



**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*Human Resources/Labor Relations  
Committee*

*October 30, 2007*

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Committee Members**

Anthony Griffin, Chair  
Howard Gibbs  
Alexis H. Roberson  
Paivi Spoon

**WASA Staff**

Jerry N. Johnson, General Manager  
Linda R. Manley, Board Secretary  
Barbara A. Grier, Assistant General Manager  
Avis M. Russell, General Counsel  
Katrina Wiggins, Human Resources Director  
Otho Milbourne, Benefits Manager

Anthony Griffin, Chairman, called the Human Resources/Labor Relations Committee (the Committee) to order at approximately 12:10 PM. Mr. Griffin announced that the Committee would go into Executive Session, to discuss the General Manager's performance evaluation, as "Other Business".

Jerry N. Johnson, General Manager, began the meeting by giving an overview of the status of labor negotiations. He indicated that WASA is at impasse with two of the five unions regarding working conditions negotiations. They are AFGE Local 872, AFSME Local 2091. We recently resolved an impasse issue with AFGE Local 631 over ground rules, negotiations will begin on November 5, 2007. NAGE and AFGE 2553 are making progress. Compensation negotiations are at impasse and first mediation session is scheduled for December 10, 2007, which is the first step in the process before arbitration.

The third agenda item, the response to the union presidents' was delivered in two parts. Mr. Johnson indicated he would provide an overview of management's response to the union president's statement and Barbara Grier, Assistant General Manager, Support Services would respond with a detailed point-by-point report, to address the claims made by the unions'. The report provided documentation to support the reply. Copies of

the response and presentation will be sent to the unions.

During his summary, Mr. Johnson acknowledged that there is room for improvement in WASA's communication with the union leadership and challenged the unions to constructively work with WASA in exploring ways to create a more productive labor-management relationship. He also noted the timing of the statements in relation to negotiations and suggested it may have been intended to influence or soften the Board's and management's positions at the bargaining table. He also noted that, some of the behavior being exhibited by the union presidents' is typical during negotiations and that union leaders and management are bound to disagree from time to time. Mr. Johnson strongly disagreed with the unions' negative portrayal of how represented employees feel about working at WASA, the overall negative portrayal of labor-management relationships as being broken and that all of the union presidents hold all of the negative views presented in their statement.

Finally, the General Manager committed to working with the union leaders to explore new ways of improving communications and working relationships through mutual respect and cooperation.

Committee member, Alexis Roberson inquired if the General Manager had plans for fixing the problems and whether or not he thought his first-line supervisors carry out his directives on the treatment of employees and that something must be happening in order for these perceptions to exist. The General Manager indicated both parties would have to compromise. He reminded the Committee of the past and acknowledged the improvements that have been made in spite of the work that still needs to be done.

The General Manager addressed the next agenda item, the proposal for transparent communications with the unions, by first providing the Committee with background on communications activities currently underway, which include meeting with employees quarterly, meeting with first-line supervisors' quarterly, offering Spanish classes, conducting mandatory two-way communication training for all employees, installing electronic message boards, (kiosks and plasma screens), bulletin boards for the unions', and requiring that department heads have a departmental communications plan as a performance goal.

Additional proposals for transparent communications to the unions include re-establishing the quarterly meetings with the General Manager or his designee and the labor unions, implementing a plan to conduct departmental quarterly management meetings, where the directors will attend meetings with the union leader for their area to exchange information and resolve issues, and lastly to develop an online Human

Resources/Labor Relations internet/intranet site that will house pertinent labor-management information.

Katrina Wiggins, Human Resource Director, presented guidelines and criteria for administration of the recruitment incentives for hard-to-fill positions. A three-tier model was developed that identified the maximum percent of salary that can be offered for each incentive and included not-to-exceed dollar amounts, for each category. Examples were provided for clarity. Mr. Griffin stated that the Board is expecting projections as to the number of positions that might be extended incentives. He requested that staff modify the guidelines to include this information.

The Human Resources report was accepted by the Committee and any questions will be addressed to the General Manager.

The Committee Work Plan was accepted by the Committee with the understanding that goals for FY08 would be discussed at the upcoming Board of Directors' Retreat. This item will be discussed at the next Human Resources/Labor Relations Committee meeting.

Otho Milbourne, Benefits Manager, briefed the Committee on the summary of 2008 healthcare renewals. Kaiser Permanente, Delta Dental and CIGNA Long Term Disability and Short Term Disability had no plan design changes and no increase for 2008. CIGNA PPO increased 15.3%, CIGNA HMO increased 14.9%; United Concordia Dental increased 31.5% due to a design change as a result of a union grievance; and the Spectera Vision Plan provider proposed a 6% rate increase. Mr. Griffin inquired if any efforts to negotiate a lower rate were made. Mr. Milbourne responded that staff was unsuccessful in negotiating a reduction in rates. The action item to advance the CIGNA increase to the Board of Directors for approval was supported by the Committee.

Mr. Griffin then requested that the Committee meeting move to executive session.

The meeting was reconvened.

Having no other business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 PM.

#### **Follow-up Items**

Provide level of retirement eligibility of employees in critical positions and a plan for addressing those vacancies

Update HR/LR Committee Work Plan for FY 2008

Schedule a HR/LR Committee Meeting during the second week of November

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Provide information on nonunion turnover, retirements and terminations  
Provide an Organizational roll-up of the General Manager's Communications Schedule  
Present the General Manager's Organizational Changes at the next meeting  
Provide information on the annual projected number of incentives