

Affirmative Action Monitoring Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 22, 2021 6:00 p.m.

Attendance: Pat Alston, Rosa Browne, Laurie Palmer, Faith Jackson, Director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management, and Justin Richardson, Director of Human Resources

Excused Absence:

Absence: Christine Sherwood

QUORUM: *Yes:* X *No:*

Call to Order: Chairperson Rosa Browne called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. She took attendance for the record and noted that there was a quorum. Faith Jackson said she would be sending a notice out to the local churches regarding the commission vacancy.

Public Session: None

Regular Meeting:

Approval of Agenda: Pat Alston motioned to approve the Meeting Agenda for April 22, 2021. Laurie Palmer seconded. The chairperson called for a vote. The motion properly carried.

Approval of Minutes: Pat Alston motioned to approve the Meeting Minutes for January 28, 2021. Laurie Palmer seconded. The chairperson called for a vote. The motion properly carried. The committee had questions for Justin Richardson in the January minutes. It agreed that it would ask those after he presented his vacancy report.

Old Business: None

New Business:

2020-2021 2nd Quarter Report: Rosa Browne asked Faith Jackson to speak on the 2020-2021 2nd Quarter Report. Faith Jackson began discussion on the 2nd quarter. She explained that the City does not do a great deal of hiring and even less since COVID-19. In this quarter, there were two new people hired. Job opportunities for new hires and promotions came under the following categories: EEO1 – Officials and Administrators, EEO2 – Professional, EEO6 – Administrative Support, and EEO8 – Service Maintenance. Hires and promotions occurred in the following departments: Board of Education and Fire. No hiring goals were achieved from new hires this quarter. However, within the promotions, three goals were achieved: one Hispanic Male promoted in EEO1, one Hispanic Male promoted in EEO2, and one Hispanic Male promoted in EEO8. Also, of the six promotions, 50% were from the protected class. She advised the committee that more goals are typically achieved through promotions than through new hires. Therefore, it's imperative to hire diversity at the entry level, so there is an opportunity for upward mobility. Typically, job opportunities fall in EEO4 – Protective Class, EEO6 – Administrative Support, and EEO8 – Service Maintenance.

Rosa Browne asked about the two new hires. She asked if there was an opportunity to hire a person of color for either of those positions. Faith Jackson answered that the two positions were Admin. Sec. III at the Board of Ed and School Custodian at Macdonough School. Faith Jackson explained that there were three minorities who made it down to the interview process for Administrative Secretary III. Justin Richardson clarified that there were three who made it to the interview out of 48 applicants, and those other three applicants are on the eligibility list. However, the total number of minorities in the applicant pool was nine, so the issue is getting more minorities to apply for the position. They have identified that they need to reform their recruitment strategies, and they need more resources to do that. Faith Jackson said that when it gets down to the interview level, it is then up to the department head to hire the most qualified candidate. She added that she knows the candidate selected, and that person has many years of experience working at City Hall. Justin Richardson said that it's his department's job to qualify and disqualify applicants. However, once the applicants get to the hiring phase, it's the hiring manager's job to interview them and tell Human Resources who passed the interview. If an applicant fails an interview, the hiring manager must provide reasons. Also, Human Resources makes sure the hiring managers are asking all applicants the same questions. He added that the City is questioned on this all the time, and it's always important to have those answers to explain why one candidate was chosen over another one.

Rosa Browne asked about job creation. She said in other industries, there has been opportunity during the pandemic to create new jobs in leadership positions. She asked if the City has been able to create new jobs. Justin Richardson said the City was not in a position to create new positions during the pandemic. Creating more jobs would be a financial burden at this time. During the pandemic, there were many policies in place to govern how employees performed their work at home, but it was up to the department heads to manage this. He added that all City employees have been back working in the building since June of 2020.

Pat Alston said she had some questions. She asked if the City has an upward mobility program. Justin Richardson answered that the City has an educational incentive program. One example is that there is currently a custodian who is going to school outside of work hours to get a construction management degree, specifically to work in Public Works. Before COVID-19, his classes were outside of work hours. However, due to COVID-19, there has been a change in the custodian hours, and he couldn't attend one of his classes on time. However, through the collective bargaining agreement, there are special leaves, and one is educational leave. Therefore, in working with the department head, the custodian was able to take unpaid leave to attend that class.

Pat Alston then asked when applicants are told they aren't qualified, is anything done to encourage them to get the education or skills to be considered qualified for future opportunities. Justin Richardson answered that some applicants reach out to Human Resources and inquire what they can do to do better on their exam or to be considered qualified. While Human Resources doesn't write this type of guidance in its boilerplate letters to applicants, the department is a public-facing office, and it serves the public. They are there to offer advice and guidance. Pat Alston asked if Human Resources reaches out. Justin Richardson said applicants reach out to them, especially when it comes to police and fire recruitments. Faith Jackson added that applicants come to her office, as well, to inquire as to why they weren't selected for a position, and she will follow up with Human Resources and communicate to the applicants what they need to do going forward.

Justin Richardson added that cafeteria workers get opportunities to work in acting capacities as acting managers. Also, they take the opportunity to get their ServSafe certificate, which is required only of the managers. Therefore, each department has methods for upward mobility. Public Works, for example, offers employees the opportunities to get training and more advanced licenses. Pat Alston then asked if

Human Resources and the hiring managers are aware of the hiring goals for each position. Justin Richardson answered that both parties are aware of the hiring goals. Pat Alston asked if the hiring managers and department heads are aware of how the goals are determined. Faith Jackson said when all the directors were meeting regularly, she would communicate in the meeting that goals were determined based on underrepresentation in the department. She added that some department heads make a great effort toward diversity when they look at their candidates.

Pat Alston said she noticed that there were 11 separations. She said she hoped this created some opportunities within the City. Faith Jackson agreed, but she reminded the committee that while there were 11 separations, there were two hires, six promotions, and four transfers. Rosa Browne asked if skills assessment is discussed during performance reviews. Also, does Human Resources provide the opportunity for employees to take classes online? Justin Richardson said employees are welcome to take online classes. Whether the City provides any incentive to taking classes is situational and in many cases managed by the department head. There was discussion that the union contracts allow for financial incentives for taking a class related to the job and getting a certain grade or higher. The police contract provides a yearly stipend based on the degree obtained. Justin Richardson added that the City is still in the process of instituting the performance review process. At this time, they are planning training for the department heads so they know how to conduct a performance review.

Vacancy Report: Rosa Browne moved the discussion to the vacancy report. Justin Richardson said he could go through the report one-by-one, or the committee could ask any questions about any recruitment. He added that COVID-19 produced a lot of retirements, especially among the nurses at the Board of Ed.

Rosa Browne said that at the last meeting, the committee had some questions for Justin Richardson. She said Pat Alston had a question about pre-employment physicals. Justin Richardson answered that every employee, except for the mayor and Chief of Staff, must pass a pre-employment physical. The physicals are dependent on the type of position.

The committee discussed the questions that were brought up at the last meeting. Pat Alston clarified that Justin Richardson emailed a response with answers. Justin Richardson said he read the minutes and wanted to apologize for not responding to Pat Alston in a timelier manner. Faith Jackson clarified that Justin Richardson sent a package of information regarding the recruitment process. She sent the information to Rosa Browne. However, she thought it should be an agenda item for the next meeting, which would allow the committee time to review everything thoroughly.

Pat Alston asked about the Chief of Police recruitment. Justin Richardson said it was reposted nationally and to the professional affiliate listservs and the minority listservs. It closed April 1st, and there were 15 applicants. Faith Jackson noted that there was diversity in the pool. Pat Alston asked about the custodian eligibility list that is expired. She asked how long lists last until they expire. Justin Richardson responded that typically, lists last for a year. However, some lists are exhausted before the year. If there are still viable candidates on a list that expires, those people will often reapply for jobs once they are posted again.

Pat Alston asked about the position for Parking Enforcement Coordinator. The vacancy report indicates that there were no internal candidates and that the open competitive position is on hold due to "PCD reorganization." She asked what PCD is. Justin Richardson answered that PCD is Planning, Conservation, and Development. The department is being split into two offices: Economic and Community Development and Land Use. This reorganization involves a lot of negotiation with the unions and reclassifications and realignments of positions. Therefore, as of right now, there is no sense

in filling the Parking Enforcement Coordinator when it will be moved to another department. Pat Alston then asked about the School Secretary III position at Snow School. She asked why it was listed twice on the vacancy report. Justin Richardson explained that it's the same position. It was posted internally, but the internal candidates did not pass the exam. Therefore, they went to an already established eligibility list. There was brief discussion on the improved testing module, which is more inclusive and does not have a timed component.

Rosa Browne asked on the vacancy report why some positions don't have a date in the "Date Requisition Received" field. Justin Richardson answered that those are postings to create an eligibility list which is often done in anticipation of one or more vacancies.

Committee Vacancy: There was no discussion on the committee vacancy.

2021 Attendance: The committee reviewed the 2021 Attendance. Rosa Browne asked Faith Jackson to again check with Christine Sherwood about her intention to continue serving on the committee. Faith Jackson said she would send her communication and copy Rose Browne on it, as well.

Announcements: Rosa Browne said she would not be able to attend the next scheduled meeting on July 22nd. The committee members discussed their availability, and they agreed to move the next meeting to August 26, 2021. **The next regular meeting of the committee will be August 26, 2021.**

Adjournment: Laurie Palmer motioned to adjourn the meeting. Pat Alston seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,



Kasey Maurice,
Administrative Secretary III