

PROPOSED MINUTES

**Wednesday, September 30, 2020
1:00 p.m.**

**Personnel Department
Virtual Zoom Meeting
Meeting ID: 951 8932 2561**

TARGETED LOCAL HIRE WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Present

Rafael Prieto (A)
Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst

Carmen Hayes-Walker
American Federation of State, County,
and Municipal Employees

Breana Weaver
Office of Councilmember Harris-Dawson
Council District 8

Robert M. Sainz (A)
Economic and Workforce Development Department

Lisa Salazar
Office of the Mayor

Gavin Koon
International Union of Operating Engineers
Local 501

Hannah Levien (A)
Office of Councilmember Krekorian
Council District 2

Lori Condinus
American Federation of State, County,
and Municipal Employees

Melissa Velasco (A)
Office of the City Administrative Officer

Teresa Sanchez
Service Employees International Union
Local 721

Wendy G. Macy
Personnel Department

David Sanders
Service Employees International Union
Local 721

Not Present

Edward R. Johnson
Office of Councilmember Wesson
Council District 10

Rudy Guevara
Service Employees International Union
Local 721

Chris Hannan
Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building
and Construction Trades Council AFL-CIO

Please Note: The minutes are a summary of the proceedings. The minutes are not verbatim statements by the speakers.

INTRODUCTION

(1) Call to Order

Ms. Cinthia Fletes, Personnel Department, called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. and established that a quorum was present.

(2) Public Comments

Ms. Fletes announced that Mr. Vincent Cordero, former manager of the Workforce Development Section and the Targeted Local Hire Program has promoted and that she would be taking over his responsibilities. No other public comments were made.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

(3) Minutes *(taken out of order after Item 5)*

The minutes of the September 17, 2019 meeting of the Targeted Local Hire Working Group (“Working Group”) were unanimously adopted by those present.

(4) Adoption of the TLH Rules of Governance

Ms. Fletes stated that the Working Group received a copy of the TLH Rules of Governance that were updated by the Governance Subcommittee during meetings held on July 14, 2020 and August 21, 2020. Ms. Fletes provided a summary of updates that were made:

- Section A – revised to clarify the Working Group was tasked with both developing and implementing a plan to provide job opportunities to the residents of the City of LA.
- Section B – revised #2 to allow voting members to inform staff of their designated alternates and #3 clarification that only one designated alternate may vote in the absence of the voting member.
- Section C – revised to adopt a “co-chair” model that requires two (2) voting members to serve as co-chairs, one representing City Management and one representing the Coalition of LA City Unions. The co-chairs will alternate leading the meetings and serve as a back-up to the absent co-chair. The co-chairs must be elected unanimously by the Working Group and shall serve for one calendar year, beginning on January 1st or for the remainder of the calendar year.
- Section D – revised #6 to clarify the Working Group members shall notify staff if they have contact with vendors, providers, and/or carriers that have a financial relationship with any business related to the Working Group.
- Section E – added to include rules on the formation of subcommittees
- Section F – revised #4 to state in order to pass a motion the Working Group members must reach consensus. In the instance that consensus is not reached, a subcommittee shall be formed regarding the motion in question as stated in #5. #6 was updated to clarify that the subcommittee will present their proposal to the motion at the following Working Group meeting, at which the motion may be passed by a 2/3 super majority.

A motion was made by Mr. Koon, seconded by Ms. Salazar, to adopt the updated TLH Rules of Governance; the motion was unanimously adopted by those present.

(5) Nomination and Election of Co-Chairs

Ms. Fletes stated per the newly adopted TLH Rules of Governance Section C. that there shall be two (2) co-chairs, one (1) representing City Management and one (1) representing the Coalition of LA City Unions. Ms. Fletes asked for nominations from the Working Group.

A motion was made by Mr. Koon to nominate David Sanders of Service Employees International Union Local 721 as the co-chair representing the Coalition of LA City Unions, seconded by Ms. Carmen Hayes-Walker; the motion was unanimously adopted by those present.

A motion was made by Ms. Lisa Salazar to nominate Breana Weaver of Council District 8 as the co-chair representing City Management, seconded by Mr. Robert Sainz; the motion was unanimously adopted by those present.

(6) General Update

Ms. Fletes stated that as of August 30, 2020, there were a total of 5,188 candidates active in the Targeted Local Hire Program (“TLH Program”) applicant pool, in which 90% identified with one or more of the targeted categories in Tier 1 (4,631). The three largest categories under Tier 1 are residents living in local ZIP codes with high unemployment and incomes below the median poverty rate, older workers, and homeless/formerly homeless individuals. A total of 940 hires and pending offers have been made, there are 30 active referral requests, the top three user departments being Airports (149), Recreation and Parks (100), and Public Works Bureau of Sanitation (89). The largest utilized class currently is Office Trainee (555), followed by Vocational Worker Custodian (135), and Vocational Worker Gardener Caretaker (101). There are 560 individuals who have completed the program and have received full civil service status with 197 individuals currently in the Assistant (Probation) period and 74 in the On the Job Training phase. Additionally, 14 individuals promoted out, 55 individuals were terminated, and 35 resigned.

Mr. Sainz asked if an analysis of termination reasons had been conducted and whether there was anything that could be done or additional support that may have prevented termination. Ms. Fletes responded that the main reasons for terminations are behavioral or performance related and explained that when an issue is brought to TLH staff’s attention outreach is conducted to the candidate’s referral agency and/or application site. Quarterly meetings are held with referral agencies which include staff updates on these issues so that assistance can be provided by the agencies to those employees. Also, an emphasis on reaching out to TLH staff when issues arise is communicated at the TLH Supervisor Briefings that are conducted bimonthly. Mr. Sainz responded that the termination numbers are relatively low given the population, congratulated staff, and stated that it was good to offer double and even triple support in looping back to the agencies to provide as much support prior to termination. Ms. Fletes agreed and stated that terminations will continue to be monitored.

Mr. Koon stated that the population that have a troubled background might need a little more help or guidance so the unions are trying to have the TLH designees step up to identify the weaknesses in behavior.

Ms. Hayes-Walker stated that by the time TLH employees contact the union they’re already about to be terminated and feels that these employees need more interaction and to be reminded that they have the ability to reach out to their CBOs if they’re having issues as well as their union. Ms. Hayes-Walker added that the employees that reached out to them also complained about not receiving training and feel that these workers were placed at a disadvantage, potentially due to COVID-19.

Ms. Sanchez stated that unfortunately referral agencies likely do not have sufficient resources to help and that she would be interested in a more systematic approach to individuals that may be struggling on the job, such as directing the hiring department at the 2nd or 5th month PSUs to contact the union and/or TLH staff, which would result in an intervention. Ms. Sanchez stated she agreed with Mr. Sainz that the overall number of terminations were low, but that she was

concerned about employees falling through the cracks by a need that having the union or more resources may have potentially helped.

Ms. Fletes responded that in the event PSUs are received by the hiring department with any unsatisfactory marks TLH staff contacts the referral agencies to try to make a connection, but that staff may also try to obtain more specific feedback from the supervisor to take into account.

Ms. Sanchez suggested that TLH staff reach out to the union because they have relationships with departments and more resources available to directly assist the department and the individual as opposed to the referral agencies. Ms. Fletes stated that TLH staff would explore reaching out to labor partners as well.

Mr. David Sanders asked who performs the outreach. Ms. Fletes responded that the 1st and 2nd level supervisors submit PSUs at the 2nd and 5th month. At that point, TLH staff reviews the ratings and any unsatisfactory ratings results in outreach to the referral agencies.

Ms. Hannah Levien, CD2, asked if any follow-up was made with individuals that resign from the TLH program to find out what they do next. Ms. Fletes responded that promoted employees typically continue to work for the City through the Civil Service examination process, however resigned employees are not being tracked. Ms. Fletes explained that it may be difficult to track this information since TLH staff is not regularly notified of resignations by hiring departments, sometimes months following the resignation while following up on the status of the employee. Ms. Fletes stated staff will look into capturing this data moving forward. Ms. Levien stated that it would be helpful information, even though it's a small percentage, to know if they resigned due to challenges or issues with the program, which would prevent a worst-case scenario of a resignation resulting in homelessness.

Ms. Hayes-Walker asked if individuals who leave the program can be given exit interviews. Ms. Fletes responded that not all City departments conduct exit interviews, but that staff will look into this as well.

Mr. Koon asked if there was a mechanism in place for departments to report to staff when they receive notice of a problem or bad performance so there's an opportunity to assist the struggling employee. Ms. Fletes responded that communication varies by department, some departments notify TLH staff regarding issues, while other departments may not until staff requests a status and then notify us the employee was terminated weeks or months prior. Mr. Koon asked if this issue can be emphasized to supervisors of TLH employees to have a tool to reach out to work out the problem. Ms. Fletes stated that it will be emphasized and addressed during the supervisor briefings that are conducted on a bi-monthly basis that TLH staff is available and should be contacted at the first sign of issues.

Ms. Weaver asked if hiring departments could be provided another check-in point between the 2nd and 5th month PSU to notify TLH staff if there were any issues so that they could have access to resources and services to assist them. Ms. Fletes stated that staff may be able to incorporate a check-in to see how the employees are doing before they get to the 5th month PSU. Ms. Weaver stated that a required check-in would hopefully result in more consistent reporting from departments. Ms. Fletes agreed.

Ms. Hayes-Walker agreed that the onus should be on the department to report this information and added that departments should also report on training provided to the employee. She explained that the current PSU includes what the employee has or hasn't done, but does not reflect what the department or supervisor has done or if they have met training expectations.

Ms. Fletes stated that a check-in would be built in between the 2nd and 5th month PSUs and clarified that PSUs are completed during the on-the-job training period before the probationary period. During the probationary period evaluations are completed in accordance with the regular civil service employee processes.

A motion was made by Ms. Weaver that Personnel report back on how the recommendations from this discussion for those that are on the verge of being terminated from the program will be implemented; seconded by Ms. Sanchez.

(7) Council Motion – Requests for New Targeted Local Hire Eligible Position Authorities

Ms. Melissa Velasco, CAO, stated in late August 2020 the City Council adopted a motion which directed the Personnel Department and CAO to survey all City departments for requests for new TLH position authorities. The CAO released a report in response to this motion, which is available in the City's Council files, that departments reported a total of 92 requests for new TLH position authorities as well as plans to hire TLH candidates into 350 existing position authorities in the current fiscal year for a total of 442 potential TLH hires in the current fiscal year which would cost approximately \$30M annually, including benefits and salaries. Ms. Velasco stated that the City Council and Mayor directed the CAO coordinate the development of Citywide spending reduction proposals which are necessary due to significant revenue losses in both the general and special funds due to COVID-19. The Council and Mayor also directed the Personnel Department to begin the necessary preparations for potential layoffs. Due to this financial difficulty that the City is experiencing, she stated that the CAO report recommended that 1) requests for new TLH position authorities should not be provided at this time and 2) that the hiring freeze exemption for TLH positions be rescinded. She clarified that this would not stop hiring, but would require TLH hiring go through the same hiring freeze approval process in place for all other positions.

Mr. Koon asked if there were any further updates on this matter. Ms. Velasco stated that the CAO report was released on Monday, September 28, 2020, and anticipates it's been referred to be heard separately by the Budget and Finance Committee as well as the Personnel Animal Welfare Committee, but has not heard of any specific updates since the report was released.

A public caller was patched through the meeting with concerns that she was told the TLH program was a lottery, but that she's worked for the City part-time as a gardener for 22 years and has been in the TLH program since 2017 and witnessed individuals signing up for the TLH program after having worked for the City part-time for less than a year being hired through the TLH program.

Ms. Weaver asked if the caller was expressing concerns that individuals were being hand selected as opposed to being chosen through random selection. The public caller confirmed. Ms. Weaver stated that public comment for item 6 had passed but that she will be connected with TLH program staff to assist her with her concerns. Caller name: Elizabeth Reffells and phone number noted.

(8) Telecommuting Checklist for TLH Supervisors

Mr. Louie Fernandez, Personnel Department, stated that on June 30, Council expressed concerns about supervision of telecommuting TLH employees. In response, TLH staff surveyed departments by email on July 20th regarding supervising TLH employees remotely to gain insight into their experience and concerns to put together best practices. A total of 26 responses were received by the August 3rd deadline. 80% of responding departments indicated they have an existing telecommuting agreement. 80% of Office Trainees and 5% of Vocational Workers are currently telecommuting. 80% of employees are reporting to their direct supervisors while telecommuting. Departments confirmed they check-in with their staff at least once a day. 70% of departments reported they did not have any concerns about continued telecommuting or hiring

new employees under the new telecommuting system or training them. Based on the responses, TLH staff referenced the current City telecommuting policy and created a telecommuting checklist for supervisors. Mr. Fernandez stated that the checklist was provided to the Working Group members and asked if there were any questions or suggestions before it is sent out to departments. He stated that the checklist includes setting clear expectations and goals with employees, setting up a clear system to evaluate success metrics on assignments and projects, establishing a system to ensure supervisors are checking in with employees regularly, determining technology needs for employees, and discussing options for remote learning.

Ms. Sanchez asked if employees assigned to telecommute supply their own equipment. Mr. Fernandez responded that departments reported in the survey that the majority is being provided, but that staff could report back with full numbers.

Ms. Weaver stated she was curious how employees in the on-the-job training phase of the program were receiving training. Mr. Fernandez responded that the majority of department responses indicate that they assess progress on assignments and also provided training through daily check-in by phone, by e-mail, and regular video calls. In this way, they're able to walk through the assignments together.

Mr. Sanders stated that he assumes some of the 55 terminated employees may be those that were teleworking and asked how evaluations are being completed, how are office skills being trained in a telecommuting situation, and how could they terminate a teleworking employee. Mr. Fernandez stated that was a good concern to bring up during this time and staff would like to look into it further with departments to get more specific information on how departments are training and evaluating telecommuting employees. However, Mr. Fernandez explained that the intent of the checklist was to provide guidance on ensuring adequate training. Ms. Weaver stated she felt this report back was important and also requested that subsequent termination reports include the dates employees were terminated.

Mr. Sanders added that he would like for there to be a way to convey to departments that employees that are unable to meet the standards due to a lack of opportunity for hands on training should be provided some allowances to meet the standards prior to termination. Mr. Fernandez agreed and stated that staff would reach out to departments to provide this information.

Ms. Hayes-Walker asked whether this checklist would be used during the training and probationary period and whether they would be completing it more than once because supervisors need to be reminded. She also suggested that checking in with their WorkSource Centers, CBOs, and referring the employee to their union if there are any issues should be added since other helpful referrals, such as EAP, was included. Mr. Fernandez responded that helpful information can be added, such as checking in with Personnel staff, their application or referral agencies, and also union, and confirmed the information will be added.

Ms. Hayes-Walker stated that if she completed the checklist only once a year she may not continue to do all of it. Mr. Fernandez stated that it will be conveyed to departments that they should continue to use the checklist and make sure they're doing it regularly with their employees.

Mr. Hayes-Walker stated that there should be a place to write what type of training is provided, videos, one-on-one, but detailing what the supervisor is doing to help the employee succeed. Mr. Fernandez stated staff would look into adding a section to add more specific details about the type of training being provided.

(9) Disaster Service Worker Assignments for TLH Employees

Ms. Fletes requested feedback and guidance from the Working Group during this pandemic regarding TLH trainees activated as Disaster Service Workers (DSW) and noted that departments and supervisors have expressed concerns about the quality of the on-the-job training period, specifically supervisors have asked if the on-the-job training period could be extended as a result of the DSW assignment.

Ms. Hayes-Walker stated that departments have full control over who is on the DSW bench list and she suggests that TLH employees simply should not be placed on the bench list. Mr. Koon agreed with Ms. Hayes-Walker, explaining that it puts them at a disadvantage and to extend the training period would not be appropriate. Mr. Koon stated that TLH employees should be exempted from the DSW list.

Ms. Weaver asked for the number of TLH employees being sought after to take part in the DSW assignments. Ms. Fletes responded that staff could survey departments for exact numbers and report back in the next meeting, but anecdotally supervisors have reported during the supervisor briefing about these issues.

Ms. Maria Koo, Personnel Department, stated that some TLH employees are being placed on the DSW bench because they're unable to work at this time as the department is not fully functioning due to COVID-19, so if they are not performing DSW assignments they do not have work to perform and would have to be placed on leave. She stated that she also suggested that these employees not be assigned DSW work and was informed the department did not have work for them to do. Ms. Weaver requested that the reasons departments are choosing to place TLH employees on the DSW bench be added to the report back to have a better understanding.

Ms. Lisa Salazar stated that it is an important clarification and it is worth exploring if employees could be provided the opportunity to earn a paycheck and have their probationary period extended so that they do not lose out on training.

Ms. Sanchez stated that more clarity is needed and guidelines in place to ensure that employees are being placed on the DSW bench appropriately because it is not desirable to extend the probationary period, but she agrees with Ms. Salazar that some work is better than no work. Mr. Koon agreed with Ms. Sanchez and stated that the data should be received prior to making the hard decisions. Ms. Sanchez added that the Working Group could consult with Paula Dayes who manages the DSW program. She also added that she heard supervisors were completing evaluations for employees that were not reporting to them and that it felt uncomfortable to do so.

Ms. Weaver asked for more detail regarding Ms. Sanchez's statement regarding supervisors feeling uncomfortable completing TLH employee evaluations. Ms. Sanchez stated that she was aware of supervisors expressing concern that they weren't supervising the employee but that the employee was assigned to them, so they were completing an evaluation for an employee they weren't training or supervising because of their DSW assignment.

Ms. Weaver stated that a report that includes the number of TLH employees assigned DSW along with the reasons they've assigned on the next meeting agenda.

CONCLUDING ITEMS

(10) Request for Future Agenda Items

Ms. Weaver stated the report for item #9 and a report for terminations especially as it relates to telecommuting and if there were employees that were terminated or are on the verge of being terminated during the period of time in which the working conditions changed.

Ms. Hayes-Walker asked if individuals were able to apply for the program and whether WorkSource Centers were open. Ms. Fletes responded that individuals are able to apply and only 2 application sites had notified TLH staff that they would temporarily close. Also, in response to the pandemic an online application process was developed. Ms. Sanchez requested the link to the online application process so that it could be provided to inquiring individuals. Ms. Fletes responded that it could be found on the llocalhire.lacity.org website under the tab "where to apply", and that the link would also be sent to the Working Group.

Ms. Koo stated it may be important for the Working Group to note that TLH employees assigned to DSW assignments may pass probation in the interim of the Working Group's determination.

Ms. Salazar requested that developing a systematic approach to terminations be kept as a follow-up item on the agenda. Ms. Weaver noted that this should be included as part of the terminations report back. Ms. Sanchez suggested a subcommittee be formed to discuss the processes for employees on the brink of termination. Subcommittee members: Carmen Hayes-Walker (AFSCME), Lisa Salazar (Office of the Mayor), Hannah Levien (CD2), Teresa Sanchez (SEIU 721), Gavin Koon (IUOE 501).

(11) Future Meeting Dates

Ms. Weaver suggested the next meeting of the Working Group be scheduled next month in consideration of the climate and to see the movement of the CAO report and the Council's decisions in terms of allocating funds to departments. The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for October 30, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.

(12) Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Ms. Weaver at 2:21 p.m.