

**MINUTES**  
**Personnel Committee**  
**Colorado Springs Utilities Board**  
**October 17, 2023**

**Committee members present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont Conference Room:**  
Committee Chair Yolanda Avila, Randy Helms, and Michelle Talarico

**Board Members present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont Conference Room:**  
Nancy Henjum

**Staff members present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont Conference Room:**  
Renee Adams, Travas Deal, Bethany Schoemer, Christina Bardsley, Rebecca Ryan, Nicole Means, Tara Russell, Heather Keeling-Silva and Somer Mese

**City of Colorado Springs staff members present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont Conference Room:**  
Jacqueline Rowland

**1. Call to Order and Welcome**

Committee Chair Yolanda Avila called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Renee Adams, Chief Administrative and Human Resources Officer, read a statement regarding the Colorado Open Meetings Law and City Charter and stated that public comment would not be a part of the meeting.

**2. Review of Minutes**

The Aug. 14, 2023, Personnel Committee minutes were accepted for posting.

**3. I-10 Treatment of Staff Compliance Report**

Ms. Adams reviewed the I-10 Treatment of Staff and explained that there are five requirements that the Utilities Board has of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) regarding treatment of staff. Overall, working conditions must be fair, dignified and respectful.

Ms. Adams stated that Colorado Springs Utilities has an open-door policy and a formal complaint process. The last comprehensive employee climate survey was conducted in 2019, as well as a pulse survey in 2021. There was another pulse survey in 2022 before the CEO recruitment, and the next employee climate survey is scheduled for 2024.

Committee Chair Avila asked if there were any filings of discrimination in the past year. Ms. Rebecca Ryan, Human Resources Supervisor, said there were six filings of discrimination in the past year, and all of them were unsubstantiated. Board Member

Randy Helms asked if there is a channel to determine if a discrimination filing is valid, and Ms. Adams explained the investigatory process.

**4. I-11 Compensation and Benefits Compliance Report**

Ms. Tara Russell, Human Resources Supervisor, discussed how the CEO reviews compensation plans for the organization and executive staff. There is an administrative procedure that allows employees to appeal any methodologies Colorado Springs Utilities uses when reviewing compensation and benefit plans. Ms. Russell shared that the information is sent in an annual wage and benefits memo. Last year there were no appeals during this process.

**5. E-2.8 Emergency Chief Executive Officer Succession Plan Compliance Report**

Ms. Adams reviewed the policy for emergency successors for the CEO. There are no changes currently. The Chief Operations Officer, Chief Systems Planning and Projects Officer, and Chief Planning and Finance Officer are the emergency successors. The CEO can only travel with one of the designated successors at a time. Board Member Helms expressed that he thinks the policy is outdated because the chances are very low that officers traveling together will die. Mr. Travas Deal, Chief Executive Officer, said that the reason for the policy is connected to the insurance and bonding impact.

**6. Employee Climate Survey**

Ms. Heather Keeling-Silva, Human Resources Business Partner, discussed the 2024 Climate Survey. To increase the participation rate, their team has identified May 13-May 24 as the dates of the survey, rather than June because of people taking time off in the summer. The 2019 participation rate was 73% and the national average is 79%. Ms. Keeling-Silva said that 75% participation is their goal for 2024, but Board Member Helms said to shoot for 80% so it is 1% higher than the national average. Board Member Nancy Henjum and Committee Chair Avila agreed with Board Member Helms.

There was a discussion regarding incentives, healthy competition, anonymity, and the need to explain the “why” behind the survey. Ms. Keeling-Silva said the team is looking at methods of communication so employees at every level of the organization know what is being changed. Committee Chair Avila asked if the participation has varied between departments, and Ms. Adams said that Human Resources and Customer Service have been historically good at filling out the surveys, but there is a need to engage more frontline workers. Board Member Henjum said that she would like to be kept updated on the Employee Climate Survey, and Ms. Adams said that she will be giving checkpoints to the committee.

**7. Plan Future Agenda – Next meeting: Thursday, Nov. 9, 2023**

Ms. Adams reviewed agenda items for the next Personnel Committee meeting. In the November meeting they will wrap-up 2023 items and look at the proposed topics and schedule for 2024. The second part of the meeting will be focused on the CEO performance plan. There will not be a meeting in December due to the holidays.

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:49 a.m.