

**CITY OF RICHMOND, CA**  
**HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**

**PERSONNEL BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING**

**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
440 CIVIC CENTER PLAZA  
RICHMOND, CA 94804**

**OCTOBER 17, 2013  
MINUTES**

The regular meeting was called to order by Chairperson Merriweather at 5:02 p.m. on October 17, 2013.

**1. ROLL CALL:**

Present: Elaine Merriweather, Chairperson  
Yvonne Nair, Board Member  
McKinley Williams, Board Member

Absent: David Brown, Vice Chairperson  
Vicki Winston, Board Member

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- None

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**SPEAKERS:**

Jacqueline McBride: expressed gratitude to the Personnel Board for their volunteer service. She stated her disappointment in the lack of items that would address inadequacies and/or corrections of misinformation being placed on the agenda by the Board.

**4. COMMUNICATIONS:**

- a. Personnel Board Retreat

**SPEAKERS:**

None

***Audio recordings of Personnel Board Meetings are available at:***  
**<http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=1090>**

Action:

The following will be offered at the Personnel Board Retreat:

- City Attorney's Office will present Brown Act
  - Review of City Charter and Personnel Rules detailing the role of the Personnel Board
  - Duties of Personnel Board – review of policies and procedures
  - Review of grievance and hearing procedures
  - Rosenberg's Rules of Order
  - Team building exercise
  - Time for reports and public comments
- b. Discuss possible training for City employees to prevent offensive speech and email in the workplace, especially in regards to the protected categories (Board Member Nair)

**SPEAKERS:**

Jacqueline McBride: stated that she has never known of an opportunity to suggest topics of training. She suggested training on the interpretation of the City Charter to avoid violation of said charter.

Kathleen Sullivan: cautioned the board from putting items on the agenda that are specifically directed. She agreed that a survey on employee suggested trainings would accomplish providing trainings that are relevant versus perceived hot topics.

Action:

- Include Personnel Board on all available training opportunities with the option of attending
  - Survey City of Richmond employees on trainings that they would like to see offered
- c. Discuss how to stop disruptive behavior at Personnel Board meetings (Board Member Nair)

**SPEAKERS:**

Jacqueline McBride: stated that the inexcusable behavior during the previous Personnel Board meeting may be avoided by including a second public comment on the agenda where the public can express their sentiments once the agenda item has been discussed.

***Audio recordings of Personnel Board Meetings are available at:***  
**<http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=1090>**

Vivien Feyer: the HRHRC does have a second period of time for public forum at the end of the meeting and it is very valuable. Ms. Feyer raised concerns about employees being disciplined for speaking publicly at the HRHRC meetings. She would like to know how to create a safe environment for employees to express concerns, suggestions, ideas, etc.

Kathleen Sullivan: agreed with Ms. Feyer's statement about creating a safe space for employees to express themselves. Ms. Sullivan also supports the addition of a second opportunity for the public to speak.

Action:

- Second public comment option to be placed on next meeting agenda
- d. Discuss communicating in a professional manner including email etiquette (Board Member Nair)

**SPEAKERS:**

Jacqueline McBride: spoke about professional communication and shared a few items from a standards on professional conduct.

Vivien Feyer: read the Declaration of Intent from the Brown Act. Ms. Feyer stated that for good reason that under no circumstances should anything said in closed session be divulged.

Charles Smith: introduced himself as a retired EBMUD employee who is also a resident of Richmond and a former Chief Steward for ASFME Local 444. Mr. Smith shared the fact EBMUD had yearly sexual harassment and sensitivity training where all employees and managers attended. He recommended that the City of Richmond follow suit.

Kathleen Sullivan: since a portion of the agenda is around communication, she suggested training on communication in a professional manner, including email.

Action:

- None
- e. Discuss the challenge of conducting Personnel Board business with fairness (Board Member Nair)

**SPEAKERS:**

Stacie Plummer: spoke on the need for an ethics commission to monitor conflict of interest throughout the City.

***Audio recordings of Personnel Board Meetings are available at:***  
**<http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=1090>**

Vivien Feyer: spoke on the correspondence received prior to the meeting and stated that she understood that a board member should not share their opinion on an upcoming agenda item before hearing the public speak. She referred the Board to the Brown Act and to seek legal advice.

Kathleen Sullivan: spoke about conflicts of interest on the Board and how that influences the public's perception of fairness.

Roseanne Ryken: request that the Board take in all the facts before casting a vote. Without considering all the information, the Board would be making the wrong vote.

Charles Smith: recommended that the Mayor take into consideration the background of Board Members because there lacks fairness when there is not at least two Board Members of the working class when sitting on a Board before the City of Richmond that is made up of working class citizens.

Jacqueline McBride: expressed her hope that the retreat would cover the City Charter Article 13 in detail.

Action:

- None

## **5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- a. Consideration of Workplace Bullying Policy

### **SPEAKERS:**

Stacie Plummer: agreed with the email correspondence from a Personnel Board Member on the Bullying Policy being vague.

Kathleen Sullivan: voiced the need to tweak the Bullying Policy to meet current needs.

Pamela Hampton: spoke about the wording in the Bullying Policy and how she has been a victim of bullying during her 14 years of employment with the City of Richmond. As a terminated employee, she expressed how she continues to feel bullied when all she ever wanted was to make this a better place.

Stacey Wilborn: voiced that she believes a Bullying Policy needs to be put in place in order to protect employees since she has witnessed 75% of the bullying items listed in the policy used against other employees in the library or other union members.

***Audio recordings of Personnel Board Meetings are available at:***  
**<http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=1090>**

Roseanne Ryken: stated she would like to see the workplace defined to include internet and email while working from home when bullying can be done via email. She also recommended conducting a survey done annually or semi-annually on how employees feel about how their manager is doing.

Charles Smith: spoke on how EBMUD handled a particular case of harassment and how there are currently rules against harassment.

Action:

- Clarify by connecting (in proximity) the definition of bullying with the examples given
- Develop a survey for employees to assess feedback – Agenda item for discussion
- Once implemented, training and oversight to assure effectiveness of policy
- Include phone and internet usage

## **6. CONSIDERATION OF PROBLEMS AND REPORTS:**

Public comment:

Pamela Hampton: requested that the Personnel Board look into her ability to bring a hearing about her termination before them.

Discussion of the ability to bring a hearing before the Personnel Board and/or arbitration

Action:

- Clarify process at November 14<sup>th</sup> Personnel Board Retreat
- Discuss previous hearings at Retreat under “Review of Grievance and Hearing Procedures”

## **7. REPORTS OF BOARD MEMBERS:**

- None

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

***Audio recordings of Personnel Board Meetings are available at:***  
**<http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=1090>**