

COUNTY OF BALDWIN

Personnel Board met at 7:15 a.m.
Delchamp's Room
161 N Section Street, Fairhope, AL 36532
Friday, February 19, 2016

Present were:

Members: Diane Thomas, Chairman; Lorenzo Howard, Jenny Erdoes, Rob Stankoski, and Pandora Heathcoe, Human Resources Director.

Absent: Scherry Douglas and Kevin Boone, City Council Liaison

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 a.m.

Minutes from the January 29, 2015 meeting were approved by a first motion set forth by Jenny Erdoes and second by Rob Stankoski.

Under old business, Diane Thomas, Chairman discussed with the Board that Lt. John Hamrick, Fairhope Police Department was present at the previous meeting. He requested on behalf of Chief Joseph Petties if the Personnel Board would review the application process and hiring process of the Fairhope Police Department. Lorenzo Howard agreed that the Police Department needs to be the best and their process should be consistent with that of other City Department hiring practices. Chairman Thomas asked Lorenzo if he would join together with Jenny Erdoes and Scherry Douglas to meet with Chief Petties to determine exactly what information he is concerned with or what he wants the Personnel Board to specifically look over.

Chairman Thomas explained that her term was extended for one more year and it expires in December 2016. She voiced her request that Lorenzo Howard agree to extend his one year term another year so other new members could be found and added to the Board.

Diane briefed the Board on Mayor Kant's request that the Board review the City's Zero Tolerance Drug and Alcohol Policy. She provided a copy of a letter to Mayor Kant to be approved by the Board confirming their opinion that the existing City policy covers the best practices for zero tolerance. The letter also mentions the City's current ability for treatment and counseling through the City's medical insurance provider and how important it is to have that coverage remain for the employees. A copy of this letter is attached to the minutes.

Under new business, Chairman Thomas stated the City currently allows law enforcement officers and corrections to receive "comp time" in lieu of over time under Section 4.05 in the City's Rules, Policies and Procedures handbook. Mayor Kant has proposed an addendum to this handbook section to allow other City hourly employees to receive "comp time." This issue was

submitted to Paul Myrick, HR counsel for the City of Fairhope, and he drafted a change to the Handbook for review. Each member present had reviewed this draft; however, all had questions if this policy covered all special events or just certain special events such as the Lighting of the Trees, Christmas parade, Mardi Gras parades and Arts & Crafts. Chairman Thomas will meet with Mayor Kant to clarify his objectives for the new ordinance and bring the information back to the Board for further review and consideration. Any change would be an addendum to the handbook and must be passed by the City Council since the handbook is an ordinance.

Lorenzo Howard brought up the previous subject of the City considering “early retirement packages” for those employees with the highest years of service who have reached a higher rate of pay. This could possibly lower overtime costs due to employees being paid overtime at a much lower rate of pay.

Pandora Heathcoe, City Human Resource Director, gave an update on the discipline process and how she has begun working with the various departments on training. She has already met with the Police Department and is in the process of scheduling the same training with all the other department heads. She mentioned the next department head training she would like to focus on is the EEOC process.

The next regularly scheduled Personnel Board meeting will be held Friday, March 18, 2016, at 7:15 AM in the Delchamps Room of City Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 AM.

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Respectfully submitted,

Pandora Heathcoe
Acting Secretary

February 19, 2016

Tim Kant, Mayor
City of Fairhope
161 N Section Street
Fairhope, AL 36532

Dear Mayor Kant,

Per your request, the Personnel Board reviewed the City's No Tolerance Drug Policy at the January meeting. It was the consensus of the Board that the Policy is comprehensive in scope and protects the interest of the City and its employees. A primary concern is that an employee who is on the job and under the influence of legal or illegal drugs exposes the City, other employees, and himself to increased, unacceptable risks.

That said, the Board is very sympathetic to any employee who has a substance abuse problem. Provision has been made in this policy for an employee to proactively seek help for this medical condition before he/she has failed a drug screen. The Board felt that it was important to educate employees on a regular basis about the help provided through their insurance plans and the availability of medical leave if necessary. We know that Pandora Heathcoe had made this information a regular part of her employee benefits education.

Drug abuse/addiction is a serious problem in our society as a whole, and it is to be expected that some of the City employees will have difficulty with this issue. The Board believes that the City's No Tolerance Drug policy is a balanced one. It sends the clear message that drug abuse will not be tolerated in the work place but offers help to any employee who seeks it.

Thank you for this opportunity to review the policy and offer our opinion on this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

Diane Thomas, Chairman Personnel Board

cc: Jack Burrell, Council President