

**Business Employment Skills Team, Inc.
Human Resource Committee Meeting
June 22, 2015**

MEETING MINUTES

The BEST, Inc. HR Committee meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Acting Chair Jennifer Robbins

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jennifer Robbins, Wayne Reising

MEMBER ABSENT: Kathy Enbom

OTHERS PRESENT: Pam Furlan, Kathy Day, JoAnn Johnson

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Wayne Reising motioned to approve the **April 27, 2015** Meeting Minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Jennifer Robbins and carried.

Jo Ann pointed out that the **August 25, 2014** Meeting Minutes need to be correct to reflect that she was not present at that meeting. Wayne Reising motioned to approve the August 25, 2014 Meeting Minutes as corrected. Motion was seconded by Jennifer Robbins and carried.

Business Meeting

Annual Salary Adjustment

Jennifer said that the Proposal for Annual Salary Adjustments was included with the meeting materials and reviewed the percentages of increase for members. She said that the sliding scale for the increases is being proposed based on performance evaluations is as follows:

| | |
|------------------|------|
| Rating 100 – 93% | 3% |
| Rating 93 – 86% | 2.5% |
| Rating 86 – 79% | 2% |
| Rating below 79% | 0% |

Kathy Day told members that if all current staff were given a 3% increase the annual staffing budget would see an increase of a little over \$26,000. Kathy continued by saying that BEST, Inc. received an increase in allocations for PY 15 of about 11% and the increase was affordable. Kathy told members that last year the Board approved up to a 2.5% increase for staff. Jennifer asked if all staff would be receiving a 3% increase this year. Kathy replied that she had not completed the evaluations on her staff yet so she was not sure. Pam replied that she had one individual on her staff that would be receiving a 2.5%. Wayne Reising motioned to recommend to the BEST, Inc. salary adjustments for staff that range from 0 – 3% maximum based on the sliding scale presented. Motion was seconded by Jennifer Robbins and carried.

New Business

Jennifer provided Pam and Kathy with their individual Executive Director Leadership Survey results as well as a copy of the staff comments that were received. Jennifer commented that, in her opinion, there were not many surprises when she read over the surveys. She said that the results were relatively good for both of the Executive Directors. Most of the comments, Jennifer said, was from one individual as noted on the handout. Jennifer said that she thought a lot of the comments were probably valid. As Executive Directors, Jennifer said the comments would be for you to assess and get together to discuss. Jennifer continued by saying that she hopes that Kathy and Pam will use the individual survey results and comments as part of their assessment for the year as well as improvements for next year.

Jennifer continued by saying that one individual commented that they appreciate the experience and knowledge that Pam and Kathy bring to the organization and said “we are very lucky”. Another comment, Jennifer said, is that they “know that the Executive Directors care about their staff even though they don’t know every individual. They are good people and believe in the program and mission”.

Jennifer said that more than once the survey results indicated there is still tension between the Executive Directors and there is still a lack of communication. She told members that some of the survey results gave specific instances with the lack of communication.

After a discussion regarding the dissemination of the survey results, members agreed to give the BEST, Inc. Board a copy of the Comments from the Executive Leadership Survey and retain the individual survey results on file.

Next, Jennifer provided copies of the Employee Engagement Survey commenting that she was very surprised by the results in particular the wages. She said that she was thinking of requesting more information on staff wages, but wanted to discuss the results with the HR Committee and BEST, Inc. Board. Jennifer said that #9 (considering the value I bring to the organization, I feel I am paid fairly) received the lowest score. She said the 19 responses, 8 individuals said that they were not paid enough. Wayne stated that he thinks that feeling is human nature. People usually think that they deserve more. He continued by saying that he has read several articles saying that when employees receive an increase they are satisfied for a specific period of time.

Jennifer asked how the Executive Directors classified their respective staff. Both Pam and Kathy agreed that the employees at BEST, Inc. are considered professionals.

Wayne stated that the article he referred to earlier indicated that people want to earn wages like those employees in the larger metropolitan areas. Jennifer stated that the employees in the larger metropolitan areas also have a higher cost of living than in our area.

Jennifer told members that the comments echoed the survey results.

Another comment, Jennifer said, is that they would rather have an earlier start time. Jennifer stated that BEST, Inc. is a service organization and if staff were able to work, as an example, from 6:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., customers would not be served.

Jennifer said that some employees commented that they did not like the Paid Hours Off System (PHO). She stated that the PHO system was recently revised and asked the Executive Directors for some clarification about earnings. In terms of sick time, Kathy said that employees are provided with time off. Pam stated that employees must use their PHOs before being compensated for any extended period of time that they may be eligible for. As for earn PHOs on a regular basis, Kathy told members that some staff who were hired after the PHO policy was revised only earn an hour a month. Therefore, Kathy said, they don't accrue enough hours to be able to take any sick or personal time. After a year, she said, employees begin earning at an increased level.

One question on the survey, Jennifer said, was that an employee asked is why the PHO earning rate ends at 15 years. Jennifer confirmed that the PHO earning level tops out at 15 years. However, she said that employees with less than 15 years are just as valuable to those with more than 15 years of employment.

Wayne commented that of the 19 employees who completed the survey, only 10 had made comments. He said that he found that interesting and took it as a good sign. Pam asked if any of the 10 comments were made by the same individual. Jennifer responded that they were all individual comments.

Jennifer then referred members to the last comment that was made indicating that most of the clients we help find employment for start at a higher rate of pay than the career advisors who assist them. In discussion this Kathy confirmed that the starting wage for a Career Advisor is about \$18.00/hour. Kathy stated that some clients, such as welders or nurses will start at a higher rate of pay. Pam confirmed that BEST, Inc. serves a lot of healthcare customers who do enter employment at a higher rate of pay. Jennifer stated the information was helpful and good to know. She stated that her employees start out at \$10.00/hour and top out at \$13.00/hour after 3 years of employment. Jennifer said that some of her employees who were hired under a previous contract topped out at \$15.00/hour.

Referring back to the topic of PHOs and Holidays, Jennifer stated that she was under the impression that the Board actually gave additional days off for employees when the Handbook was revised. Kathy told members that when the Board started paying employees for all Holidays, the earning level of PHOs was reduced. No additional days were provided. Kathy said that PHOs earning level tops out at 6.64 every 2 weeks for those employees with 13+ years of service. Jennifer confirmed that employees are granted 12 Holidays per year.

Continuing discussion of the days off for employees, Kathy told members that two-thirds of the staff came from either IL Valley Community College or Highland Community College where they had a lot more days off.

Wayne asked about the Retirement Plan for the former Community College staff. Kathy responded that they were under the SERS plan.

Kathy continued by saying that the former Community College staff were used to having the time off between Christmas and New Year's, plus 12 Holidays, 12 sick days and depending on how many years of service, they also received 2-4 weeks of vacation a year. An additional perk, Kathy said was that Community College employees were able to work 4 ten hour days during the summer months. Kathy stated that many of these individuals had worked for the Community Colleges for 10+ years and were used to more liberal benefits. Jennifer responded and confirmed that former Community College employees worked 40 hours a week and now they only work 37.5 hours a week. She stated that when they became BEST, Inc. employees their work week was reduced by 2.5 hours. It was also confirmed the employees receive a 30-minute unpaid lunch break.

In closing, Jennifer asked if anyone had any questions regarding the survey. Pam said that now that the results are compiled and everyone has commented, what will be the next step. She asked if a survey was going to be done in order to let staff know that their benefits may be comparable to those of surrounding areas or would the survey be filed away.

Kathy stated that a survey could be sent to neighboring areas about salary, time off and benefits. Pam suggested to look at neighboring like areas (not-for-profits) as some of the county offices may have union representation.

Jennifer asked about the employees who left the agency after the merge. Kathy said that one employee went to the Community College. Pam responded that of the other 3 that left, 2 retired and one started to work part-time in the private sector.

Jennifer told members that at some time there has to be an acceptable level of turnover. She said that if turnover was extreme then we would need to review benefits and pay, even with a good job market.

Pam asked if the HR Committee or BEST, Inc. Board was going to respond to the staff. Jennifer said that the topic can be addressed at the Board meeting following the HR Committee meeting.

Wayne commented that checking with surrounding like areas about salary, benefits and time off would be beneficial. Jennifer commented that the Bureau of Labor Statistics has all of this data information available and she did not think it made sense to duplicate an effort that has already been done.

Kathy confirmed that the only negative response is in regards to pay.

Pam asked how many responded to the survey. Jennifer said based on the responses she thought 20. Kathy stated that there are 21 employees including her and Pam so only 19 employees should have responded. Pam said that she was glad to see that everyone, or at least the majority, responded.

Wayne stated that even with the survey results indicating that employees are unhappy with their pay, 16 of them say that they want to be working for BEST, Inc. a year from now. He said that in reality, they can complain about the pay, but they are still going to be working for BEST. Wayne commented that if pay was an issue, they would be looking elsewhere.

Wayne – even with the higher leaning where people are unhappy with pay – 16 say that want to work with best a year from now. So they can complain about pay but still going to work here. If pay was an issue they would be looking at elsewhere.

Pam said that the statement regarding pay was one category of interest. She stated that not everyone will be happy 100% of the time.

Kathy noted that BEST, Inc. has a wide range of experienced staff ranging from 1 – 30+ years.

Other Business

Per Kathy Enbom, Jo Ann reminded members that there will be an HR Committee meeting on August 24.

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

With there being no further business, Wayne Reising motioned to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Jennifer Robbins. Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Jo Ann Johnson

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JRobbins', is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Jennifer Robbins
Secretary