

Chair Jim Behling called to order the meeting of the Transition Committee at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 27 in the County Board Conference Rooms #1,2,3 at the Vilas County Courthouse, 330 Court Street, Eagle River, Wisconsin. Public meeting notice was given to the public twenty-four hours prior to the meeting.

Transition Committee Members Present: Chair Jim Behling, Emil Bakka, Bob Egan, Sig Hjemvick, Erv Teichmiller.

Committee Members Absent: Linda Thorpe and Ed Bluthardt

Others Present: Janna Kahl, Martha Milanowski, Ken Anderson, and 18 Vilas County employees.

Approve Agenda: Motion by E. Bakka, second by B. Egan to approve the agenda to be discussed in any order of the Chair. All voting aye, carried.

Approve Minutes: Motion by E. Teichmiller, second by B. Egan to approve the August 29, 2011 minutes. All voting aye, carried.

Employee Handbook: The first three chapters of the handbook had been previously reviewed by the Transition Committee, and the Committee wants to ensure that the previous work conducted on the handbook is not lost. J. Behling stated that the Committee does not need to have the Handbook completed in its entirety prior to January 1. It's more important that the Handbook is done correctly, then to have it completed prior to the contracts' expiration.

J. Behling stated that the Committee needs to assign priorities to the items needing completion as we continue to transition into the post-BRB environment. E. Teichmiller said he wanted to gauge the concerns that employees have in an effort to add urgency to specific items. E. Teichmiller stated that the Committee had done a lot of work on the option of pooling days off, into a PTO-type system, and does not want to see that work lost. J. Behling stated that one item that will need to be included in the discussions is how to handle the bridging of accumulated benefits, in particular, sick days.

J. Behling described that the proposal will be to have two different versions of handbooks, one for employees, and one for supervisors to act as an operations manual. The handbooks will likely have an addendum to incorporate any department-specific policies/procedures.

J. Kahl distributed two lists of topics that could potentially appear in the two different manuals. She explained that there is a consortium of about 14 counties currently working on drafting the wording for specific policies. That wording is due back to the consortium on November 30.

E. Teichmiller asked about the impending Concealed Carry regulations, and M. Milanowski explained that issue will be addressed to the County Board at the upcoming meeting.

Drafting interim work rules to guide employees and supervisors upon the expiration of the contracts was discussed. M. Milanowski described that interim work rules have been established by another department within the County, so a similar template could be used for the remaining employees.

E. Teichmiller asked if benefits and other changes will appear in the interim work rules, and J. Behling responded that all policies will be status quo until employees and supervisors are notified differently.

Priorities: J. Behling said that the established priority will be: Complete interim work rules; Determine policies regarding hours, OT, comp time, leave, and holidays; and to incorporate management input into the final draft of the work rules.

J. Kahl will complete the draft interim work rules by November 25, and distribute to Committee members in preparation for the next meeting, November 30 at 4:00 pm.

J. Behling said that Committee members have questioned if these meetings can be held during the day, and discuss resolutions in the afternoon where it may be possible for employees to attend. The Committee members present stated that they would prefer to continue to have employee involvement and to ensure transparency, wanted to keep the meetings at the 4:00 time.

Public Participation:

One employee stated that prior to the meeting, he had very little respect, and a lot of doubt for the way things have been handled recently. He said, that after this meeting, and learning that things will remain status quo until employees hear of a different way of operating, he was able to reduce the amount of doubt he had for this process.

Another employee stated that she is concerned that employees are continually asked to contribute more, and they hear rumors of benefits being cut, but then she reads in the minutes that Committees are spending extra money on large items.

A third employee stated that employees rely on sick day accumulation for income continuation. She said that if there is abuse in the use of sick time, then to deal with those abusing employees. And if it the abuse is happening with a department head, then the oversight committee should be involved. The employee also asked if training would be offered to department heads; J. Kahl stated that training would be offered for the new administrator handbook. If there is a need for further training for a department head, then J. Kahl will work with him/her/ or their respective oversight committee to identify training opportunities. The employee asked if merit pay is being considered, and J. Behling stated that we could not discuss that option at this time.

Another employee stated it is a double-edged sword because employees are taxpayers, too, so when employees see money being spent, they wonder if that is the types of purchases they would make if it was their own checkbook being used.

B. Egan stated that he believes part of the problem is that Committee members don't know what employees do while at work every day.

An employee stated that any Committee member is welcome to do a ride along for food delivery for any of his homebound citizens.

Committee members are welcomed to attend Social Services meetings in order to hear more about what they are working on.

A final employee stated that there is a lot of reservation and hesitation of what things will be like as we move forward.

Letters and Communication: None

Adjournment: Motion by E. Teichmiller, seconded by B. Egan to adjourn meeting. J. Behling adjourned the meeting at 5:30 pm.

Minutes reflect the recorders notation and are subject to approval by the appropriate board or committee.

Respectfully submitted by: Janna Kahl, Human Resources Manager