



Human Relations Committee
(Chair—Sewell, Member—Martin)
MINUTES
Wednesday, April 15, 2026 — 9:00 AM

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Russ Martin called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM

ROLL CALL

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Russ Martin, Member Amber Duff

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Brian Macy, Marion Champion, Danny Friend, Oriana Hoffert, Skyler Aubrey, Dori Petee

PUBLIC INPUT

No public input

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

REVIEW EMPLOYEE REQUESTS FOR FY 2026-2027

Oriana Hoffert (Human Resources Manager) summarized the annual non-union employee “ask” process and the use of 12 comparable agencies to benchmark wages and benefits, noting that the 2021–2022 classification/compensation work created a solid baseline and that annual COLAs help maintain competitiveness. Staff reported 29 requests collected March 3rd.

Key themes reviewed (with staff recommendations):

- **Holidays/leave:** Consider moving from 14 to 15 holidays by adding a floating holiday (flexibility for birthday/Christmas Eve); impact is primarily operational coverage time rather than direct added payroll cost.
- **Bereavement:** Generally retain statutory definitions; any additional time to be handled through other leave types.
- **Compensation/COLA:** FY COLA planned at 2.91% (estimated cost about \$173k on \$5.9M budgeted salaries). The committee discussed the request for “5% whichever greater,” but noted the current approach follows inflation and budget constraints.
- **Retirement savings match:** No change recommended; current 457 match is already above many comparators, and staff recommended additional employee education for newer hires.
- **Standby/callout:** Discussed the request to increase standby from 3 to 6 hours for all holidays, the recommendation is to increase it from 3 to 4 hours (considered how other agencies compensate) One additional hour of holiday standby compensation (estimated under \$4k); adding a two-hour minimum for on-site callouts (estimated about \$24k); and compensating certain customer phone calls similarly to existing SCADA/remote-in pay.
- **Overtime rules:** Generally retain FLSA weekly overtime; do not count jury duty as hours worked.

- **Fatigue pay:** Recognized as a safety/compensation concern, but policies at other agencies are complex and infrequently triggered; flexibility has been used during extraordinary events (e.g., Tropical Storm Hilary).
- **Bilingual pay:** Recommended increasing from \$25 to \$50 per pay period for 13 eligible employees (adding roughly \$8.4k–\$9k) to better align with market while keeping a flat-rate approach.
- **Catastrophic leave bank:** No change recommended due to tax, discrimination, and administrative risk concerns.
- **Sick time cash-out threshold:** Retain current minimum of 140 hours (within peer range/average).
- **Boot allowance:** Staff discussed increasing to \$350 (market alignment) and moving reimbursements to ACH/direct deposit when available.
- **Retiree medical:** No changes recommended; current policy provides 50% employee-only premium at age 55 and 100% at age 60 until Medicare age 65; comparators largely do not cover spouses.
- **Administrative requests (PTO bank; hybrid/alternate schedules including 4/10 and 9/80):** Not recommended at this time due to service-hour coverage needs and board direction to remain open five days per week.
- **Culture/operations:** “Bring your kids to work day” was supported as a future culture initiative; timely completion of performance evaluations was reinforced as an expectation.

Staff clarified that items coded “white” were recommended for adoption and items coded “blue” were not.

Skyler Aubrey summarized budget capacity, noting prior-year salaries/benefits were about \$1.13M under budget and the current year is projected to be about \$1.4M under budget due to conservative budgeting (top-step assumptions and vacancies), supporting absorption of approximately \$225k in recommended changes. Members agreed that recommendations will be presented to the full board as part of the budget process, with a concise synopsis of all requests and the recommended subset.

ADJOURN

With no further business, Chair Martin adjourned the meeting at 10:43 AM

Respectfully submitted,



Dori Petee
Executive Assistant