SAN MATEO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
PERSONNEL COMMISSION VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Zoom Meeting ID: 962 5378 8912
Meeting #582
May 19, 2021, 2:30 p.m.

Commission Members Present: Christine Coffey, Commissioner
Veronica Palmer, Commissioner
Karen Schwarz, Commissioner

Commission Staff Present: Dr. Karen D. White

Others Present: Nancy Magee, Superintendent

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<tr>
<th>Terri Aiello</th>
<th>Krystyna Gniady</th>
<th>Patricia Love</th>
<th>Lori Musso</th>
<th>Elvia Tapia</th>
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<tr>
<td>Janeen Bonnevie</td>
<td>Philip Gordillo</td>
<td>Teri Mai</td>
<td>Lorrie Owens</td>
<td>Taufua Veu</td>
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<td>Vanessa Chavez</td>
<td>Linda Gore</td>
<td>Minette Manio</td>
<td>Veronica Pantoja</td>
<td>Loriann Villanis</td>
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<td>Jean Corpuz</td>
<td>Margie Gustafson</td>
<td>Cindy Matsuyama</td>
<td>Yazmine Patino</td>
<td>Karen Williams</td>
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<td>Francesca D’Amato</td>
<td>Diem Hoang</td>
<td>Tami Moore</td>
<td>Denise Porterfield</td>
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<td>Kirsten Ellinger</td>
<td>Amanda Lee</td>
<td>Christian Morales</td>
<td>Dalma Sato</td>
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<td>Timothy Fox</td>
<td>Rocio López</td>
<td>Laurie Mouton</td>
<td>Claudia Schwartz</td>
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1A. CALL TO ORDER – 2:30 p.m.

1B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Personnel Commission Chairperson Veronica Palmer called the meeting to order. She introduced Linda Gore, Personnel Commission Services Specialist of Santa Clara County as the technical host for the Personnel Commission meeting.

Action: A motion to adopt May 19, 2021, regular meeting agenda was made and seconded. Motion passed, and agenda was approved as submitted.

Votes Taken by Roll Call:

Coffey- Aye
Schwarz- Aye
Palmer- Aye

2A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES #581

Action: A motion to adopt April 14, 2021, regular meeting minutes was made and seconded. Motion passed, and minutes were approved as submitted.
Votes Taken, by Roll Call:

Coffey - Aye
Schwarz - Aye
Palmer - Aye

3A. BOARD OF EDUCATION/SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATIONS

Superintendent Nancy Magee addressed the Personnel Commission and provided an update from the San Mateo County Office (SMCOE) Board of Education and Superintendent's office.

Superintendent Magee wished everyone a happy classified school employee week. She also acknowledged a recently held recognition event for retirees. She expressed her appreciation for all of the valued services added within the office, school districts, and community partners. "We are now in the hiring season, and we have some employees who are retiring." So, she is looking forward to bringing on new Team Members over the next several months.

She also made a few remarks about the Personnel Commission using BoardDocs.

4A. PUBLIC/EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS

Chief Technology Officer Laurie Owens reiterated Superintendent McGee's sentiments in congratulating all retirees and Classified Employees. Ms. Owens also acknowledged the new online format for the agenda and minutes (Board Docs). Ms. Owens commended and congratulated Dr. White for the certification list that provided her an opportunity to hire two new employees. The entire process was conducted in a very organized and efficient manner that led her to fill her vacancy in a matter of weeks, not several months, as in the case of previous vacancies.

5. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Recruitment and Selection Update and Staffing Report

Executive Director Dr. Karen White presented to the Personnel Commission the monthly update on classified recruitment.

Dr. White reported that Personnel Commission Services closed four recruitments during May. She reiterated that the hiring season is here, so there are currently six new recruitments in progress. Although she is short-staffed, she is committed to proceeding effectively, efficiently, and organized to continue to move the recruitments forward.

As a result of the four recruitments' timing, the certification list will be submitted for ratification on next month's agenda.
B. Personnel Commission Services Executive Director's Report

Personnel Commission Services, Executive Director Dr. Karen D. White addressed the Personnel Commission to provide an update on the department's current activities.

Dr. White described how her commitment to working on automating processes using specialized software applications led to the implementation of Board Docs and the continued progress of successfully using eSkill and Zoom for examinations. Dr. White expressed that she is now considering how to continue these new technology options in a hybrid format due to the building reopening. Therefore, she is also partnering with the CTO to plan accordingly.

Dr. White expressed her top priorities for this month: automating processes, recruitments and working on classifications. She described completing two classifications (Administration Assistant I-Bilingual and Registered Behavior Technician) and met with respective stakeholders about them. She indicated that the new classification of Administrative Assistant-Bilingual is submitted with the signed agreement between CSEA and the Administration as an action item further in the agenda.

Dr. White also commented on how standing meetings are being held with the Union, Commissioners, and other organizations to continue to build relationships and answer all questions. She encouraged others to contact her.

C. Personnel Commission 2021-22 PC Meeting Calendar

Personnel Commission is requested to review the proposed meeting dates for the fiscal year 2021-2022.

Commissioner Chair Palmer addressed a comment to Executive Director Dr. White about the May 18th date on the calendar. Dr. White indicated that she was not familiar with the rationale of changing the meeting date to the third week of May instead of the second week. Therefore, she will research and respond to this question at next month's meeting.

The final draft of the calendar will be presented at the next Personnel Commission meeting for approval with any corrections.

6. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of New Classification and Salary Range for Administrative Assistant I, Bilingual

Personnel Commission Chairperson Veronica Palmer requested a motion to approve the new classification and salary range for Administrative Assistant I, Bilingual.
Action: A motion to approve was made and seconded. Motion passed, and the Classification and Salary Range for Administrative Assistant I, Bilingual, was unanimously approved.

Votes Taken by Roll Call:

Coffey - Aye
Palmer - Aye
Schwarz – Aye

7. PUBLIC HEARING, PERSONNEL COMMISSION SERVICES BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2021-22

A. Call to Order
Commission Chairperson Veronica Palmer opened the public hearing and called the hearing to order at 2:51 p.m.

B. Reading of Hearing Notice and Statement of Purpose
Commissioner Palmer read the hearing notice and the statement of purpose.

The purpose of the hearing was for the Personnel Commission to take action relating to the adoption of the Personnel Commission Services Budget Proposal for the fiscal year 2021-2022.

C. Public Hearing Procedure and Guidelines
Commissioner Palmer reiterated the public hearing procedure and guidelines.

D. Public Comment

Superintendent Magee responded and addressed comments previously made by Mr. Gordillo at the April 14th Personnel Commission meeting. He recommended no changes be made to the budget based on the pandemic – this is also his advocacy across the state. She found Mr. Gordillo's recommendation not aligned with SMCOE's internal practices. It was also not appropriate for a person who is not directly a part of the SMCOE organization to be making recommendations for SMCOE's budgets. Superintendent Magee described how SMCOE's practice is responsive to occurring conditions and adjusts budgets accordingly when necessary. For example, increasing or decreasing staffing needs to meet goals. It is also very normal for Executive Directors to make appropriate changes to their budget, as this is the norm for the whole (SMCOE) organization.

Superintendent Magee expressed her perspectives of the Commissioners requiring the Executive Director to ask the Commission for approval of expenditures over a specific amount of money. This procedure could potentially slow down operations and processes
for recruitment to move forward. It would be required for the item to be presented to the Commission, which only meets once a month but is relatively low in cost. This practice is disingenuous in how the County Office has operated in the past. She also commented how SMCOE's Executive Directors are highly qualified professional education administrators that typically make very sound decisions on their budget. She asked the Commissioners to consider raising the threshold of the amount on expenditures for the executive director so it does not affect the efficiency of the County Office.

E. Personnel Commission Discussion/Action
Commissioner Chair Palmer opened the floor for Commission discussion.

Commissioner Chair Palmer stated that she disapproves of the budget submitted by the Executive Director, Dr. Karen White. She believes that there are too many budget cuts due to Covid and public media indicating that we are in a period of inflation. Commissioner Chair Palmer said that salaries and benefits would increase with personnel being added to the Personnel Commission. She further indicated that it was not the budget that she asked Dr. White to submit to the Commission. Chair Palmer also acknowledged that she is not completely at odds with Superintendent Magee's comments; however, she believes that it is better to have than to not have when needed. She further commented that any potential monies not spent in the budget are swept back to the County Office's general fund and that money can be used for any purpose as it approaches the year's end.

Commissioner Coffey stated that she supports Commissioner Chair Palmer's comments. She would much rather end the year with a surplus, given the uncertainty around us.

Commissioner Schwarz stated that the proposed budget for 2021-22 is less than the approved budget for 2020-21. The proposed budget is also less than the last two years' approved budget. So, she is unsure what the concern is and will be at odds with her fellow Commissioners when she looks at the totals for the proposed budget. She feels that the numbers for the proposed 2021-22 budget make sense.

Commissioner Chair Palmer stated that she would like to address Commissioner Schwarz's concerns. As the salary and benefits account begin to increase, it will put stress on our discrepancy expenses. Due to the uncertainties of COVID-19, it is best to have additional funds in the budget as previously stated, then return it if not used, than to need it and not have it.

Commissioner Coffey stated that she would like to keep the previous amount to provide room for unexpected expenditures.

Commissioner Chair Palmer offered to meet with Superintendent Magee and the financial staff to determine their financial goal and cooperate as much as possible. She feels the Commission needs to have the flexibility to have the funds available when necessary.
Action: A motion to adopt the Personnel Commission Services proposed budget as presented for the Fiscal Year 2021-22 was made and seconded. The budget was defeated.

Votes Taken, By Roll Call:

Coffey- Nay  
Palmer- Nay  
Schwarz- Aye

Commissioner Chair Palmer proposed a new motion to adopt the Personnel Commission Services Budget based on last year's 2020-2021 budget for the fiscal year 2021-22.

Action: A motion to keep the Personnel Commission Services budget the same as the fiscal year 2020-21 for the new Fiscal Year 2021-22 was made and seconded. Motion passed and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Schwarz indicated how the difference between the defeated budget and the newly proposed budget is about $31,707; the defeated budget is approximately $31,707 less than the proposed budget.

Votes Taken, By Roll Call:

Coffey- Aye  
Palmer- Aye  
Schwarz- Aye

F. Having heard all discussions and with the approval of the new budget proposal for the 2021-2022 fiscal year by the Commission, Commissioner Palmer closed the public hearing.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT RE CLOSED SESSION ITEM(S)

The following individuals addressed the Personnel Commission and expressed their comments regarding the closed session item:

- Superintendent Magee indicated how the action that occurred today is very disappointing and frustrating. Executive Director Dr. White worked directly with our budget team, just like all executive directors. She commented how Commissioner Chair Palmer made an argument about $31,000 reflecting reclassified positions in the Personnel Commission Services department associated with a decrease in salaries (funds). She further explained how the budget team compiled a budget and acknowledged her frustration in how there is a perception of some type of failure to your executive director - who is fulfilling her duties and following all of the processes and policies of the County office. Superintendent Magee continued to explain the budget protocol for Commissioners. "You invited me, the County Superintendent, to discuss the budget - this is not something that should occur with a
personnel commissioner. The Personnel Commission's role is to set the vision for the team, and your executive director does the business of the Personnel Commission. Therefore, I would be more than happy to meet with both of you to discuss your goals and SMCOE goals for the budget. Superintendent Magee stated for the record on Dr. White's evaluation; she is a very qualified professional.

- Associate Superintendent Human Resources Lori Musso stated for the record how she worked very closely with Dr. White. She is an outstanding employee. She has streamlined some systems, and her follow-through is amazing. As stated earlier in the meeting, our recruitments are going through smoother, quicker. She also has developed good relationships with personnel, especially Hiring Managers. She is very professional. Her attention to detail to the Merit Rules is consistently and effectively demonstrated in her communications to me regarding Union relations. So, consider this feedback regarding her evaluation regarding my working relationship and having served with her.

- Chief Technology Officer Lori Owens stated for the record how Dr. White is working efficiently in staffing recruitments. She commented that she recognizes the amount of work that goes into the budget as a budget manager. She also stressed the importance of a budget workshop. There is a comment related to the performance evaluation of Dr. White that should be communicated to the Commissioners. A colleague in one of the districts contacted her to commend Dr. White's performance. He indicated how it was one of the most organized and professional oral board examinations that he had experienced.

9. CLOSED SESSION

Public Employee Performance Evaluation (Govt. Code § 54957)
Title: Executive Director, Personnel Commission Services

The Commission adjourned the meeting and moved into a closed session.

10. RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

The Commission reconvened and reopened the regular session to the public at 4:33 p.m.

Commissioner Chair Palmer announced that the action taken during the Closed Session was to remove any budgetary restrictions that have been imposed on Executive Director Dr. White. She is now free to manage the budget as she sees fit without having to report to the Commission every time she goes over a specified amount.

11. ADJOURNMENT

A. Next Meeting
   The next Personnel Commission meeting is scheduled for June 9, 2021, at 2:30 p.m.

B. Adjourn the Meeting
   Personnel Commission Chairperson Veronica Palmer adjourned the meeting.
Respectfully Submitted By:

Dr. Karen D. White  
Ex-Officio Secretary to the Personnel Commission