; Denise Mazza, State Human Resources Commission Administrator, Office of State Human Resources; Nancy Astrike, LeAnn Biscoglio, Felicia Bridges, Andrea Clinkscales, Ronald Condrey, Scarlette Gardner, Joseph Gilroy, Vivian Jackson, Jill Lucas, Caroline Peace, and DeShun Perry of the Office of State Human Resources; Sylvia Crumpler, HR Director, NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services; Keita Cannon, HR Director, NC Auditor's Office; Dr. Donnell Adams, HR Director, NC Department of Administration; Bancroft Neufville, HR Director, NC Department of Commerce; Shakeyia Hazell, HR Director, NC Community College System; Glenda Ellerbee, HR Director, Office of State Controller; Karen Gerald, HR Director, NC Department of Health and Human Services; Colleen Goldsmith, NC Department of Information Technology; Janet Devan, NC Department of Insurance; Angeline Hariston, HR Director, NC Office of Administrative Hearings; Kristin Bierline, HR Director, NC Department of Justice; Joe Marro, HR Director, NC Secretary of State Office; Gary Wiggins, NC Department of Transportation; Debra Thomas, HR Director, NC Office of the Treasurer; Jennifer Christeson, Chief Operating Office and Wrenn Rivenbark, Clinical Director, NC Department of Public Safety; and Chris Chiron, Associate VP, UNC System;.

Opening

The Commission convened its open meeting at 9:02 a.m. via Webex Teleconference.

The State Human Resources Commission (SHRC) last convened on October 7, 2021.

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.

There were no additions or corrections to the agenda for the October 7, 2021 meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Approval of the Minutes for the June 3, 2021 State Human Resources Commission Meeting.

Motion: Commissioner Page made a motion to recommend approval of the June 3, 2021 meeting minutes.

Second: Commissioner Beamon seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval of the June 3, 2021 minutes.

Motion carried.

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

Deputy Director Twanetta Lytle Alston presented an overview of new COVID and Non-COVID exceptions granted by Director Gibson under 25 NCAC 01A .0104 since the June 3, 2021 State Human Resources Meeting.

Business Session Public Comment

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

State Human Resources Director’s Report

Director Barbara Gibson greeted the Commissioners and thanked members of the Commission for accepting reappointments to serve through 2025 noting that their guidance and thoughtful feedback, sometimes on tough questions, is invaluable to all State of North Carolina employees. The reappointments included two by Governor Cooper -- Courtney Cooper-Lewter and Emily Jones -- and three by the General Assembly - Doug Boyette, April Page, and Philip Strach. Grateful thanks was also offered to commissioners Ross Beamon and John Eller, whose terms run through June 2022. Lastly, Director Gibson expressed her appreciation to Commissioner Martin Falls, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, for having served two terms and continuing to provide his insights until a new member is appointed to his seat, noting that Commissioner Falls had been a tireless advocate – not just for state employees who are veterans, but for all state employees.

Director Gibson then presented information regarding Executive Order 224 and OSHR’s Role in the Vaccination and Testing policy. The Order tasked OSHR with developing a policy requiring all Cabinet agency employees to provide verification of vaccination by Sept. 1 or begin weekly testing. Director Gibson commended agency colleagues for their input in the policy’s development and for the support and feedback from the North Carolina Department of Information Technology to provide the COVIDSafeNC data system. Council of State agencies have been encouraged to follow the policy, and several have adopted it in part to expand the

effort to ensure safe workplaces for all state workers, as well as visitors to state facilities. Employee compliance within agencies continues to be confirmed in COVIDSafeNC by their HR offices, with more employees uploading proof of vaccination. As COVID-19 conditions continue to evolve across North Carolina, OSHR will remain on alert to update resources and advise agencies on best practices to support employees and promote worksite safety.

Director Gibson then explained the launch of the new NC Learning Center Resources – a major milestone to overhaul the online Learning Management System, or LMS. Current training resource relied on outdated technology and was difficult for both LMS administrators and state employees to use. The new and improved NC Learning Center which debuted Monday, October 11 includes agency-created content with a robust catalogue of more than 2,000 courses available to employees on such topics as diversity, teamwork, leadership, safety, health and wellness, communication. The system's new functionality, called Learner Home, provides a modern look and intuitive interface for a vastly improved user experience, but it also retains the existing drop-down menus making it easy for users who may prefer using the old navigation. The new system will make it easier for agencies to assign and monitor training, as well as empower employees to more easily select modules relevant to their job role and career aspirations by providing quality training to our workforce that is essential for recruitment and retention. Improving the LMS has been a priority for me from day one, and we are eager to see how our workforce responds to both assigned and self-selected modules to support their professional development.

Director Gibson continued her report with news about another Virtual Career Expo hosted by the Talent Acquisition section on September 28. More than a thousand registrants participated, having one-on-one chats with OSHR representatives and recruiters from across state agencies and the UNC System. She expressed her gratitude to Governor Cooper for proclaiming State of North Carolina Career Professionals Week, Sept. 26 through Oct. 2, which included the day of the Virtual Career Expo and commended the hundreds of state agency human resources professionals who are essential to the state's recruitment and retention efforts. Governor Cooper also taped an enthusiastic video message that was shared with everyone who registered for the virtual event, encouraging them to apply for jobs and join our workforce. She gave a special shout-out to State Talent Acquisition Manager Kristin Siemek, who managed to coordinate this important outreach while her section is short-staffed due to one retirement and another employee accepting a promotional opportunity. The event logged more than 2,500 individual visits to the more than a dozen job-type chat rooms, exchanging nearly 14,000 messages with recruiters and other state HR professionals.

Director Gibson closed her report by presenting the following October events and activities:

- Open Enrollment for NCFlex pre-tax benefits and the State Health Plan Oct. 11-29. The NCFlex team actively communicated with state employees to make sure they knew about Open Enrollment and the importance of updating their personal information and enrollment choices and emphasizing the rollover of unspent Flexible Spending Account

dollars available to members, many of whom put off appointments and procedures due to the pandemic, or who had to make changes in daycare or eldercare needs. A series of virtual sessions led by NCFlex would be provided throughout Open Enrollment to help participants better understand benefit options, and the team assisted several agencies in presenting virtual and in-person outreach.

- Several proclamation-related events occurring in October:

Certified Professional Managers Month and Monday (Oct. 4) Certified Professional Manager's Day

A class of 36 public sector middle managers, including two local government employees, graduate in October, having completed complex, agency-specific projects that can be put into action to deliver increased efficiencies. This also was the first CPM program conducted entirely remotely, due to the pandemic. While we look forward to providing face-to-face instruction again, I am proud of our CPM Program Manager Reed Altman and the entire Talent Management Team for the very successful pivot to online instruction. It not only empowered these participants to achieve more in the roles, but also makes the CPM and other professional development opportunities accessible to those located far from Raleigh.

Disability Employment Awareness Month

Diversity and Workforce Services team scheduled an outstanding speaking for the October EEO Network Lunch & Learn Series. On Oct. 21, Beth Butler, J.D. Disability Inclusion Consultant and Executive Director of Disability:IN North Carolina will address the pandemic's impact on people with disabilities and America's workforce. Like all EEO Lunch & Learn events since the pandemic began, it will be presented online – creating opportunities for more state government HR professionals to participate – and a recording will be posted for anytime viewing on the OSHR website.

Pedestrian Safety Month in North Carolina, and Safety and Workers' Compensation team promoting the WalkSmartNC initiative

The goal is to increase awareness of areas in the Downtown State Government Complex where pedestrian-motorist collisions are more likely to occur – and to encourage walkers and drivers alike to be more observant to prevent crash-related injury and frightening near-misses. The Governor's Highway Safety Program provided the funding for this program, which created a model that can be replicated by communities and organizations statewide.

Governor's Awards for Excellence

OSHR presented 17 Governor's Awards in a virtual - 16 individual employees and one 23-member team - these honorees are the superheroes of state government, exemplary employees making outstanding contributions that go beyond the scope of the job duties to improve conditions for coworkers and all North Carolinians. The video of the event is posted to the OSHR website to view any time.

OSHR's General Counsel Report

General Counsel Blake Thomas updated the Commission on Federal measures on COVID and what the State is doing. While most Federal measures are not applicable at this time, OSHR will continue to watch health care, transportation, federal contractors and large employer vaccination requirements. GC Thomas reminded the Commission that the Communicable Disease Emergency Policy was still planned to be revisited but that Provision 8 is still applicable as it continues to wind down the measures extended as a result of the Pandemic. Finally, GC Thomas shared the Data Access issue that was discovered on July 30, 2021 and the details about how it was being addressed.

Andrea Clinkscales -- Total Rewards: Salary Administration

Total Rewards/Salary Administration Division Director Andrea Clinkscales presented the updates to the Paid Parental Leave Pilot Program Policy to the Commission to alleviate confusion as to who is eligible to be awarded the benefit. The updates to the Paid Parental Leave Pilot Program Policy include excluding the word "probationary" from the body of the policy as related to "Covered Employees," and to clarify "Covered Employees" are employees who have been continuously employed by the State of North Carolina for the immediate twelve (12) preceding months "in a permanent or time-limited position."

Chair: There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for a motion to recommend approval of the revisions to the Paid Parental Leave Pilot Program Policy as presented.

Motion: Commissioner Eller made a motion to recommend approval of

Second: Commissioner Cooper-Lewter seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission recommended approval of the revisions to the Paid Parental Leave Pilot Program Policy as presented.

Motion carried.

Blake Thomas – Legal, Commission, & Policy: Vaccination Incentive Pilot Program Policy

General Counsel Blake Thomas presented the new Vaccination Incentive Pilot Program Policy to the Commission. GC Thomas explained that this policy establishes a program under which the Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice, at its option and if funds are available, may offer a Vaccination Bonus to certain employees. The default bonus under the policy is up to \$500 and is available to eligible employees who choose to get vaccinated now, as well as eligible employees who already have been vaccinated. To be eligible, permanent employees must, as of October 7, 2021, have been at the Department of Public Safety and had their duty station at a correctional facility, residential program, residential treatment facility, transitional house, or group home operated by the Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice. For temporary employees to be eligible they must regularly work at least 20 hours per week on-site

and in-person at a correctional facility, residential program, residential treatment facility, transitional house, or group home operated by the Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice. The policy allows other agencies or divisions to be added to this pilot policy in the future, but only with State Human Resources Commission approval.

Commissioner Beamon asked how many employees were involved and how the program would be funded. He further inquired how many of those under DPS who had had COVID were offenders and how many DPS employees had already been vaccinated.

GC Thomas estimated approximately 13,000 employees were involved and that the Office of State Budget and Management have confirmed that the funds are available from Federal funds for COVID matters. He also stated that the number who had had COVID did not include any offenders and that approximately 56% of DPS employees had already been vaccinated.

Commissioner Beamon then summarized his concerns about where the funding was coming from and if the vaccination is available for free why have an incentive since if a person's health is really their priority and the vaccine has been available for a year now.

GC Thomas responded briefly that per DPS that when incentives have been offered more people will respond.

Chair: There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for a motion to recommend approval of the new Vaccination Incentive Pilot Program Policy as presented.

Motion: Commissioner Strach 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 the new Vaccination Incentive Pilot Program Policy as presented.

Motion carried.

Nancy Astrike – Division Director/Diversity and Workforce Services: Reduction in Force Policy

Diversity and Workforce Services Division Director Nancy Astrike reported on the proposed modifications to the Reduction in Force (RIF) policy to reflect changes included in HB602 that allows the UNC System to approve RIF Plans. House Bill 602, ratified on July 8, 2021, requires a change to the approval of RIF plans for UNC System employees subject to the SHRA. Specifically: "The President shall have the authority to approve a reduction in force for positions subject to the North Carolina Human Resources Act in accordance with the reduction in force policies of the Office of State Human Resources without further approval by any other State agency."

Chair: There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for a motion to recommend approval of the revisions to the Reduction in Force Policy as presented.

Motion: Commissioner Falls so moved.

Second: Commission Eller and Beamon seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission agreed to recommend the approval of the revisions to the Reduction in Force Policy as presented.

Motion carried.

Joseph Gilroy – Temporary Solutions Manager/Business Operations: 25 NCAC 01C .0405 (Temporary Appointment) and .0407 (Temporary Part-Time Appointment)

Temporary Solutions Manager Joe Gilroy presented the proposed rulemaking changes to 25 NCAC 01C .0405 which defines temporary part-time employment and explains the maximum length of assignment, exclusions to this limit, and the ineligibility of part-time temporaries for certain benefits. The rule is redundant of 25 NCAC 01C .0407. It mirrors 25 NCAC 01C .0405 verbatim with the exception of speaking specifically about “part-time” temporary employment. Part-time temporary employees are defined as and subject to the same terms and exclusions as the temporaries discussed in .0405.

Chair: There being no further discussion or questions, the Chair called for a motion to recommend approval of submission as permanent Rule 25 NCAC 01C .0405 (Temporary Appointment) to update it to include inmates, interns and externs as exceptions to the mandatory break-in-service requirement for temporary employment and the deletion of 25 NCAC 01C .0407 (Temporary Part-Time Appointment) as redundant.

Motion: Commissioner Beamon so moved.

Second: Commission Page seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was held and all attending members of the Commission agreed to recommend approval of submission as permanent Rule 25 NCAC 01C .0405 (Temporary Appointment) to update it to include inmates, interns and externs as exceptions to the mandatory break-in-service requirement for temporary employment and the deletion of 25 NCAC 01C .0407 (Temporary Part-Time Appointment) as redundant.

Motion carried.

Felicia Bridges – Total Rewards: Classification and Compensation: 45 Revised or Prior Approved Classification Specs

Total Rewards: Classification and Compensation Consultant Felicia Bridges presented the 45 revised or prior approved classifications specs to the Commission.

- Accounting Director II
- Accounting Director I
- Accounting Manager II
- Accounting Manager I
- Accountant IV
- Accountant III
- Accountant II
- Accountant I
- Accounting Specialist
- Accounting Technician III
- Accounting Technician II
- Accounting Technician I
- Accounting Clerk II
- Accounting Clerk I
- Insurance Company Examiner I
- Insurance Company Examiner II
- Substance Abuse Program Manager
- Substance Abuse Counselor
- Substance Abuse Program Coordinator
- Substance Abuse Supervisor, Clinical
- Substance Abuse Counselor, Clinical
- Applications Systems Manager II
- Applications Systems Manager I
- Applications Systems Specialist
- Applications Systems Analyst II
- Applications Systems Analyst I
- Applications Technician II
- Applications Technician I
- Database Analyst II
- Database Analyst I
- Database Manager II
- Database Manager I
- IT Project/Program Portfolio Director
- IT Project/Program Portfolio Manager
- IT Project Manager II
- IT Project Manager I
- Network Manager II
- Network Manager I
- Network Engineer
- Network Specialist
- Network Analyst II
- Network Analyst I
- Network Technician
- Web Designer/Developer
- Web Designer

Chair: There being no further or questions, the Chair called for a motion to recommend approval of the 45 Revised or Prior Approved Classification Specifications for the New Class and Compensation System.

Motion: Commissioner Cooper-Lewter and Beamon 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 the 45 Revised or Prior Approved Classification Specifications for the New Class and Compensation System.

Motion carried.

Minutes of the October 7, 2021 State Human Resources Commission Meeting

Executive Session

The State Human Resources Commission did not have an executive session at its October 7, 2021 meeting.

Minutes submitted by:

Denise H. Mazza,
State Human Resources Commission Administrator