



**Career Service Board Meeting #2299**  
**Minutes**  
**Thursday, November 3, 2016, 5:00 p.m.**  
**Webb Municipal Building**  
**201 W. Colfax Ave, Fourth Floor, Room 4.G.2**

**Gina Casias (Chair)**  
**Patti Klinge (Co-Chair)**  
**Neil Peck**  
**Derrick Fuller**

**I. Opening:** *Meeting called to order at 5:02 p.m.*

1. **Approval of the Agenda for the November 3, 2016 Board Meeting.**  
*The Board unanimously approved the agenda for the November 3, 2016 meeting.*
2. **Approval of the Minutes for the October 20, 2016 Board Meeting.**  
*The Board unanimously approved the minutes for the October 20, 2016 meeting.*

**II. Board Comments:** *None.*

**III. Public Comments:** *None.*

**IV. Public Hearing:**

1. Classification Notice No. 1531 – Economic Crime Specialist

*Susan O'Neill, Sr. Classification and Compensation Analyst from the Office of Human Resources presented Classification Notice No. 1531 to the Board.*

*Ms. O'Neill proposed the following change:*

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Current Pay Grade/Range</u>	<u>Proposed Pay Grade/Range</u>
Economic Crime Specialist	612-N (\$34,127-\$49,825)	613-N (\$35,680-\$52,093)

*Board member Neil Peck said the job description of the Economic Crime Specialist almost resembles that of an FBI agent. He emphasized how complex the job duties appear to be. He said he believes that the 613-N pay grade is very low considering the type of work involved in this position. He suggested that more research be conducted to find out how employees with these positions in similar organizations are paid.*

*Liza Willis, Legal Administrator for the Denver District Attorney's Office responded to Mr. Peck's concerns. She agrees that employees in this classification have a lot more responsibility than they used to and that further research is a good idea.*

*Board Co-Chair Patti Klinge asked Ms. O'Neill if she had difficulty finding data for comparative jobs.*

*Ms. O'Neill responded that she did have some trouble since this classification is very specialized.*

*The board deferred consideration of Classification Notice No. 1531 pending further examination.*

2. Classification Notice No. 1532 – Victim Advocate

*Susan O'Neill presented Classification Notice No. 1532 to the Board.*

*Ms. O'Neill proposed the following change:*

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Current Pay Grade/Range</u>	<u>Proposed Pay Grade/Range</u>
Victim Advocate	616-A (\$43,170-\$63,028)	617-A (\$45,134-\$65,896)

*The board unanimously approved Classification Notice No. 1532.*

3. Public Hearing Notice No. 532 – Proposed Revision to Career Service Rule 13 – Pay for Performance

*Karen Niparko, Executive Director of the Office of Human Resources and Nicole de Gioia-Keane, Classification and Compensation Manager, began Public Hearing Notice No. 532 with an overview and the background behind the newly proposed merit table which is a large component of the suggested changes to Rule 13.*

*Ms. de Gioia-Keane explained that the previous merit table conflated two concepts: pay for performance and market adjustment. She said a merit increase should be based solely on performance for the prior review year and that the merit process should not be used to fix salary issues.*

*Ms. de Gioia-Keane also said that the Office of Human Resources has seen consistent increases over past four years in the “outstanding” and “exceeds expectations” ratings with a decrease in the “successful” ranking which is designed to be the expected rating. This has resulted in agencies going over their merit budget and requesting exceptions to spend more money. She explained that the proposed table would have more flexibility and allow agencies to stay within budget so that there will be fewer exception requests.*

*Mr. Peck asked who was involved in the development of the new merit table.*

*Ms. de Gioia-Keane responded that many conversations pertaining to the proposed table and merit process have taken place with a number of agencies throughout the city.*

*Rory McLuster, Deputy Director of the Office of Human Resources, also said that the Office of Human Resources’ service teams have received lots of feedback from agency leaders, managers, and employees. She said they have been obtaining feedback over the course of time, particularly during the last three years.*

*Ms. de Gioia-Keane said that the city is trying to evolve toward a culture of more management discretion and accountability. She said this involves fair and consistent performance ratings and equitable allocation of merit dollars.*

*Ms. de Gioia-Keane pointed out that if the board approves of the proposed merit table, next steps would include strong communication plans to management and employees,*

*Ms. McLuster also emphasized that the Office of Human Resources’ service teams are well prepared to launch a strong communication strategy so managers fully understand the new process.*

*Ms. Niparko said the overall approach to the proposed merit table is in response to requests from the Mayor’s Office and agency leaders as well as feedback received from employees. She said the city has been moving toward being a pay for performance organization. She*

said the previous table was too prescriptive and narrow and did not give managers the discretion to do their jobs.

Board member Derrick Fuller asked about the coaching that takes place throughout the year to let employees know how they are doing so that when it is time for their reviews they are not surprised by their ratings.

Ms. McLuster answered by saying that managers are encouraged to have conversations with their employees throughout the year that focus on performance and constructive feedback. She also said that as the evaluation period approaches, it is important for managers to also target the specifics, such as timelines and information relevant to the performance process.

Ms. Niparko pointed out that Leader as Coach training is offered throughout the city which teaches managers to coach for performance, development, and career moves.

Ms. Klinge asked what employees might find negative about this proposed merit table.

Ms. de Gioia-Keane said it is possible for an employee who has been rated as “Outstanding” in recent years to now receive only an “Exceeds Expectations” or “Successful” rating.

Ms. Niparko also pointed out that with the new merit table an employee could potentially receive a lower percentage of pay increase if they fall within the lower quartiles.

Mr. Peck brought up a hypothetical scenario of a top performer who is straight out of college and hired into the city. He asked if this type of employee would fare better under the new merit table or the previous one as her career progressed.

Ms. McLuster said that with the previous merit table, the hypothetical employee would earn more money at first, but her earning potential would decrease as her career progressed. As a result, she would be better off with the new merit table.

Ms. Klinge asked if it is possible for an employee to exceed the maximum for their pay grade if they are in the fourth quartile.

Ms. de Gioia-Keane said an employee in the fourth quartile can only be paid up to the maximum in their pay grade. Once an employee has reached the maximum, the remainder of his or her pay increase would be given in a lump sum payment.

Public hearing speaker Gretchen Hollrah, Deputy Chief Financial Officer from the Department of Finance, said she is in support of the new merit table, but expressed concern with the process. She said her department wants to modernize just as much as anyone, however, she would like to see coaching and notification for employees take place at the start of their PEPR process. She does not believe these types of changes should be made in the 11<sup>th</sup> month of the PEPR season and asked that the Career Service Board look closely at the process.

Ms. Klinge asked Ms. Hollrah what, exactly, she was proposing.

Ms. Hollrah asked that the new merit table be introduced at the beginning of the next PEPR season.

Ms. Klinge said she understands Ms. Hollrah’s point, but said that if the proposed merit table is delayed, they will be ignoring the concerns of the employees who have worked for the city for many years and feel the process is not fair. She said that with all of the feedback that has been received by many agencies and employees, it is important to implement this change now, rather than wait.

*Public hearing speaker George Delaney, Chief Operating Office for the Department of Public Works, spoke in support of the implementation of the new merit table. Mr. Delaney said that many of his department's employees feel punished for staying with the city throughout the years because they do not even receive the average pay increase. He said their senior employees are the biggest contributors to the success of their department due to their level of experience. He also said he understands Ms. Hollrah's point, but he believes the implementation of the proposed merit table is the right thing to do. He also said he does not foresee a lot of backlash from employees over this change.*

*Public hearing speaker Tom Blackman, Engineer and Architect Supervisor with the Department of Public Works, also spoke in support of the proposed merit table. He said he likes the intent of the table and his only concern is with the first and second quartiles. He said it seems that employees in the second quartile would be accelerating their careers a little faster than those in the first quartile and that seems unfair.*

*Public hearing speaker Suzanne Iversen, HR Manager with the Office of Human Resources, also supported the proposed merit table. She said the need for flexibility within the merit table has been expressed by managers throughout the city for many years. She thinks it would be profoundly impactful to not move forward with this change at this time. She also said she does not think coaching supervisors and managers through this change will be difficult.*

*Public hearing speaker, Kelly Semprich, Social Case Worker Supervisor at Denver Human Services, brought up the fact that there was a recent reclassification of social caseworkers due to a change the Fair Labor Standards Act. Due to this required shift in salary range, some of her employees who have been with the city for five years are now in the first quartile. She said these employees would have benefitted under the previous merit table, but not under the proposed table.*

*Public hearing speaker Michael Oh, HR Manager with Office of Human Resources, said he was a recruiter with the city for three years prior to his current position. He spoke in support of the proposed merit table from a recruiting perspective. He said sometimes it is necessary to hire top talent into a higher quartile. He said in these cases, the previous merit table could be demotivating because, once hired, employees would realize they did not have as much potential for higher pay increases. He said the new table would help attract and keep top talent within the city.*

*Ms. de Gioia-Keane and Dani Brown, HR Manager from the Office of Human Resources, went on to outline the specific changes proposed for Rule 13.*

*With regard to Rule 13-32 B.1, Ms. Klinge asked how the 3.3% average for merit increases was determined.*

*Ms. de Gioia-Keane responded that each year OHR conducts a high-level forecast from data published in local and national salary surveys. They look at projections regarding salaries and inflation. This data is aggregated and a conversation is held with members of the Budget Management Office who then determine what the city can afford with regard to market data.*

*The board unanimously approved Public Hearing Notice No. 532.*

## **V. Director's Briefing:**

1. *Cindy Bishop, Director of Talent Acquisition from the Office of Human Resources, provided a Talent Acquisition update which included the following:*
  - *The "Ban the Box" initiative was implemented on August 1 and, to date, there has been no increase in background check failures.*

- *The consolidation of onboarding which includes offer letters, background checks, and new-hire paperwork has been completed for all agencies across the city except the Department of Parks & Recreation.*
  - *Average time-to-fill is now 72 days which is 12 days less than last year.*
  - *The city usually has over 1,000 open positions, but the current number has been decreased to 787.*
2. *Karen Niparko, Executive Director of the Office of Human Resources, said Board member Neil Peck had suggested that some form of recognition take place for Colleen Rea, former Chair of the Career Service Board who had to quickly depart the board earlier this year due to family issues.*

*Board member Neil Peck said he believes it is appropriate for the city to recognize someone who devoted a substantial amount of time as a volunteer. He proposed that the city adopt a resolution expressing its sincere appreciation to Ms. Rea for her dedicated service to and leadership of the Career Service Board. He suggested this be sentiment be printed on a framed certificate.*

*The board unanimously approved this resolution.*

3. *Rory McLuster, Deputy Director from the Office of Human Resources, provided an update on the city's preparation for potential retirees and turnover. She said 26% of the city's workforce will be eligible for retirement in the next five years. She also brought up the issue of the growing population of millennials who tend to stay with their employers for only three to five years. She said that, in response to these issues, a Workforce Readiness Action Plan has been created to focus on making sure city agencies are prepared to address the risk of losing talent.*

**VI. New Cases:**

1. *Krishna Colquitt v. Department of Human Services, Appeal No. 34-15A  
The Career Service Board postponed their decision on this case.*
2. *Richard Sawyer v. Department of Safety, Denver Sheriff's Department, Appeal No. 16-16A  
The Career Service Board affirmed the Hearing Officer's decision, written order to follow.*
3. *Frank Espinoza v. Department of Safety, Denver Sheriff's Department, Appeal No. 14-16  
The Career Service Board granted the Appellant's Motion for Extension of Time to File Opening Brief.*

**VII. Pending Cases:**

1. *Danial Steckman v. Department of Safety, Denver Sheriff's Department, Appeal No. 30-15  
The Career Service Board affirmed the Hearing Officer's decision, written order to follow.*
2. *Marion Stewart v. Denver Sheriff's Department, Appeal Nos. 38-15A and 60-15A  
The Career Service Board affirmed the Hearing Officer's decision, written order to follow.*

**VIII. Executive Session:**

*The Board went into executive session at 6:51 p.m. to discuss cases and staffing matters.*

*The Board re-convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.*

**IX. Adjournment:** *Adjournment was at 7:01 p.m.*