



## HUMAN RESOURCES BOARD

Meeting Minutes  
Monday, May 05, 2025

### Opening:

The hybrid meeting of the Human Resources Board was called to order at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 05, 2025, by Chair Kerry Pendergast.

#### Present:

Dr. Austin Attaway  
Elizabeth Scott-Jones  
Makisha Alexander  
Tony Van Vegten  
Kerry Pendergast  
Rene Goldman  
Veronica Poston

#### Absent:

Jadie Lee

#### Public Comment Period:

- No Public Comment

#### Public Hearing

- **Harassment Free Workplace Report & Policy**
  - Deputy Director of Human Resources, Colene Torres, presented Policy III-6 to the board, opening her presentation with that the Policy was last revised in June 2013.
  - Several revisions to support & preserve the right of employees to be free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in the workplace & set uniform guidelines to address and resolve complaints. This was done by emphasizing accountability and explicitly including visitors, board and commission members, elected officials, interns, and prospective employees so that “workplace interactions” cover interactions beyond traditional employee relationships.
  - Definitions of harassment have been expanded to acknowledge inappropriate behavior occurring during public meetings and reinforces that all participating policies in attendance of these public meetings must adhere to the standards defined in this policy. The definition of harassment was also expanded to include unwanted physical contact, speech, visual contact, and explicit or implicit suggestions of sex in return for favorable employment.
  - The retaliation section was updated so that employees may report occurrences of retaliation to many different sources to increase their accessibility in making these reports. It was also strengthened to protect employees who witness and report inappropriate conduct.
  - The obligation section was updated to include a harassment complaint form that employees can fill out to ensure that all allegations are properly documented.

- A training section was added to ensure compliance with Assembly Bill AB18-25.
- Board Member Alexander asked if “visitors” includes contractors?
  - Ms. Torres confirmed yes that is correct.
- Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway made two suggestions:
  - P.2 under examples in Section E
  - Unwanted visual contact should include formal language for long and short form videos (including gifs and memes specifically) since these often do not get investigated since they are classified as “humors”
  - Ms. Torres thanked him for pointing that out and said they could make that suggestion.
  - P.5 under Investigations and Confidentiality
  - This section is vague about what will happen in instances of breached confidentiality, and this should be strengthened by providing sanctions in the instance of breached confidentiality
  - Ms. Torres reports she appreciates the feedback.
- Chair Pendergast inquired if Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway would like to see this policy come back with these changes.
  - Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway responded yes, at least the second one.
  - Ms. Torres clarified that when these revisions occur it will not be returned to the board for approval for a couple more months since it must be sent back to the Union to go through the meet and confer process to ensure they agree with these changes as well.
  - Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway then asked for Ms. Torres’s feedback on the confidentiality section be brought to attention.
  - Director Goldman responded to his question, explaining that employees are admonished during the investigative process and are provided with a letter and disciplinary policy regarding confidentiality.
  - Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway reported he would be fine moving forward without the changes being made.
- Board Member Van Vegten reported he had a few questions about the policy before they could move forward:
  - Board Member Van Vegten asked how does this document serve in public meetings?
  - Ms. Torres responded that individuals participating in public meetings, such as this one, will be held accountable for their actions any time there is interaction with a City employee.
  - Board Member Van Vegten requested clarification about where to find this policy.
  - Ms. Torres clarified that this can be found within the Human Resources Policy & Procedure manual.
  - Board Member Van Vegten asked for clarification in regards to the training being required for non-supervisory and supervisory employees
  - Ms. Torres clarified that there is training for both management and non-management employees that takes place.
- Board Member Scott-Jones motioned that this policy be approved and Board Member Van Vegten seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Ayes:** Scott-Jones, Alexander, Van Vegten, Attaway, Pendergast

**No:**

**Absent:** Lee

### **Discussion Calendar**

- **2025 Human Resources Board Workplan**
  - Chair Pendergast reported that Board Secretary, Michelle Stevens, cautioned the board when approaching the workplan to ensure they were in compliance with the standing rules of the Human Resources Board of the City of Riverside which Ms. Stevens refers to as the “board charter”. Board Member Pendergast reported that upon reviewing the suggested changes from Board Member Lee, he did not see any changes that would fall out of compliance with this document.
  - Vice Chair Dr. Attaway then suggested that the workplan should be updated to incorporate tangible outcomes when measuring S.M.A.R.T. goals, including quarterly or bi-monthly metrics. Specifically, Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway explained that he’d like to see:
    - Addressing Section 5.1 through city-wide attraction statistics.
    - Addressing Section 5.3 through city-wide awareness statistics.
    - He went on to suggest that there be more transparency in employees knowing their abilities in HR processes so that employees may see the value in attending these meetings and being willing to discuss pain points, which may allow the board to identify common pain points and address them.
    - He also suggested measuring employee awareness of the various trainings available to them.
    - Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway then inquired about what communication currently looks like across the city since HR is the center of that communication.
    - Director Goldman expressed that it is important to note that not all employees are regularly seated at a desk and utilizing a computer in which they can send and receive emails. She then shared that communicating the availability of training is often done in person, and provided the foreman academy as an example of this. She explained that we must rely on the leadership to get this message out, and that HR conducts outreach to present HR initiatives to employees.
    - Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway then asked if HR has access to SMS blasts.
    - Ms. Goldman responded that this is something the team is actively working on, and that Ms. Torres just worked on validating the bank of employee personal numbers. She mentioned that employees also tend to follow the City social media pages.
    - Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway then inquired about how much HR information needs to remain internal.
  - Ms. Goldman responded that most of the information needs to remain internal, but that the “feel good” things can go out on social media. The marketing team and arts & cultural affairs team are great assets in getting the word out and communicating with the City and employees following those accounts. She shared that marketing also sends out email blasts through the exchange server for internal communications including upcoming projects (such as the survey) or safety concerns. Board Member Alexander inquired if there is a platform or landing page where these pages are stored.

- Director Goldman explained that yes there is someone on staff dedicated to updating this page.
- Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway suggested combining these concepts with SMS blasts to reduce siloing employees and reinforce the benefits of attending HR Board meetings.
  - Ms. Goldman explained that with certain initiatives, such as health and wellness groups, there are ambassadors at locations throughout the city.
  - Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway asked if there are metrics available for email engagements.
  - Ms. Goldman explained that while we definitely have access to our social media footprint and she assumes that yes there are metrics but it is not something she currently has access to.
  - Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway suggested being able to see these metrics in future meetings.
- Chair Pendergast asked Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway if there is any specific language he'd like to see added to the Workplan.
  - Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway responded that he'd like to see a second page added to the Workplan that contains metrics that can be reported on and monitored so that the Board can move from being reactive to proactive. He'd like to see metrics associated with each section on a rotational basis (one month ".1", next month ".2", etc., so that each metric is reviewed quarterly). Examples included email engagements, communication, policy complaints would be shared every third month in alignment with goal 5.3.
  - Chair Pendergast asked if HR staff would be comfortable with preparing such a page as part of the workplan or if it should be a secondary page designed to benefit the board.
  - Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway responded he would like this to be part of the workplan.
- Deputy Director Torres requested a motion be made so that the changes can be taken to the Governmental Processes Committee (GPC) so they may be considered.
- Chair Pendergast then reiterated that the final Workplan does not get finalized and approved by the HR Board but by another committee, which Ms. Torres confirmed.
- Vice Chair Dr. Attaway clarified that the updates he'd like to see are:
  - Tangible metrics attached to goals 1-3
  - 5.1: Metrics on cross-departmental applications
    - Board Member Scott-Jones expressed that she'd like to see turnover and attrition as part of these metrics
  - 5.3: Metrics on communication engagements
  - 5.5: Metrics on the engagement and attendance of health and wellbeing events
- Board Member Scott-Jones moved to approve these changes and advance them to be reviewed by the GPC as presented by Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway with a second by Board Member Alexander.
- Chair Pendergast requested that the board review the suggestions presented by Board Member Lee via email since the April Board meeting, and explained that in summary she was looking to beef up each section and make them more tangible and more clear.

- Director Goldman mentioned the board should avoid making the workplan overly specific and narrow that it prevents an emerging opportunity or goal from being addressed.
- Chair Pendergast requested clarification, and Ms. Goldman stated that she can look and review the document closer.
- Board Member Van Vegten shared that he seems to be out of the email chain and was unable to review Board Member Lee's responses prior to the meeting.
- Board Member Alexander then summarized Board Member Lee's recommendations including:
  - S.M.A.R.T. goals should be included
  - Using "personnel" is not up to industry standards and should be updated to alternate phrasing.
- Chair Pendergast stated that while Board Member Lee removed a statement in regards to being "across the city organization", he believes that statement should remain.
- Ms. Goldman explained that the goals within the workplan must align with the purview provided by the City Charter. She mentioned that she would be okay with amending the charter but that it would not take place immediately. She then read the sections of the City Charter and Municipal Codes which outline the HR Board's power.
- Chair Pendergast responded that these suggested changes would not make the board out of compliance with these conditions.
- Vice Chair Dr. Attaway moved to advance these changes to the Workplan to the next step in approval with a second by Board Member Van Vegten. The motion passed unanimously.

**Ayes:** Scott-Jones, Alexander, Van Vegten, Attaway, Pendergast

**No:**

**Absent:** Lee

- Vice Chair Dr. Attaway mentioned that in the spirit of communication he'd like to make a motion to pass advisory to the City Council on them instituting a new policy for themselves to utilize their communication channels for hiring and job openings. He explained that instead of this being a voluntary action by councilmembers that it should be mandatory for councilmembers to communicate job openings with their respective wards so they may have a stake in the hiring process. Vice Chair Vice-Chair Dr. Attaway moved to pass this advisory to the City Council with a second by Board Member Scott-Jones. The motion passed unanimously.

**Ayes:** Scott-Jones, Alexander, Van Vegten, Attaway, Pendergast

**No:**

**Absent:** Lee

## **Minutes**

- **Review and Approval of April 7, 2025, Minutes**
  - Board Member Van Vegten motioned to approve the minutes as presented with a second by Board Member Scott-Jones. The motion passed unanimously.

**Ayes:** Scott-Jones, Alexander, Van Vegten, Attaway, Pendergast

**No:**

**Absent:** Lee

### **Communications**

- **Human Resources Director Updates – Rene Goldman, Human Resources Director**
  - Director Rene Goldman shared that Recruitment Manager, Maggie Tanner, attended a career fair at La Sierra High School on 04/18/25 and reported that representing the City's summer employment opportunities and other various programs we offer was a great success.
  - Ms. Goldman reported that this month, the training division is offering "Part Three" for three technical Microsoft courses which are available to all City Staff
  - Ms. Goldman informed the Board that Benefits/Wellness team is implementing events that will be biweekly instead of monthly. This change was made as a result of an employee survey. Ms. Goldman reported that this week a Stroke Prevention Webinar.
  - Director Goldman shared that on 05/22/25 a ScholarShare 529 College Savings Workshop will be offered to employees as an opportunity for them to learn more about the cost of college, saving options, and the ScholarShare program that is offered to employees as well.
  - Director Goldman shared in the coming month several in-person Safety Related Trainings will be offered, including:
    - OSHA-10, an introductory-level safety training.
    - Stop the Bleed, a training designed to empower bystanders to help in a bleeding emergency.
    - Situational Awareness, which is key in assisting staff with recognizing warning signs of potential violence or threats both in and out of the workplace.
    - Active Assailant Prevention, which is a training course designed to prepare employees for workplace active shooter situations.
  - Ms. Goldman on 05/07/25 at 9:00 a.m. will be presenting the Telecommuting Policy & Program as it exists today at the Governmental Processes Committee. It is being reviewed due to the political climate and the Federal Government return to work order. Ms. Goldman explained that she looks forward to the opportunity to share the importance of offering telecommute in maintaining the status of a premier employer and doing so effectively so that it does not impact service to the City's constituents.

### **Items for Future Human Resources Board Consideration – Kerry Pendergast, Chair**

- a. Chair Pendergast noted that the Standing Rules of the Human Resources Board of the City of Riverside have not been reviewed since 2017 and requested that they be submitted to the board for review sometime soon.
- b. Board Member Van Vegten inquired about the Blue Zone Event occurring 05/17/25. Ms. Goldman responded that while she was not part of the planning committee and will not be in attendance at this event, that it should be a great one to attend.

*Meeting was adjourned at 5:58 p.m. by Chair Kerry Pendergast.*

Minutes submitted by: Veronica Poston, Substitute for Michelle Stevens, Secretary Human Resources Board