

CRRA Organizational Synergy & Human Resources Committee
July 14, 2004 Meeting

Draft Minutes

Members Present: Stephen Cassano, Committee Chairman
Michael Pace, Board Chairman
Mark Cooper
James Francis

CRRA Staff Present: Tom Kirk, President
Jim Bolduc, CFO
Chris Hyfield, Human Resources Manager
Kristen Greig, Legal Temp

Chairman Cassano called the meeting to order at 2:40 p.m. and noted that a quorum was present.

1. Approval of the Minutes of the April 13, 2004 Organizational Synergy & Human Resources Committee Meeting

Chairman Cassano requested a motion to accept the minutes of the April 13, 2004 Committee meeting. The motion was made by Chairman Pace and seconded by Director Francis. Director Francis stated that on the second page, the second sentence of the second paragraph should read "Chairman Cassano" rather than "Chairman Cohn." Mr. Hyfield stated that under the paragraph regarding adjournment, the minutes should read, "The meeting was adjourned at 12:21 p.m."

Chairman Cassano requested a motion to accept the minutes of the April 13, 2004 Committee with the corrections. The motion was made by Director Cooper and seconded by Director Francis.

The motion previously made and seconded was approved unanimously.

2. Review and Recommend New Comp Time Policy

Mr. Hyfield handed out a copy of the current "Compensatory Time" Policy which could be found in the Employee Handbook.

Mr. Kirk explained that the motivation behind changing to the new Comp Time Policy was to ensure it was compatible with the new time keeping software. There was not an actual change in benefits. Mr. Kirk said that the comp time policy was currently working well and was being utilized appropriately.

Mr. Hyfield added that the new policy clarified that comp time could not be used as part of an employee's resignation period, but that it would be paid out upon separation of employment with CRRA. Director Francis stated that, in the policies he had seen, comp time was not paid out upon termination. Mr. Hyfield stated that the intention was to see that comp time was handled similarly to the payout of personal time.

Chairman Pace asked whether this policy was affected by the new overtime regulations. Mr. Hyfield responded that the new regulations did not affect exempt employees at CRRA and that CRRA was not obligated to pay out comp time. Chairman Pace asked for confirmation that CRRA was not required to pay for overtime in wages. Mr. Hyfield said that there were exempt positions that could earn overtime pay, but the employees of CRRA did not fall into that category.

Chairman Pace asked to what extent comp time was utilized. Mr. Kirk responded that, although comp time was allegedly abused under the previous Board and management, it was very much controlled now. Mr. Kirk said his concern was that employees could possibly request comp time prior to announcing that they would be leaving the company. Mr. Kirk stated that the person's presence and having them assist with a transition was more valuable to the company than a pay out, in most instances.

Director Francis stated that the policy was not clear on how the time would be paid and suggested that the pay out not be paid in a lump sum, but paid as a regular paycheck. Mr. Hyfield stated that as written, the comp time would be paid out in the employee's last paycheck. Mr. Kirk stated that it was possible to pay out every two weeks rather than in the last paycheck. Chairman Cassano stated that with the 37.5 hour cap, he believed CRRA could retain employees through a transition and the employee would be paid out in the last paycheck for the accumulated comp time. Director Francis agreed stating that the pay out could be a concern if the cap were ever raised beyond 37.5 hours.

Mr. Kirk recommended that the Committee consider two other changes. Mr. Kirk stated that if it was the Committee's intention to consider a 40 hour work week, he suggested that under "Accumulation of Compensatory Time" 37.5 hours be stricken and replaced with "one week." Also, under "Use of Compensatory Time" Mr. Kirk recommended that 3.75 and 7.5 be stricken and replaced with "half day" and "full day" respectively. Mr. Kirk stated that if the Board decided on a 40 hour work week, the changes would eliminate the need to go back and change this policy.

Chairman Cassano asked for a motion to adopt the policy with the suggested changes.

The motion made by Director Francis and seconded by Chairman Pace was approved unanimously.

Chairman Pace asked whether there would be an adjustment in the pay scales if the 40 hour work week was adopted. Mr. Kirk responded that the Board would have to address the matter, but he stated that CRRA had three options to consider when considering the 7% increase in work hours: adopt the 40 hour week with no additional compensation, give a 7% increase, or offer something in between. Mr. Kirk stated that the matter had been handled differently by different organizations.

Mr. Hyfield stated that he had done some research on how other quasi-public agencies handled the work week. Mr. Hyfield explained that the State had moved managerial employees and some hourly employees to a 40 hour work week and made a 7% pay adjustment. Mr. Hyfield stated that many of the quasi-public agencies made the same changes. Some agencies remained at 37.5 hours and one remained at 35 hours.

Chairman Pace asked how many CRRA employees would be moved to a 40 hour work week. Mr. Kirk responded that everyone but the enforcement personnel would be affected. Mr. Kirk responded that there were enforcement employees that were already working 40 hours. Mr. Kirk wanted the Committee to be aware that payroll was established by surveys that were based on a weekly scale, not by a 37.5 or 40 hour week specifically. Mr. Kirk stated that market data showed that most companies had a 40 hour week.

Chairman Pace asked whether the longer week was being considered for a coordination of hours or if there was a benefit to the company. Mr. Kirk responded that the benefit to the company would be minimal, because it broke down to only one half hour a day and many people were already working that time. Mr. Kirk stated that he would not expect to see a large productivity change, but he did not think the change would hurt the organization either. Mr. Kirk explained that his concern was that the hourly field employees already worked a 40 hour week and everyone else was normally working 37.5 hours.

Chairman Pace asked if it would be more appropriate to review the matter at the next budget cycle since CRRA was a month into the new budget. Mr. Kirk responded that he thought it would be appropriate to make the change either in January or July at one of the scheduled increase periods. Chairman Pace stated that the matter should be brought to the table as the new fiscal year approached. Chairman Cassano stated that a 3% raise given at the beginning of the new fiscal year and a 7% increase to compensate for the additional hours was a substantial raise. Mr. Kirk said that if the Board was inclined to increase the hours with an increase in pay, he believed there could be compromise. For example, if a 2% across the board increase was to be given in July, an additional 2% could be given for the additional hours.

Mr. Hyfield stated that the personal and vacation time accruals would also change.

Chairman Pace asked Mr. Bolduc for his opinion on the matter. Mr. Bolduc stated that he was leaning towards no increase in pay. Mr. Bolduc stated that there was

usually a lot more pain associated with a bankruptcy, but that after a short hiatus without increases, the Board had been very good to employees with respect to their increases. Mr. Bolduc added that CRRA was getting an average of how many hours were currently worked from ADP, but he thought many employees were already working at least 40 hours.

Director Francis stated that he would like to see the increase put toward merit increases rather than an across the board salary increase. Mr. Kirk said that his biggest concern was the consistency. Chairman Cassano stated that he was aware of other employers who required varied work schedules. Chairman Cassano added that if one department consistently worked over 40 hours than the adjustment should be made, but he felt the employees should be compensated for the increase.

The issue was tabled with action taken.

3. CRRA Human Resources Update

Mr. Hyfield stated that CRRA currently had 53 employees and listed recent hires. Mr. Hyfield said that there were vacancies for following positions: Scale Enforcement Specialist, Managing Director of Legal Services, Operations Analyst, Operations Manger Customer Care, and Accounting Assistant. The Operations Analyst position was currently on hold since it had been vacant for a significant amount of time.

Mr. Hyfield added that the focus was currently on the Operations Manager Customer Care position. Mr. Kirk explained that the Operations Manager Customer Care would focus on rebuilding the relationships with the Project towns, especially Bridgeport, and create a new project to survive the 2008 contract as well as concentrating on future plans. Chairman Pace asked if management was looking for an in-house candidate. Mr. Hyfield responded that an in-house application had been received. Chairman Pace stated that if there was someone in the company that had the expertise, it was best to look in-house first. Chairman Cassano stated that the position would require marketing experience. Mr. Hyfield agreed stating that it was a type of sales position that also required technical expertise. Chairman Pace stated that it was important that employees know that there are opportunities for advancement within the company.

Mr. Hyfield noted that there was an offer out to the Scale Enforcement Specialist, which he expected to be accepted by the end of the week.

Regarding the Managing Director of Legal Services, Mr. Hyfield said that there was one more interview to be conducted. Chairman Pace asked who was interviewing the candidates. Mr. Kirk responded that the panel consisted of him, Mr. Bolduc, Mr. Egan, Mr. Gent, and Mr. Hyfield. The Policies and Procurement Committee had recommended that an attorney evaluate the legal qualifications of the final candidates, which was being done via telephone.

Chairman Cassano stated that hiring responsibilities should be given back to the management team. The Board reserved a role for the Organization Synergy & Human Resources Committee with regard to the President and Chief Financial Officer positions. Mr. Kirk said that management understood that Director of Legal Services was a key position and it was management's intent was to identify a preferred candidate and recommend that person to the Policies and Procurement Committee or the Organizational Synergy and Human Resources Committee. Chairman Pace stated that he would prefer that the decision go through the Organizational Synergy and Human Resources Committee. Mr. Kirk said that a recommendation should be available within a week and a meeting would be arranged for the Organizational Synergy and Human Resources Committee to meet the preferred candidate prior to making an offer.

Chairman Pace asked whether the interviews included questions that would require disclosure of matters or relationships that could cause CRRA embarrassment. Mr. Kirk responded that CRRA did a criminal check. Chairman Pace stated that he wanted to be sure that there was disclosure of any potential conflicts. The Committee and management emphasized that a qualified candidate would not be disqualified because they had an indirect connection to CRRA, but Chairman Pace stated that he wanted to know of any conflicts before they arose.

Chairman Pace also suggested that management consider CRRA's Affirmative Plan when considering candidates. Chairman Pace said that the organization could use more diversity and Mr. Kirk agreed.

Mr. Kirk said that diversity was also taken into consideration during the initial screening procedure and that Mr. Larry Brown of Horton International was aware of CRRA's desire to be a diverse organization and its Affirmative Action Policy. Chairman Cassano asked whether the advertising of the vacancy was consistent with the Affirmative Action Policy. Mr. Hyfield responded in the affirmative stating that the vacancy was posted in "Northeast Minority" and that CRRA had performed outreach to several regional groups in Hartford.

4. Bus Pass Policy

Mr. Kirk explained that the previous bus pass policy required a six month wait before reimbursement, which was inconsistent with the parking pass policy which was issued immediately. Chairman Cassano asked whether the Board was offering or encouraging the use of bus passes. Chairman Cassano noted that CRRA should be taking a lead role in encouraging employees to use mass transit. Mr. Hyfield responded that it was an option available to employees.

Mr. Kirk stated that the policy also clarified that employees would choose either a bus pass or parking pass.

5. Corporate Seal Designation

Mr. Bolduc explained that there were documents that required the Corporate Seal, which in the absence of a Corporate Secretary, could not be certified. Mr. Bolduc said that the new Director of Legal Services would be appointed Corporate Secretary, but in the meantime, there was the need for a secondary person to have the ability to certify documents.

Executive Session

Chairman Cassano requested a motion to go into an Executive Session in order to discuss confidential personnel performance matters. Chairman Cassano requested that Mr. Kirk, Mr. Bolduc, and Mr. Hyfield remain during the executive session. The motion to go into Executive Session made by Director Cooper and seconded by Director Francis was approved unanimously.

The Executive Session began at 3:23 p.m. and concluded at 3:40 p.m. Chairman Cassano noted that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to discuss before the Committee, Chairman Cassano requested a motion to adjourn. The motion to adjourn made by Director Cooper and seconded by Director Francis was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Greig
Legal Temp