

**Organizational Synergy & Human Resources Committee  
Feb. 26, 2009 Meeting**

**Draft Minutes**

Members Present: Dave Damer, Committee Chairman  
Timothy Griswold (by telephone)

CRRA Management Present: Thomas Kirk, President  
James Bolduc, Chief Financial Officer  
Chris Hyfield, Human Resources Manager  
Moirra Kenney, Secretary to the Board/Paralegal

Also Present: Monica L. Marchese, Marchese Consulting, LLC

Chairman Damer called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m. and noted that there was a quorum.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JAN. 29, 2009, ORGANIZATIONAL SYNERGY & HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING**

Chairman Damer requested a motion to approve the minutes of the Jan. 29, 2009, Organizational Synergy & Human Resources Committee meeting. Director Griswold made the motion, which was seconded by Chairman Damer.

The motion to approve the minutes was approved unanimously.

**2. REVIEW AND RECOMMEND EMPLOYEE SEVERANCE POLICY**

Chairman Damer requested a motion to approve the above referenced motion. The motion was made by Director Griswold.

**RESOLVED:** That the Severance Policy be approved as presented by the Organizational Synergy & Human resources Committee.

The motion was seconded by Chairman Damer.

Director Griswold said the employee severance policy captures the minimum and maximums of the three different grades and provides the CRRA Board the necessary flexibility for individual situations. Chairman Damer agreed but noted that there are several changes that could be done prior to presentation to the full Board.

Mr. Kirk said the federal stimulus bill addresses some Cobra benefits that may require further investigation by management as there may be additional benefits available without

additional cost. He said that he and Chairman Damer had discussed tabling this issue until the next month in order to further review those possibilities.

Director Griswold asked Mr. Kirk if he felt the possibility of CRRA receiving financial assistance from the stimulus package would be a one time occurrence. He said if the policy was to continue into further years how would the possible one-time occurrence of the stimulus assistance help. Mr. Kirk said it was likely assistance from the stimulus package would be on one time occurrence and it allows for subsidy of the Cobra payment. He explained the subsidy would not extend the length of the Cobra which may be problematic in the policy. Mr. Hyfield said the subsidy is for nine months and language could be built in to the policy that could be taken out if necessary.

Director Griswold asked if specific provisions are necessary. Mr. Hyfield said that CRRA's employment counsel could craft the necessary language. Mr. Hyfield explained the provision functions by the employer taking a credit against the employer liability to deposit payroll taxes and federal income taxes. He explained with the tax return high a wage earner has the ability to take the subsidy with a recapture tax or wave it and pay the full Cobra premiums.

Chairman Damer asked if there is language that can be placed in the policy to enhance CRRA's ability to capture these benefits. Mr. Bolduc said that CRRA is governed by state and federal law regardless. Ms. Marchese said that the policy indicates that benefits are not guaranteed. She said because there is an enhancement in Cobra it may be wise to incorporate that subsidy into the policy.

Chairman Damer introduced Monica Marchese as the Interim Human Resources Manager as Chris Hyfield is leaving CRRA.

Chairman Damer asked Director Griswold if he was in agreement that the calculations concerning the levels of severance were accurate. Director Griswold said that he feels the levels reflect the difficulty a member of upper management may have in securing a comparable position.

Chairman Damer said that concerning the years of service being rounded up to the full year that there should be a statement saying rounded to the nearest full day versus year.

Ms. Marchese asked if the Committee was in agreement with the tiering process. Mr. Kirk said the assignment of positions of each of the three levels would make the tier levels more understanding.

After substantial discussion the Committee agreed that the policy would be updated per the edits of the Committee and returned to the Committee at a later date.

### **3. MOTION TO TABLE**

Chairman Damer requested a motion to table the employee severance policy. The motion to table was made by Chairman Damer and seconded by Director Griswold.

The motion to table the employee severance policy was approved unanimously.

#### **4. REVIEW AND RECOMMEND RESOLUTION REGARDING MARKET PROGRESSION ADJUSTMENT FOR THE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS**

Chairman Damer requested a motion to approve the above referenced motion. The motion was made by Chairman Damer.

**RESOLVED:** That the salary range adjustment for the Director of Operations be adopted as presented and discussed by the Organizational Synergy & human resources Committee.

The motion was seconded by Director Griswold.

Mr. Kirk said the resolution concerns CRRA's Director of Operations, Mike Tracey. Mr. Kirk said that given Mr. Tracey's salary is still below the market range that this resolution would effect an increase of what that position is making in the current market.

Chairman Damer said that according to the resolution Mr. Tracey would not be eligible for the ATB increase in July. Mr. Kirk said that is correct, according to CRRA policies and procedures any employee who was given a market progression adjustment is not eligible for the ATB increase.

Chairman Damer said that he had no objections to the passage of this motion. He said as long as management is comfortable that they are paying the correct salary it should be executed as that is what the employee should be making. He said that management feels this adjustment is fair and deserved and noted that Mr. Tracey's performance has been highly rated.

The motion previously made and seconded was approved unanimously.

#### **5. DISCUSSION ITEM CONCERNING MERIT INCREASES**

Mr. Kirk said that management was in agreement with the Committee that it would be inappropriate to issue merit increases given the current economy. He noted the employee head count is about to be down by 12 and ½ percent. Mr. Kirk said there are several opportunities for the Board which provide for recognition of the CRRA employees efforts without the implementation of a merit increase.

Mr. Kirk reviewed several alternatives to merit increases with the Committee. He said that recognition of the lack of a defined benefit could be an increase in the 401k contribution. Mr. Kirk said another option would re-provide the sick time benefit. He explained that there is currently no sick time at CRRA which counters the practice of most quasi-publics and municipalities comparable to CRRA. Mr. Kirk said the provision would allow for accrual of sick time. He said that management recommends five days per year accruable with a follow up procedure ensuring the provision would not be abused. The Committee discussed the current use of personnel days for sick time and the benefits associated with receiving and accruing sick time.

Mr. Kirk said that the five sick days would be well welcomed by employees. He explained that employees have repeatedly requested sick time. Chairman Damer said that he would like to have a detailed discussion concerning this potential policy. He said the Committee is very reluctant to not recommend merit increases however sensitivity is necessary to CRRA's customers in consideration of the difficulties in the economy.

Chairman Damer said he felt personally the merit increase was the best option which provided for recognition of the performance of each individual employee. Director Griswold asked if the CRRA pool of employees is large enough to make this tier system used for grading effective. Mr. Kirk said the performance management plan is effective in providing employee feedback and evaluating minimum and exceptional performance.

Chairman Damer said that more detailed discussion concerning the approvals and a policy are necessary before the Committee considers recommending this proposal to the Board. He said that a maximum on accrual days is also necessary.

## **6. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Damer requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion made by Director Griswold and seconded by Chairman Damer was approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Moira Kenney  
Secretary to the Board/Paralegal