

Employee Forum Minutes
August 14, 2003
Housing Administration Building

Members Present: Than Austin, Felix Bloch, Maggie Burnett, Amy Edwards, Lisa Edwards, Amy Harvey, Chelsea Laws, Bernard Leach, George Long, Leanne Mikels, Mona Nazir, Iris Schwintzer, Deborah Squires, Traval Watkins, Susie Whaley, Mary Jean Williams

Members Absent: Ann Brown, Jeff Clark, Kelly Stokes, David Sasser

- Minutes approved from 7-10-03 meeting
- Agreement of items of discussion for today's meeting

Additional:

- Removal of Social Security numbers from paychecks; Maggie Burnett talked to Finance and has had no response yet. Also discussed in the Payroll & Benefits meeting. The software is not setup to remove this information from the paychecks. Stuffing and sealing envelopes would help. Maggie is to request a report from the director of Finance on what is planned.
- Need to figure out the relationship between other Town department's employee committees, the Employee Forum and the Town managers office.
- Welcome new members: no new members present. Amy Harvey, Felix Bloch and MaryJean Williams spoke to shift personnel at the Fire department - no one had volunteered by Monday the 11th as requested and there was no response from the Library. Felix said he may send out a letter to Fire and Library staff to provoke a better response. Iris Schwintzer spoke to someone that works in the Library that was interested. She will contact them again. The issues will also be addressed with the manager.
- EF Elections work group met 8/13/03 (Felix Bloch, Amy Harvey, Deborah Squires, Susie Whaley) to discuss how to proceed with election of 2004 Forum members. It was decided we would ask for assistance from HR to determine who is eligible; sending out ballots, and tallying ballots. The time frame for the process is to have the nomination ballots go out in October, voting in November; new members attend the December EF meeting and officers for 2004 selected in February. Election questions for the September meeting will include: **-should shifts in the Fire and Police departments be represented; -should one of the representatives from Transportation be from the Maintenance division; -consecutive terms, if allowed and how much time between terms; -alternates and who should represent department when alternate is not available.** Members should come prepared to present ideas and other issues regarding this topic
- Requests for the Manager:
Amy has placed a folder titled 'Requests to the Manager' on the shared directory. There is a folder for draft requests and requests that have been forwarded as well as a current list of items to discuss. The Benefits work group has a proposal for an Employee Wellness Program. It was suggested to discuss the perception that there is no one in HR to go to with questions about how an employee is being treated on the job. Hopefully there will be a meeting with the Town manager before the September meeting.
- The following was reported as ways employees are shown appreciation in their respective departments:

Transportation: Annual Employee Picnic; Annual Awards Banquet (safety awards, years of service pins); employees that drive for Tarheel Express are allowed to attend the event, i.e., UNC basketball games, concerts, etc.; Honor Roll Program, Distinguished Driver Program; Employee of the Month Program

Parks and Recreation: Employee Picnic, catered (1st time this year)

Housing: Holiday Breakfast and Dinner (December)

Inspections: Nothing at this time

Information Technology: Annual luncheon with Director; appreciation is verbalized; possible career progression upon IT certification

Public Works: Employee of the Month (divisional) name on a division plaque and certificate; from divisional EOM, one is chosen for department wide EOM, they receive a special parking spot, gift certificate to restaurant, name on a department plaque; Quarterly Safety Incentive Awards, Annual Fish Fry, Clean-up Day w/ cookout, Martin Luther King Program (funded by employees), Holiday Meal, meals served during inclement weather; Career Progression; Employee Training



Finance: Take employees out to lunch; gift certificates for extra work; Birthday Cake/ Breakfast Quarterly; Holiday Luncheon

Police: Career Progression; E-mails of appreciation; "Cal Cups"; Platoons have their own ways they show appreciation

Library: "Thank-you" letters are posted on a bulletin board; Staff Development Days

Manager's Office (Admin., Clerk's Office, and Attorney's Office): Holiday Pot Luck; Birthday gatherings; "Cal Cups"; Annual Breakfast at one of the Manager's home

Planning: Birthday Parties; "Cal Cups"

Engineering: Occasionally bring in lunch

It was suggested that employees could be given certificates for years of service at the Longevity Breakfast.

Forum members were asked to find out how employees in their departments feel about the Employee Appreciation Day. What other things can be done to show appreciation? It was suggested the EAD be held on the weekend and open to families, is this of interest?

Work Group Discussion

Communications/Employee Relations:

- Computer availability to Town employees. IT is working on making a computer available to all employees in departments where they are not. The Chapel Hill Public Library has computers available and the Hargraves Community Center will have computers soon as part of their tutoring program. Internet access is questionable at Hargraves.
- The flyer promoting the EF webpage is nearly complete. Debra Squires will help with printing them.
- Plan to discuss the list of ways departments show employee appreciation with the Town manager. We hope to have suggestions for ways employees can be shown appreciation from EF department representatives by the next meeting.

Promotion/Hiring:

- Staffing levels were discussed. HR will need to be contacted to get information on what positions are open, why they aren't being filled and if the staffing levels are keeping pace with the growth of the town.

Education/Training:

- Finalized the proposal for a presentation by an AFLAC representative to be discussed with the Town manager.

Benefits:

- Discussed the possibility of implementing an Employee Discount Program for Town employees. The program would offer discounts at local businesses. Reviewed a similar program done by the Town of Cary. This will likely be a future topic of discussion with the Town manager.
- Discussed information related to Employer Assisted Housing Programs, and possible financial planning activities sponsored by the Town.

Town Policies:

- Received response from HR clarifying the Disciplinary Action Policy. Copies were provided to EF members for their review; to be discussed at the next meeting.

It was decided that at our next meeting we would not break into Work Groups to further discuss the elections process/questions; employee appreciation and clarification of the Disciplinary Action Policy process.