



Minutes Approved by the EAC

## EAC Delegate Meeting Notes

Employees Advisory Council Delegates Meeting  
September 25, 2008, 8:04 A.M.

### Call to Order

- Chairman Paul Rogers called the meeting to order.

### Introductions

- Mr. Rogers noted that the following individuals were in attendance:
  - Peggy Rowe, Director of Personnel
  - Jean Magee, Human Resources Manager
  - Dave Blasewitz, Human Resources Manager
  - Carol A. Tresca, Human Resources Coordinator

### Emergency Compensation

- The EAC Representatives meeting took place on September 17, 2008. Following lengthy discussion regarding employee compensation during a declared state of emergency, the members voted 10 to 4 in opposition to propose increasing compensation from time-and-a-half to double-time for those individuals required to work during the crisis.
- Three percent of County employees are considered first responders; the remaining 97 percent will most likely return to work within 36 hours of a storm event, provided that it is not catastrophic.
- In response to queries by a delegate in the audience, Mr. Rogers confirmed that a rough description of the EAC policy is that the employees will bring an issue or idea to the Delegates. If the Delegates act upon the issue, it is presented to the Representatives. The Representatives review the issue and if it is decided that it merits action, they then present it to the Appointing Authority or the Unified Personnel Board (UPB).
- Proposed that first responders receive four to eight hours of administrative leave prior to a storm which will afford them time to attend to personal responsibilities.

### Comments from Peggy Rowe, Director of Personnel

- Ms. Rowe provided historical background information relating to employee compensation during a declared state of emergency; whereupon, she provided input and responded to queries by the Delegates, indicating the following:
  - Prior to the major storms which occurred in 2004:
    - Employees required to work were paid straight time; reporting to work was considered part of the job.
    - Citizen volunteers staffed the Citizens Information Center (CIC); they were not always familiar with County operations and may not have desired to report during an emergency situation.



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- Employees who were told not to report for work were provided paid administrative leave.
- Changes resulting from the 2004 hurricane season:
  - Departments were requested to make available approximately ten percent of their employees to staff the CIC.
  - Employees working in the CIC are paid 1.0 times their salary during standard working hours and 1.5 times their salary for hours worked outside of their ordinary shift.
  - Employees working during an emergency receive compensation at 1.5 times their regular hourly rate.
  - Up to four weeks of administrative leave, to be paid at an employee's regular hourly rate, may be granted to those who are required to stay at home following a storm or disaster.
- Employees who do not return to work once called back will be subject to dismissal.
- Holiday and emergency pay should not be compared; the former is an employee benefit, the latter is not.
- The general public considers it the responsibility of local government to protect them throughout an emergency.
- Upon review of other organizations emergency policies, some were more generous than Pinellas County, others less so.
- Chairman Rogers cautioned that presenting to the Appointing Authorities on behalf of the few could put the administrative pay provided to all other Unified Personnel System employees at risk.

### Personnel Status Report

- Ms. Rowe presented a Personnel Status Report regarding layoffs and related the following:
  - One classified employee and nine exempt employees continue to be at risk of being laid off.
  - Due to the bumping process, 130 classified employees will transfer to different positions on October 1, 2008; many departments will have a New Employee Welcome Day to ease the transition for affected employees.
  - At previous times it has been mentioned that a severance package should be provided to employees who are affected by a reduction-in-force.
  - Upon notification that their position was being eliminated, many employees chose to find new jobs, retire early, or volunteered for layoff.
  - It is currently unknown if another round of budget cuts will take place, additional information will be available after the Legislative body meets.



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- Robert S. LaSala has been hired as the County's new administrator and will commence employment October 12, 2008. Ms. Rowe recommended that the delegates extend Mr. LaSala an invitation to attend an EAC Delegates meeting.

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At this time, 9:09 A.M., the meeting was recessed and reconvened at 9:24 A.M.; whereupon, Ms. Rowe left the meeting.

\* \* \* \*

### EAC Council Election

- Delegates George A. Morrison and Deborah L. Fulton, candidates in the upcoming EAC election, provided information regarding their backgrounds and qualifications relating to their candidacy.

### Holiday Season Troop Drive

- Tom West requested donations of various items to be distributed to U.S. troops, noting that items must be available for pick up before the end of October.

### Employee Advocate Update

- Two Advocates appeared before the UPB during an Appeal of Termination Hearing; they were commended by the members for exceptional representation of their client.
- Five Advocates have given notice that they will be temporarily unable to serve, and Lisa Wombles will be joining the group, leaving a total of 14 Advocates.
- Advocates previously had been working in pairs; they will now work individually.
- Initial requests for an employee advocate will be received by Carol Tresca.

### Legislative Committee Update

- Chuck Lubitz and Charles Toney met with Interim County Administrator Fred E. Marquis and Commissioner Calvin D. Harris, current Chairman of the Florida Association of Counties (FAC), to discuss EAC requests pertaining to the Florida Retirement System.
- EAC representatives have been meeting with local legislators on an individual basis for years, but working with FAC could provide a large audience of County representatives throughout the state.

### Reappointment of EAC Representative to the UPB



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- Ira Wolf moved, seconded by Tim Clark and carried, that George E. Tragos be reappointed to a two-year term as one of the two EAC Representatives sitting on the UPB.

### Agenda for the Upcoming Appointing Authority Meeting

- The October 10 meeting will last just one hour instead of two.
- Suggested agenda items include the following:
  - Employees were not adequately compensated during good financial times and are now expected to economize during bad times. When good times return, they will look forward to compensation above the market rate to make amends.
  - Pay and benefit equity; cost of living adjustments (COLAs).
  - During hard times, an across-the-board cost of living pay increase of three percent, effective October 1.
  - Discussion ensued regarding the four-day work week, which is at the discretion of the Appointing Authorities and although currently available in most BCC departments, many Delegates indicated that they have been meeting with resistance.
  - Telecommuting.
  - Reaching midpoint of salary range within five years.

### Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 A.M.