

Minutes of the EDIT Meeting of 1/8/26 on the Zoom Platform

Present: Jonathan Tropp, Chairman; Challa Flemming, Vice Chair; David Rosenburg, Samantha Miller, Rick Bolton

Absent: Rodney Gray, Chris Powell

Also Present: James Cordone, Town of Trumbull Attorney; William B. Chin, Town of Trumbull Technology Director; Tom McCarthy, Town of Trumbull Director of Human Resources; Joanne Glasser Orenstein, Clerk; Jennifer Winschell, Town Council Liaison

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Tropp at 7:33pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and Roll Call was completed.

There was an email from Michelle Jakab to all members, thanking everyone for participation in last month's meeting, and supplying data on school suspensions and its relevance to her department. She also expressed interest in the Book Club.

No members of the public offered public comment.

Mr. Bolton made a motion to approve the December minutes, Ms. Flemming seconded. VOTE: All in favor.

New Business

Mr. Tropp thanked Mr. McCarthy for coming.

Mr. McCarthy has been in his position for a while, having previously been a labor relations attorney in Bridgeport and New Haven. He oversaw benefits and HR in Bridgeport as well. There are three people in his department, he does all personnel functions, Stephen Librandi is in charge of Civil Service and Luisa Rosario is an HR Generalist.

He spends a lot of time on contracts. Every year another union contract is up. Trumbull is almost entirely staffed by civil service, except for appointed positions, nurses and EMS. The Civil Service Commission approves testing processes and hiring. They need to remain neutral and objective in hiring. They provide a certified list to commissions. Mr. Librandi also came from New Haven. They have made a more efficient hiring process, but they don't really have the ability to control diversity through the hiring process but they have done a lot to expand the pool of prospects. They have invested money to increase the pool by using consultants but have found the best results come from using department staffs.

They also do all the benefits, the costs for which are going through the roof. They are working very hard to contain costs. They have a partnership plan with all state employees.

He handles disciplinary issues, which are rare.

His department does not handle the Education Department, except workers' comp cases.

He is bombarded by vendors seeking to sell their services. They used one, who promised more eyeballs but not more candidates. For the police department, having an officer go to job fairs was much more effective than sending Mr. McCarthy or Mr. Librandi. The officer followed up with every person they met at the job fair, invited them to come visit the police station and urged them to put in their applications, giving pointers. Mr. Librandi sends email reminders regularly to everyone who applies for a job, and then a second reminder.

Mr. McCarthy said the Police Department is the most diverse in town. It has been so since he started. They have not been as successful on the Town side, except for gender diversity. They are better at getting transfers from neighboring towns. There are also not many openings in departments other than the police.

Civil Service is designed to remove nepotism, favoritism and political action in hiring. It is a strict testing type program.

Senior Staff recently received anti-bias training. He asked the attendees to critique it, but he hasn't yet reviewed all the feedback. He feels the trainers were great, everyone seemed to agree. The one thing he would recommend is to take it out of an academic setting, as examples were a little strained. He also feels it's not a great program for people lower in the chain, but great for supervisors, librarians; not for DPW staff.

The plan is to next expand it to department heads and see how it goes, maybe then customer-service level will follow.

Mr. McCarthy said the trainers offered a different way to think about diversity, trait bias, areas that are permanent that we make determinations based on. They help create a different pathway in your brain.

Mr. McCarthy said he would be happy to come back any time.

Old Business

Book Club Feb 2. Mr. Tropp reported there has been nothing more in social media or elsewhere about the book choice.

New Business

Future Meeting Guests

Mr. Tropp said Chief Lombardo will attend the February meeting and he will reach out to Ms. Bakalar to try to schedule her for March.

Survey

Mr. Tropp and Ms. Flemming have a meeting on January 13 with Ms. Tesoro to discuss.

Mr. Rosenberg made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Flemming seconded. VOTE: All in favor at 8:18pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Glasser Orenstein
January 13, 2025.