

**MINUTES**  
**Personnel Committee**  
**Colorado Springs Utilities Board**  
**August 14, 2023**

**Committee members present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont Conference Room:** Dave Donelson, Michelle Talarico and Randy Helms

**Committee members excused:** Yolanda Avila

**Staff members present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont Conference Room:** Renee Adams, Tristan Gearhart, Natalie Watts, Heather Harvey, Tara Russell, Andie Buhl and Megan Johnston

**City staff present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont Conference Room:** Renee Congdon

**1. Call to Order and Welcome**

Committee Member Helms 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 July 17, 2023, Personnel Committee minutes were approved for posting.

**3. 2023 - 2024 Labor and Benefits Monitoring and Planning Presentation**

Ms. Tara Russell, Human Resources Supervisor, reviewed the foundation of the workforce's successes and the organization's compensation commitment to be market competitive, enabling Springs Utilities to attract and retain a competent, engaged and customer-focused workforce to effectively and efficiently support the needs of the community. She said the compensation strategies are:

- Attract and retain an engaged and customer-focused workforce
- Address market competitiveness in a competitive labor market
- Reward for job performance
- Communicate annual pay programs and changes
- Implement programs that address the needs of the organization
- Adhere to enterprise budgets
- Monitor the impact of legislative changes

Ms. Russell reviewed the 2024 labor budget planning efforts for the organization, and she said the compensation program is currently being evaluated and pay delivery changes are expected, such that base pay funding will be used for the following categories:

- Performance pay
- Salary structure pay adjustments
- Probationary pay adjustments
- Apprentice step increases
- Market alignment
- New positions

Ms. Russell said all changes will be announced to employees in the annual wage and benefits memo. She said wages continue to rise in a tight labor market, despite recessionary concerns.

Ms. Russell reviewed the organization's benefits commitment which is to offer market competitive benefits to attract and retain a high-performing workforce, with a continued focus on cost management strategies as Springs Utilities manages its self-insured medical and dental plans and follows a consumer-directed health care strategy. She said the benefits strategies are:

- Provide market competitive benefits
- Drive healthcare consumerism
- Create a culture of health and well-being
- Maximize offerings to support emotional health and wellbeing support services
- Evaluate health fund levels, plan designs, cost sharing and premium structures
- Balance benefit premium increases with base pay adjustments
- Track healthcare legislation and impacts

Ms. Russell concluded with the 2024 benefits planning efforts for the organization:

- Healthcare claims cost trend is projected to increase by 6%-9%, meaning it will cost more to treat patients in the coming year
- Evaluating moderate medical and dental premium increases
- Health fund reserves have a surplus
- Exploring options to use reserves to enhance benefits plan offerings and communications
- Maintain current premium cost sharing between employer and employee
- Encourage and promote convenient telehealth options, replacing costly in-person visits
- Monitor increasing specialty-drug pricing

#### **4. Human Resource Integrated Plan (HRIP) Update**

Ms. Heather Harvey, Human Resources Manager, said Springs Utilities' HRIP is to identify short-term and long-term workforce planning needs to help close gaps in current workforce planning programs. She said the HRIP initiative includes the development and maintenance of a comprehensive strategy that addresses the current and future workforce needs of Colorado Springs Utilities. Ms. Harvey said the goal of this program is to identify gaps in the current workforce to improve and

address succession planning, recruitment, and retention by applying the six steps of Strategic Workforce Planning (Strategic Drivers, Supply Analysis, Demand Analysis, Gap Analysis, Action Planning, Monitoring Progress).

Ms. Harvey said succession planning is an intentional process to prepare employees for future roles and ensure the seamless movement of talent within the organization. She said the organization is at risk when years of institutional knowledge or specialized skills suddenly disappear because the organization understands that employees can leave for any reason and at any time. For Springs Utilities, succession planning is a vital step in attracting, developing, and retaining an engaged and customer-focused workforce. Ms. Harvey said Human Resources required all leaders to participate in a Succession Task in April 2022 and April 2023 to rate their direct reports on risk of loss, impact of loss and employee potential. From there, the organization reviewed the results to craft a succession plan.

Ms. Harvey concluded with next steps, which are:

- HR Business Partners will collaborate directly with the leaders in their assigned customer groups to assist in directing leaders to the tools and resources to create succession action plans.
- Action plans will be developed by the end of Q4 2023 to address the high risk/impact by following the best practices for succession planning.
- Results will be measured on an annual basis. Success of the project will be demonstrated by the reduction in high risk/high impact percentages.

**5. Introduce CEO Mid-year Competency and Strategic Objective Review Process**

Ms. Adams reviewed the process for the CEO mid-year review which will be discussed at the September Utilities Board meeting.

**6. Plan Future Agenda – Next meeting: Friday, Sep. 22, 2023**

Ms. Adams reviewed agenda items for the next Personnel Committee meeting. She noted that the September meeting date has been changed to Friday instead of Monday to accommodate the Chamber & EDC's D.C. Fly-In.

**7. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:57 a.m.