

April 10, 2023 Ad Hoc Meeting - Employee Benefits and Wage Review Ad Hoc Committee

Ad Hoc Meeting – Employee Benefits and Wage Review – April 10, 2023 AT 12:00 P.M.

Members Present:

Mark Jantzer, Scott Burlingame, Stephan Podrygula, Lisa Jundt, Derek Hackett, Travis Seifert, Harold Stewart, Kevin Ternes, Margie Zietz

Members Absent:

Laurie Davis, Terri Phillion, Dallas Varty

Also Present:

Mikayla McWilliams (City Clerk)

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mark Jantzer at 12:03 pm. Alderman Jantzer discussed the meetings agenda. Bereavement leave was the first to be discussed. Currently bereavement leave is taken out of sick leave hours. Harold mentioned the grandmother/grandfather -in-laws be added to the policy as a recommendation from the policy committee. Margie discussed that if the city goes to PTO system 40 hours of bereavement could come out of the frozen sick leave banks. The management team recommended it would be used out of PTO. Kevin Ternes thought it would be something management would have to track if it is separated out of the PTO.

Harold Stewart reminded the committee the policy is only for the family members listed out in the policy. With the current process, an employee is allowed to take 3 consecutive days for a funeral of any family member listed in the policy. There are two additional days given if the employee has to travel over 300 miles. Travis Seifert asked Harold if he had seen other cities have bereavement as separate leave. Harold in past experience had seen it both ways and mentioned it is a preference of the employer. Harold also didn't recall any issues in the communities which had it as a separate leave.

Kevin Ternes motioned to expand bereavement to grandmother/grandfather -in-laws. Alderman Podrygula seconded and the motion carried with a unanimous vote in favor of the motion.

Travis Siefert motioned to recommend if the City of Minot moves to the PTO system, bereavement leave not be taken out of PTO time and time off will follow the bereavement policy for amount of days allowed to be taken. Margie Zietz seconded and the motion carried with a unanimous vote in favor of the motion.

David Lakefield, Finance Director, did want to mention that when the report was run for the average sick days taken by an employee it did include the employees who had to take long term sick leave, bereavement leave, and regular sick days.

Maternity and Paternity Leave were next up for discussion. FMLA would cover both maternity and paternity leave for up to 12 weeks but does not require those 12 weeks to be paid. Short term disability covers maternity leave for up to 6 or 8 weeks depending on delivery. Paternity leave would need to come out of PTO time and an employee could access the frozen sick leave bank by the PTO recommendations. Harold mentioned paternity could be treated like maternity leave where paternity leave would get 6 or 8 weeks depending on delivery. The management team believed adoption should be covered as well.

If an employee only had 4 weeks of PTO, that employee could access their frozen sick leave bank for paternity. They would gain access to the frozen sick bank after 7 days of PTO is taken because paternity leave would be a qualifying event. Alderman Podrygula stated the more support for the family the better since it is a time of major adjustment. Margie thought this would keep the city competitive since Ward County has a similar policy.

Margie Zietz motioned to recommend the City of Minot allow up to 6 weeks of paternity leave with either a birth of a child or adoption of a child and time off will follow PTO recommendations for PTO and the frozen sick leave bank. Travis Seifert seconded and the motion carried with a unanimous vote in favor of the motion.

The comp time recommendation would be to cap it at 40 hours for general employees and 80 hours for PD and FD and anything beyond that would be paid out as overtime. The problem is every department has different policies on comp time. Travis asked if shift workers for a holiday could be offered PTO add to or for on-call hours it could be PTO add to. Holidays would be paid out as usual for employees and on-call would be comp time or stipend pay. On-call workers should be compensated fairly but PTO is for consistency and equity for all employees. Comp time is a temporary flexibility to be used in the near future. Employees should not have large comp time banks.

Dan Jonasson stated his departments have on-call weeks which are done on a rotation basis and for each week an employee is on-call they receive 8 hours of vacation add to. The employee can choose vacation add to or overtime for payment on any hours over the 40 hours worked during their on-call week. Dan recommends on-call be allowed to do PTO add to instead of comp time.

Derek asked if the employees would prefer the fixed number of hours for on-call or a stipend. Dan replied saying the employees want the time off and they value the flexibility to take the time off at their leisure. Margie reiterated different departments are doing different things and it is nice as an employee to have time off when wanted since working on-call weeks does not allow the employee the ability to do certain things. Alderman Podrygula agreed time off is more important than pay but also agreed having a limit on comp time is important. Alderman Podrygula suggested all employees could be at the 80-hour cap.

Dan also stated the shift workers are also working holidays along side the PD and FD. The main issue with comp time is that it is capped. It was mentioned when an employee gets called in on an on-call week the employee should get paid overtime not the ability to add time such as PTO or comp. It was stated the average employee who works in a department where on-call weeks are necessary usually works 4 on-call weeks a year resulting in an addition 32 hours of vacation add to with our current system. It was also mentioned the shift workers should have built in holiday hours just like PD and FD since they work holidays also.

Harold discussed this topic by tying it back to the federal law that allows PD and FD to work more hours without being paid overtime. Harold reiterated he wants all employees to be compensated fairly for worked time but it is inconsistent in our current process throughout the departments and a much richer plan than most other cities. There is an argument to be had about the city hiring more staff instead of overtime.

Chief Klug discussed the policy of the Police Department. Currently, Detectives are on call about 4 weeks a year without compensation. The department is looking into the idea of a stipend, looking away from the idea of comp time but making sure there is fair compensation. The committee went on to discuss different departments and restrictions to comp time. The Airport is also looking into the idea of a stipend of \$125 per week and are currently developing a policy.

Alderman Podrygula recommended City Manager and Management Team come up with an on-call policy. Derek Hackett seconded and the motion carried with a unanimous vote in favor of the motion.

Travis Seifert recommended comp time banks should be capped at 80 hours for all employees. Alderman Podrygula seconded and the motion carried with a vote: ayes: Hackett, Podrygula, Seifert, Zietz; nays: Jantzer, Jundt, Stewart, Ternes. With a tie vote, the motion failed.

Lastly, overtime needed to be discussed. Fire Department would be 106 hours worked in a two-week period and for general employees it would be 40 hours worked per week. There seems to be inconsistency where overtime is paid even though an employee has not worked the time necessary to receive overtime.

Harold recommended the City of Minot follow the FLSA guidelines where an employee must work the amount required before they can qualify for overtime. Lisa Jundt seconded and the motion carried with a unanimous vote in favor of the motion.

Derek Hackett motioned to leave the recommendations as they are and send to the City Council. Margie Zietz seconded and the motion carried with a unanimous vote in favor of the motion.

There being no further business Chairman Jantzer dissolved the committee, the meeting adjourned at 1:37 pm.