

Monday, November 7, 2022 at 3:00-4:30 pm

1. Management update on phased retirement and tuition reimbursement pilots (15 min)

Joel

- a. *Are these still in discussion? What to expect with student loan forgiveness (will there be an MOU that puts it to the agency's discretion to enact a pilot)?*
- b. *Yes, they are with the HR management team (ADDs, DD, Managers and Supervisors) to look at the pilot programs. The pilot systems below are listed by agency priority.*
 - i. *Phased retired roll out proposed for January*
 1. *Guidance document drafted*
 2. *Provide potential savings (reducing the number of hours the retiree would be working)*
 - ii. *Hiring and referral incentives (leave up to the divisions)*
 1. *This pilot can go forward without a budget/funding (could be covered by holding the vacancy/salary savings)*
 - iii. *Student Loan reimbursement*
 - a. *Establish a new baseline and identify that these are basic requirements to talent acquisition, we need these items to recruit and retain the best talent*
 2. *Funding has not been obtained and the amount of reimbursements and the number of staff approved for reimbursement would be dependent on the number and location of new positions that the MPCA can get approved*
- c. *States were sharing their Recruitment/retention plans at the recent Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) meeting - incentives and ideas, what's appealing to folks coming directly out of school as well as career changes.*
 - i. *There is a momentum across the states to increase incentives and to show state service as a career*
 - ii. *Requested management to share the information from ECOS for use to review.*

2. Workload & prioritization issues (30 min) *Kristin Kirchoff-Franklin*

- a. *Response and how can we work on this together, it's becoming a large issue (60+ people) and what can we do to help?*
 - i. *Nicole Green - this outline is extremely helpful - what do we need to prioritize, what does **done** look like, what does success look like. Employees knowing what their priorities are and that they can move toward completing their priorities (Challenge me well)*
 - ii. *Katrina Kessler - FTEs should truly represent the work that we do (ground truthing), so how much work can an FTE do and how do we prioritize our workloads. How do we accommodate additional work and prioritize through a consistent lens? We need a culture for people to feel heard and not overburdened and skills aligned with priorities. Feels troubled that*

these concerns are coming through the Meet and Confer vs being brought up through supervisors/leadership

- iii. *Wayne Cords - addressing the example of the weekly meetings: do staff not feel comfortable talking to their supervisors about limiting these meetings if they have outlived their usefulness?*
 - 1. *Follow up from Nicole - is the purpose of the meeting clear? We're meeting weekly and the issues are not resolved. Should some items brought up at these meetings have been an email?*
 - 2. *Kristin - meetings should have agendas, tell people why they are taking their time. Brought up Innovation project from several years ago that could be re-examined by leadership and re-distributed to agency staff.*
- iv. *Claudia - Folks that do not feel empowered to take their vacation due to fear of work piling up. Supervisors and leaders should (and do) model taking their accrued time off for staff. You can and SHOULD take the time off that you've accumulated. Workplace culture in some areas of the agency seems to be that everything we do is so important and we should put work before all other things in their lives. There is a need to develop the culture of healthy workplace boundaries*
 - 1. *Katrina - these things are important and the commissioners office also tries to emulate this.*
 - 2. *Peter - bring this up with your supervisor to have these discussions - it has to work both ways. We have a model for this in the CO and support it agency-wide. People need to take time off.*
- v. *Kellie - encourage members to go back to their supervisors, if we don't have supervisors that are doing a good job adjusting and being flexible with deadlines (esp. if there is vacation), then we'd like you to follow up with this MPCA Meet & Confer committee.*
 - 1. *Get a deadline in the first place to get a priority*
 - 2. *If you feel that you are unable to take vacation, talk to your supervisor*
 - 3. *Needs to come from both directions - workplans and building workplans - building in time to acknowledge time off*
- 3. *Direct communication request on strategic plan (5 min) Barbara M.*
 - a. *Planned update (Katrina will be working with Paul Pestano on this.*
- 4. *Question on sick leave and timesheets (5 min) Claudia*
 - a. *Comment section on the timesheets - strictly required, what is this additional information on the "type" of sick leave being used for?*
 - i. *Nicole Green - Hold off from years ago for paper timesheets - believed for a reason - leadership trying to track down the written reason instead of saying "we've always done it this way"*
 - ii. *In place of the paper leave request*

- iii. *For dependent-related sick leave, HR wants to make sure that employees receive any FMLA leave that we may not know they qualify for if we don't have that additional information*
 - iv. *The additional information could also be identified for Workers comp evidence*
 - v. *What is the level of detail that is required?*
 - 1. *Who is the qualifying person that you are taking leave for (employee vs dependent)*
 - 2. *Recommend using appt and illness as additional qualifiers*
 - vi. *Kristin K. F. suggested that we add another code in the timesheet system to show absences for SIK-self vs SIK-dependent*
5. *Communications Social Media Policy (Kellie McNamara and Andrea Cournoyer - interim communications director)*
- a. *MAPE edits/concerns - Leadership response*
 - i. *This policy also pertains to personal social media accounts*
 - ii. *Desire to have this included in the next Document Knowledge Transfer (DKT) policy acknowledgement in January*
 - 1. *MAPE will have our response next week depending on we get the updated policy for our review*
 - iii. *Reiterate that this policy has been worked on, back and forth with Meet and Confer and the open conversations have been successful for both parties*
 - iv. *Waiting on clarification regarding what communications means in the context of the policy and what types of items would need to wait for MPCA PIO/Communications and what constitutes public communication by the agency*
 - 1.
6. *New business? (5 min) Claudia*
- a. *Joel - has anyone used the office hours*
 - i. *Yes! Kartina said that an Operations Division person, who visited during office hours, was the inspiration for the connection survey, and while responses weren't overwhelming, they've had good responses*
 - b. *Kristin M. R. - thank you to the management team for responding to our concerns and helping to expedite the removal of the fences blocking the sidewalks and crosswalks from the remote lots adjacent to the police and sheriff's buildings. These changes also improved transportation issues that were addressed in the last meeting*
7. *Anything MAPE can do to help? (10 min) Claudia*
8. *Summarize any follow up actions (5 min) Claudia*

Follow Up actions:

- Peter to share recruitment and retention strategies from ECOS
- Kristin K.F. to send outline regarding Workforce and Prioritization

- Andrea and Kellie will be working on the Comms plan and will send to the Meet and Confer
- If the policy/written documentation for comments regarding “Employee/Dependent” on timesheets is available, please share with the Meet and Confer members
- Upcoming communication from Katrina and Paul Pestano on the next phase of the Strategic Plan planned for December
- Kristin K. F. to find and send the older Innovation project regarding meeting etiquette that was established for the agency several years ago.