



BEAUMONT-CHERRY VALLEY WATER DISTRICT AGENDA

560 Magnolia Avenue, Beaumont, CA 92223

MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Covington called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Attendance. Directors Covington and Ramirez attended in person.

<i>Directors present:</i>	<i>Covington, Ramirez</i>
<i>Directors absent:</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Staff present:</i>	<i>General Manager Dan Jagers Assistant Director of Finance and Administration Sylvia Molina Human Resources Manager Ren Berioso Director of Information Technology Robert Rasha Management Analyst II Lorena Lopez Executive Assistant Lynda Kerney</i>
<i>BCVWD Employee Association reps:</i>	<i>Customer Service Representative II Luis Lomeli Water Production Operator II Joshua McCue Tommy LaMont Maintenance Technician Senior Water Utility Worker Andrew Becerra Water Utility Superintendent Julian Herrera</i>

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Adjustments to the Agenda:

Ms. Molina drew attention to Item 6 page numbering and Item 7 attachments.

2. Acceptance of the Meeting minutes

The September 19, 2023 meeting was cancelled

a. August 15, 2023

The Committee accepted the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting by the following vote:

MOVED: Ramirez	SECONDED: Covington	APPROVED
AYES:	Covington, Ramirez	
NOES:	None.	
ABSTAIN:	None.	
ABSENT:	None.	

3. Report / Update from BCVWD Employees Association: None.

4. Report / Update from BCVWD Exempt Employees: None.

5. Report from Human Resources Department

Assistant Director of Finance and Administration Sylvia Molina presented highlights of the report:

- Currently 43 employees
- Two temporary water utility workers promoted to regular employees
- The Development Services Technician recruitment is under review
- An employee satisfaction survey was conducted

Director Ramirez asked about the longevity of staff that were recently separated and Ms. Molina responded between 1 and 6 years.

6. Policies and Procedures Manual Updates / Revisions

Policy 3235 Military Leave: Mr. Jagers reminded the Committee of previous discussion. Ms. Molina presented changes made since the prior draft policy. Director Ramirez commented that the majority of the proposed policy follows the law and reflects the requirements.

Director Covington asked about the following:

- Inclusion of part time employees: Ms. Molina said she would research if the law applied to part time employees
- Whether 30 days was the maximum for one year: Mr. Jagers responded that 30 days is the minimum that an employee on military leave must be paid
- Option to offer paid inactive duty leave: Ms. Molina indicated it is not required to pay for inactive duty, and currently the District does not do so. She will add it to the table.

Director Ramirez asked about the following:

- Health care insurance protection for military service of less than 31 days: Ms. Molina indicated that for those on less than 30 days leave adjustments are at the District's option; after that, COBRA would apply, but the District has typically continued an employee's health coverage for the length of service.
- The allowable charge for COBRA of 102 percent includes administrative costs.
- How many times has the District experienced employees on military leave: Ms. Lopez explained that in the past seven years, one employee during the time of COVID was on leave for about a year and a half.

Discussion turned to the provision of ongoing health insurance benefits and salary differential. While on military leave, the servicemember receives coverage from the military. Chair Covington indicated support for continued provision of coverage. Mr. Jagers pointed out this is a fairly robust benefit.

Chair Covington and Director Ramirez indicated support for providing a salary differential. The law requires payment of salary for 30 days of military leave; after the 30th day, there is no pay requirement, Ms. Molina advised. Mr. Jagers noted there is

no current exposure to the District, but a high salaried individual may create a significant unanticipated financial burden, including any temporary staffing needs.

Director Ramirez proposed maintaining the health insurance benefit for duration of the service, but no salary differential. Chair Covington proposed providing a salary differential for all employees on military leave. The Committee decided to recommend both options to the full Board and directed staff to include them in the proposed policy draft, along with any other options.

The Committee recommended proposed Policy 3235 to the full Board for consideration of all policy options by the following vote:

MOVED: Covington	SECONDED: Ramirez	APPROVED
AYES:	Covington, Ramirez	
NOES:	None.	
ABSTAIN:	None.	
ABSENT:	None.	

Policy 3110 Jury and Witness Duty: Ms. Molina advised that a couple of District staff members had recently been called to jury duty. Research by staff and HR Dynamics showed that most other agencies' policies cover a minimum of 80 hours or the length of service. BCVWD's current policy includes 40 hours (5 days) and the ability to use accrued time off after 40 hours.

In response to Director Ramirez, Human Resources Manager Ren Berioso assured that employees are required to provide proof of jury service.

Chair Covington expressed disenchantment with the jury duty system. He suggested reducing the number of paid hours for jury duty leave from the existing policy of five (5) days, noting that neither State nor federal law mandates the District to pay for jury duty leave. He expressed concern with the potential financial liability to the District of extended jury service.

The Committee directed staff to revise the draft policy as follows:

- Remove part-time and temporary employees from the policy
- Specify that the leave is for each summons
- Take to the Board for consideration limiting paid jury duty leave to a maximum of 30 hours (3 days) OR 40 hours (one week)

Mr. Jagers noted that the District's exposure to potential lengthy jury service is low, but the District is a public servant. Ms. Lopez pointed out that jury duty leave is a loss to part-time and temporary employees, as they do not accrue paid time off to use for the leave.

The Committee recommended Policy 3110 with revisions as stated by the Personnel Committee and options to be forwarded to the Board of Directors for consideration by the following vote:

MOVED: Covington	SECONDED: Ramirez	APPROVED
AYES:	Covington, Ramirez	
NOES:	None.	
ABSTAIN:	None.	
ABSENT:	None.	

7. Review Policy Tracking Matrix

Ms. Molina recapped discussion at the August 15 meeting and presented options for streamlined policy tracking. She noted that the new HR Manager would be continually reviewing policies for required updates.

Director Ramirez indicated he was comfortable with the dashboard and Policy Options tables; Covington concurred. Chair Covington pointed out this has been ongoing for three years and only 50 percent of the policies are completed. Ms. Molina noted that policies are often revisited due to new laws. Mr. Jagers suggested a strategy of reviewing blocks of policies in a quarterly workshop.

Director Ramirez stated there has been a lack of oversight and it is necessary to do chunks at a time. It will be another three to four years before this is done, Covington observed. It will be faster now with capable people, and a flow that was not present before, Ramirez responded. Jagers suggested trying this method, and if working, expand from three policies per meeting to more.

Chair Covington directed staff not to bring every policy to the Personnel Committee unless it has to come to the Personnel Committee. Others can go to the Finance and Audit Committee, he said.

Committee members indicated preference for Table 2 (the dashboard) and suggested color coding.

Director Ramirez requested policies be taken together when logical.

Mr. Jagers and Ms. Molina reviewed upcoming policies and Jagers noted that the proposed Dress Code and Personal Standards Policy had received a lot of interest and feedback from staff.

8. Results of Employee Benefits Survey – August 2023

Ms. Lopez reminded the Committee of their prior discussion and presented the survey results indicating that employees were relatively satisfied overall with the current benefits. Director Ramirez indicated he was satisfied with the information.

9. Review of Health Insurance Options Report of December 8, 2021

Ms. Lopez reminded the Committee of their prior discussion and the earlier presentation given by Keenan and Associates. She reviewed the option of leaving CalPERS.

Mr. Jagers added that it is a year and a half timeline to leave CalPERS and reminded about the factors that affect cost.

Information on how health benefits are calculated was obtained at a recent conference and a handout is available for review, Ms. Lopez stated.

Director Covington recalled a report showing that the cost of CalPERS benefits will be increasing by 11 percent in 2024. He noted that Region 3 (Riverside – San Bernardino) did not offer any EPOs or PPOs for BCVWD employees to choose from, but in other regions the cost is relative. He said he would like to look into information on providing

the staff options of PPOs or EPOs, and it does not appear CalPERS is offering that. He requested staff pursue those cost options.

Covington recalled that Keenan had noted the District does not have enough employees and is better served outside of CalPERS if there are more than 100 employees, but Keenan was providing the same service for the Recreation and Park District with only 10 employees.

10. Update: BCVWD FY 2024 Operating Budget

Ms. Molina presented the budget activity calendar and changes to the personnel portion of the budget. She noted a 3.7 percent Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for all employees based on the MOU and was used as the starting point rate for a potential director per diem increase. Mr. Jagers noted that the final per diem rate will be considered at the upcoming public hearing.

Ms. Molina reviewed the changes to the Organizational Chart including changes in titles and positions in the Operations Department and separating Customer Service from Finance.

Chair Covington asked if there would be a change in count of Full Time Equivalent employees (FTEs) between 2023 and 2024. Ms. Molina pointed out there are 41 full time, and 15 temporary part time totaling 48.5 FTEs, and for 2024 most have converted to full time, but the total remains the same. Covington reiterated there would be no addition of FTEs.

Director Ramirez noted there are currently about 21,000 service connections and asked about the meters, for efficiency and less time in the field for meter reading. Chair Covington asked if that goal had been achieved. Mr. Jagers advised that the final conversions are still in progress, but the goal had been accomplished. The total estimated project cost for the AMI is \$5.2 million and will likely end up in the high \$4 million to \$5 million range. In response to Director Ramirez, Ms. Lopez stated there are 200 meters left; the project is 99 percent complete.

Mr. Jagers advised that the valve exercising program and flushing program had not been healthy and are being caught up, along with other activities that are being improved. Director Ramirez asked about details of the flushing and Mr. Jagers reported there are just a few areas with issues and staff is careful with the old pipelines.

Directors noted that despite no increase in FTEs, the budget had increased by almost \$1 million. Ms. Molina attributed the COLA impact and health insurance benefits, but noted savings based on investments in retirement trust accounts, for a total of a 4.1 percent increase which is still less than in previous years.

Jagers and Molina clarified the staffing change fiscal impact of \$339,500. Chair Covington asked for a breakdown at the next meeting and noted the need for the Committee to take a deep dive into the proposal to ensure meeting their fiscal responsibility and be able to report to the Board.

Jagers reiterated that temporary staff are being replaced with regular full time staff. Ramirez acknowledged the increased burden. He recommended the Personnel Committee meet again sooner than the scheduled Nov. 21 meeting for more detail and greater efficiency.

11. Action List for Future Meetings

- *Employee Association topics: none added*
- *Policy manual updates (ongoing)*
- *Special Meeting on FY 2024 Budget before Nov. 8*

12. Next Meeting Date:

- Special Meeting to be scheduled
- Regular Meeting Tuesday, November 21, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:28 p.m.

Attest:



John Covington, Chairman

to the Personnel Committee of the Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District