

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY
Policy Review Committee
Meeting Minutes – October 26, 2018

In attendance: Gary Baker, Donna Donahue, Beth Dow (staff) and Chris English (staff)

- 1. Call to Order.** Chris called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.
- 2. Approve October 26, 2018 Meeting Minutes.** Gary made a motion to approve the October 26, 2018 meeting minutes, seconded by Beth. Approved unanimously.
- 3.a Review Draft Welcome/Onboarding Letter for New Employees.** Chris asked the Committee for comments on the draft Welcome/Onboard Letter he had put together. Donna said that it was more detailed than she had envisioned, and she shared her own draft, which was more a true welcome letter that would serve as an introduction to the Employee Guidebook. Chris noted that the Town uses a (more or less) standard offer letter format and that his thought was to create a welcome letter than would help a new employee (post-offer) understand what to expect during his/her first few days with the Town. The Committee discussed the different onboarding topics covered in the draft letter – workplace attire, becoming familiar with policies and procedures, learning about benefits and payroll processes, and visiting the various Town departments – and eventually agreed with a suggestion from Beth that these items could be included as a one-page attachment to the standard offer letter, leaving Donna’s welcome letter concept to serve as the introduction to the Guidebook. Gary suggested that supervisors be provided with an onboarding checklist. The Committee agreed that an acknowledgment page for the new employee to sign, indicating that he/she has been given an opportunity to read the Guidebook and ask questions, would be appropriate.

The Committee also discussed the background check component of the offer letter and why a separate employee acknowledgement form is included, rather than a simple statement that a background check is required as a term of employment. Donna commented that, in her experience, notification regarding the background check is often included on the employment application, itself. She also said a Letter of Intent is commonly used, which positions a successful background check as a pre-condition to the formal offer of employment. Gary noted that pre-notification regarding the background check also gives applicants an opportunity to proactively raise potential issues during the interview/pre-employment process. Chris said he would ask Kathleen for additional information on the history of the issue.

- 3.b. Discuss Committee Member Input on Guidebook Elements.** The Committee discussed the content categories to include in the Guidebook.

Beth’s input for the Table of Contents:

- Organization Chart (names and positions)
- Guide to Municipal Services (modified for employees)

- Employee ID process
- Pay info – Payroll cycle and when timesheets are due
- How to request time off
- Accident Reporting
- Exit process

The Committee discussed options for revising the Guide to Municipal Services as an employee reference, and came to the conclusion that a hybrid org chart format – with employee names and functional responsibilities tailored for internal use – might be a better approach.

Donna’s input for the Table of Contents:

- Welcome Letter
- Mission Statement
- Code of Conduct
- Flow chart/Organization chart
- Employment policies (EEO, et. al.)
- Compensation & Benefits (taken from the Personnel Policy or Union Contract)
- Health, Safety and Security (including policies like Active Shooter)
- ERISA (retirement plan) info
- Exit process (including confidentiality agreement?)

Donna noted that she liked the basic breakdown used in the ASCD Employee Handbook:

- I. General
- II. Your Job
- III. Your Benefits
- IV. Other

Chris’ input for the Table of Contents (taken from the “Typical TOC for a quite complete Employee Handbook”):

- Orientation
- Pay Day
- Performance Reviews (Job Evaluations)
- Time Sheets
- Medical Coverage
- Dental
- Short-Term Disability
- Long-Term Disability
- Retirement
- Workers Comp
- Accidents
- Leaving Your Company

After additional discussion, it was the consensus of the Committee that, beyond providing basic introductory information on a particular topic, in general the Guidebook should be designed to refer employees to specific staff resources who can provide more detailed information, rather than trying to keep multiple documents up to date in the guidebook. Chris suggested additional discussion would be needed regarding the relationship between the Guidebook and the Personnel Policy (which covers many of the same topics) to determine how the Guidebook will refer to the policy in a consistent fashion.

Next Steps.

1. Chris said he would work on converting his Welcome Letter draft into a one-page fact sheet attachment to the Offer Letter.
2. Beth volunteered to work on the hybrid org chart with functional breakouts for employee reference.
3. Donna said she would look for a copy of the bank's Code of Conduct to share with the Committee as a potential starting point for a Town COC.

The Committee will meet next on Friday, November 2nd, at 8:00 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Submitted by:

Chris English
Assistant Town Manager