



**MINUTES
Personnel Committee
Colorado Springs Utilities Board
January 17, 2025**

Committee members present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont Conference Room:

Yolanda Avila and Randy Helms

Staff members present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont Conference Room:

Travas Deal, Renee Adams, Michael Francolino, Tristan Gearhart, Somer Mese, Sara Akins, Heather Harvey, Jacqueline Nunez, Gail Pecoraro, Bethany Schoemer and Natalie Watts

City staff present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont Conference Room:

Elli Harris-Mevis and Matthew Vanlandingham

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Committee Chair Yolanda Avila called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. Ms. Renee Adams, Chief Human Resources Officer, read a statement regarding the Colorado Open Meetings Law and City Charter and stated that public comment would not be a part of the meeting.

Members in attendance in the Rosemont Conference Room and Ms. Natalie Watts, Strategic Planning and Governance Manager, introduced the online attendees.

Mr. Travas Deal, Chief Executive Officer, presented Committee Chair Avila with a service award for her dedication to the Personnel Committee. Mr. Tristan Gearhart, Chief Planning Financial Officer, thanked Vice Chair Avila for her dedication to the employees of the organization and the difference she has made during her tenure.

2. Review of Minutes

The Nov. 18, 2024, Personnel Committee minutes were approved for posting.

3. Safety Moment: Slips, Trips and Falls

Ms. Sara Akins, Occupational Clinic Supervisor, shared the safety moment on slips, trips and falls. A slip is caused by the absence of sufficient friction between a person's feet and his/her walking surface. A trip is a loss of balance that occurs when the forward or backward movement of one foot or both feet is interrupted. A fall is the consequence of a slip. Falls happen when an irregular body movement disrupts balance. Causes of slip, trip and fall incidents are caused by human factors (54%), wet or slippery surfaces (25%), and housekeeping issues (16%), according to a Southern University study.

The organization had 38 incidents in 2024 – 20 falls, 14 trips, and 4 slips. There are ways to prevent slips, trips and falls. These include good traction, walking with purpose, not carrying too many objections, and avoiding distractions like texting and talking on the phone while walking.

4. Employee Climate Survey Action Planning Efforts

Ms. Heather Harvey, Human Resources Manager, said that every division and every department was required to submit an action plan.

A total of 380 action plans were received, by 131 unique users – indicating that many users have submitted multiple plans. Of the plans submitted, 89.74% have not been started, and 10.26% are in progress. The top action planning survey items used are Career Development: I feel valued at Utilities; Other which offers customization outside the survey items which includes themes such as communication and employee development; Supervisor: I understand how the success of my department is measured; Career Development: My direct supervisor supports my career development; Supervisor: Clear goals are set for our department, and Career Development: I receive the training I need to be successful in my work.

Division Action Planning

Top themes for the different areas throughout the organization are Systems Planning and Projects -- Career Development: I feel valued at Utilities; Customer and Enterprise Services -- Supervisor: I understand how the success of my department is measured; Administrative Human Resources -- Leadership: I feel the organization manages change effectively; Planning and Finance -- Leadership: I feel the organization manages change effectively; Operations -- Leadership: I trust that communications from my manager are open and honest.

5. Personnel Committee Topic Recommendations for Utilities Board Working Committee

Ms. Adams said that as the structure of the committee meetings is changing, it is important for the Personnel Committee to review and bring forward items that they feel would be important for the Working Committee to discuss. Workplans over the past four years were reviewed and key focus areas and strategic initiatives were compiled for the committee to review.

Ms. Adams stated that Compliance Reports are Utilities Board requirements and cannot be changed.

Compliance Reports

- Board Expected Results – Scorecard (ER: 1:1-3)
 - Workforce Index; Occupational Injuries and Illnesses – Lost Time
- Treatment of Staff (I-10)
- Compensation and Benefits (I-11)
- Emergency CEO Succession (E-2.8)

Ms. Adams asked for feedback on the Focus areas and the Strategic Areas. After discussion the following items were determined to move forward to the Working Committee.

Focus Areas

- Affirmative Action Plan and Workforce Demographics
- CEO Competencies
- CEO Year-End and Mid-Year Performance Reviews- perhaps doing a “softer” mid-year evaluation, more of a conversation
- Employee Climate Survey and Action Planning
- New Board Member Orientation
- Workforce Updates- updates from employee groups with activities within those work groups, and not specific to awards

Strategic Initiatives

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Total Worker Health
- Workforce Development and Training- at a higher level
- Safety Maturity, Safety, Occupational Health Clinic- annually
- Support Our Community – Employee Volunteer Program
- Human Resources Integrated Plan (HRIP)

Committee Member Helms asked if the change went through to redirect the organizations' donations to other not for profit organizations to Project COPE. Ms. Adams said that this change has been made. All organizations that had received funds previously have been contacted, and they were very gracious with this news. Their names have been added to the list of organizations where Colorado Springs Utilities employees can volunteer.

Ms. Harvey updated the committee on the HRIP. Supervisors throughout the organization were asked to identify employees as high risk / high impact and high potential. The high risk / high impact classification was the impact on the organization if the employee were to leave the organization. The high potential classification identified the potential of the employee. This information is being used for succession planning efforts throughout the organization.

Committee Member Helms congratulated and thanked Committee Chair Avila for her work on the Personnel Committee over his time on the committee. He reiterated the importance of continuing to recruit a diverse workforce. He stated that it is particularly important to keep a safety focus, and having a safety moment at the Working Committee meeting is a great way of keeping this focus.

Committee Chair Avila said that one of the things that she has enjoyed most serving on the Personnel Committee is being able to get to know members of the staff and getting to know her fellow Board Members better.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.