



**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*Human Resources/Labor Relations  
Committee*

*September 26, 2006*

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Committee Members**

Bruce F. Romer, Chair (Phone)  
Howard Gibbs  
Dr. Jacqueline Brown (Phone)  
Joseph Cotruvo

**WASA Staff**

Jerry N. Johnson, General Manager  
Linda R. Manley, Board Secretary  
Barbara Grier, Assistant General Manager  
Avis M. Russell, General Counsel  
Katrina Wiggins, Human Resources Director  
Otho Milbourne, Benefits Manager  
Terry Gilmore, Training and Development Manager  
Everett Lallis, Health and Safety Director  
Tanya De Leon, Risk Manager

Bruce F. Romer, Chairman, called the Human Resources/Labor Relations Committee (the Committee) to order at approximately 9:40 AM. Jerry N. Johnson, General Manager, began by introducing the new Human Resources Director, Katrina Wiggins. Mr. Romer moved to the first item on the agenda. Mr. Johnson provided an update on Working Conditions Negotiations with the five (5) local unions. Mr. Johnson informed the Committee that the Authority's attempt to negotiate five (5) individual agreements was unsuccessful. However, the unions agreed to rollover the current working conditions since compensation negotiations will commence in October. Mr. Johnson stated that he was seeking authorization for the General Manager to sign the Working Conditions agreements. Committee member Jacqueline Brown asked if one (1), Working Conditions contract applied to all five (5) unions. Mr. Johnson explained that although there is one (1) uniform working condition provisions, there will be five (5) individual agreements. Committee member Brown made a motion to recommend that the Board authorize the General Manager to sign agreements with the unions to rollover the existing Working Conditions agreement. The motion was seconded by Committee member Howard Gibbs and was unanimously approved by the Committee.

Mr. Johnson provided an update on the status of AFGE Local 872 dues deductions. He noted that he has not received a response from any of his five (5) letters sent to AFGE National or District requesting information to support the transfer of union dues collected by the Authority. He also noted that dues have been held in an escrow account since February 2006. The balance in the account is approximately \$28,000.

Avis Russell, General Counsel, advised the Committee that the proposed rulemaking pertaining to conflict of interest was advertised in the DC Register for the required period and no comments were received. She advised the Committee that WASA was only bringing forward the Standards of Conduct provisions. She noted that the proposed rulemaking pertaining to disciplinary actions and the appeal process was withdrawn and would be resubmitted as a part of a comprehensive revision of personnel regulations. The revisions will be presented to the Committee before the end of the year. After much discussion, the Committee directed staff to revise the rulemaking to incorporate the Committee's concerns regarding Section 5213.4, the criteria for reducing the time period that an employee is prohibited from working on an Authority contract after separation of employment. Staff should also address the Committee's concerns about Section 5217.7, which focuses on the need to exclude employees separated as a result of a reduction-in-force from the definition of employees terminated by the Authority. Mr. Johnson stated that the revisions would be made.

Otho Milbourne, Jr., Benefits Manager, provided an overview of the vendor selection process for the WASA Health and Welfare Plans. Mr. Milbourne identified the evaluation criteria used and noted that the Authority was pleased with the number of vendors responding to the solicitations. Staff recommended the following vendors for contact award:

CIGNA Healthcare	Medical Services
Delta Dental	Dental PPO
Concordia	Dental HMO
CIGNA	Disability Insurance
CIGNA	Life Insurance

Mr. Romer noted that the benefits package was comprehensive and offered good value to the Authority and employees. Committee member Gibbs made a motion to recommend to the Board to award a contract to CIGNA Healthcare for medical services and for the General Manager to enter into agreements with the other vendors under his contracting authority. The motion was seconded by Committee member Brown and was unanimously approved by the Committee.

Ms. Wiggins reported on the results of a survey on recruitment incentives. Ms. Wiggins stated that it is increasingly more difficult to fill executive, professional and scarce skill technical vacancies in order to compete. Attractive incentives have proven to have a positive impact during the recruitment process. While the Authority has competitive pay and rich health and welfare benefits, other incentives may be needed to attract candidates.

Based on the staff research and the review of incentives offered by major employers in the region, staff recommended that the Authority enhance its recruitment incentive by offering signing and referral bonuses, housing assistance and transportation and/or parking assistance. Committee member Brown stated that it is important to have an attractive and comprehensive incentive package for recruitment in this difficult market. She noted, however, that contrary to the information provided to WASA, Prince Georges County does not authorize signing bonuses. The General Manager stated he would have the General Counsel research whether there is legal authority to implement housing assistance incentives. He stated that he preferred an approach that links the Authority to the equity in the property. Committee member Brown suggested that the Authority investigate home loan relationships with banks, including the Authority's current bank. Committee member Joseph Cotruvo inquired as to whether professional positions are eligible for the recommended incentive package. Ms. Wiggins indicated executive, professional and hard-to-fill positions would be eligible for incentives. Mr. Johnson stated that staff will explore program design for each incentive option and will provide a report at the next Committee meeting. Mr. Romer concurred with the approach recommended by Mr. Johnson.

Terry Gilmore, Training and Development Manager, provided updates on the Authority's Replacement/Succession Planning efforts and the Employee Climate Survey Employee Focus Groups activities. The update on Replacement/Succession Planning included a discussion of the knowledge management/knowledge capture workshops and workforce planning. Mr. Gilmore reported that replacement planning activities included training programs, establishing new "Assistant" positions, overlapping hires and cross-training. Committee member Brown questioned overlapping hires and how this could be done. The General Manager stated that the overlapping hires would be accomplished by using vacancies that exist within the Board's authorized headcount.

The presentation on the Employee Climate Survey – Employee Focus Groups provided insight regarding employees concerns. During the sessions, employees indicated that they were generally satisfied with the Authority's benefits package, career development initiatives, jobs, and relations with coworkers, salary and the employee newsletter. Mr. Gilmore noted that the primary focus of the employee concerns centered on

communication. Committee member Cotruvo emphasized that many of the concerns raised in the focus groups centered on first-line supervisory relationships with employees and recommended continued training in this area. Committee member Gibbs suggested implementing a spot award program to recognize employee contributions.

The Human Resources Staff Report was presented by exception noting that staff would respond to questions from Committee members. There were no questions.

Mr. Everett Lallis, Occupational Safety and Health Director, and Tanya Deleon, Risk Management Manager, presented the quarterly Safety and Risk Management Report. It was noted that Safety and Risk Management partnered to reduce the total number of claims and the lost time incidence rate. The report indicated that claims, cost and the lost time incidents have steadily declined since 2001. Committee member Brown inquired about the increase in the number of preventable vehicle accidents. Mr. Lallis noted that corrective actions have been undertaken to address this statistic including a new Driver's Qualification Program.

The General Manager recommended that the Committee Workplan for 2007-2008 be approved by exception. He indicated that a status column would be added to the report and will be presented at the next meeting. The Committee responded favorably to the information.

Having no other business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 AM.