

ALASKA STATE PERSONNEL BOARD MEETING

July 17, 2023

1:00 P.M.

Atwood Building

550 W 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 1970

Anchorage, Alaska

In person:

- Al Tamagni, Chairperson
- Dr. Keith Hamilton, Board Member
- Camille Brill, Human Resource Consultant 6, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations, on behalf of Kate Sheehan, Personnel Director and Board Secretary

Present by teleconference:

- Jessie Alloway, Chief Assistant Attorney General, Department of Law
- Matt Stinson, Assistant Attorney General, Department of Law
- Jennifer Williams, Paralegal 2, Department of Law
- Deborah Etheridge, Director of Public Assistance, Department of Health
- Josie Stern, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Health
- Frank Hurt, Human Resource Consultant 4, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
- Jeff Hahnen, Human Resource Consultant 2, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
- Jay Ribao, Human Resource Consultant 1, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
- Elizabeth Miller, Human Resource Consultant 2, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
- Katherine Orozco, Human Resource Consultant 5, Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
- Richard Shultz, Member of the Public

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Tamagni called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda with additions was moved and approved.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the November 16, 2022, meeting was moved and approved.

4. ETHICS DISCLOSURE – PERSONNEL BOARD MEMBERS

The board members had no disclosures or conflicts of interest of which that they were aware.

5. EXPAND THE PARTIALLY EXEMPT SERVICE TO INCLUDE PCN 063000  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE,  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

Elizabeth Miller, DOPLR Classification Human Resource Consultant 2, explained that the new partially exempt Deputy Director position is being requested as the Division of Public Assistance is a large organization, does not have a Deputy Director, and needs the position for extra managerial support to supervise staff and oversee programs. This would allow the Division Director to focus on their responsibilities.

Chairperson Tamagni clarified that this was for the Department of Health and Director Etheridge confirmed that was accurate. Chairperson Tamagni asked the status of the backlog for the department and Director Etheridge stated that since April they have realigned their staffing patterns to address the backlog in food stamps and other applications and recertifications. They are currently out of the backlog for recertifications for food stamps and expedited applications for food stamps and they are currently working on their backlog of regular SNAP applications which still hovers just over 5,000 applications. They have a staffing pattern right now that has a team dedicated to the backlog and another team striving to keep them current.

Chairperson Tamagni asked how far back their applications go to which Director Etheridge replied that their oldest SNAP application that they are working on is from September 2022. The recertifications periodically fall behind by 10 days, but they generally stay current now with recertifications and expedited food stamp applications. Expedited food stamp cases are where an individual indicates they have less than \$150 in income in their bank account. They previously had 2,800 of those expedites in backlog that they have since cleared and are striving to stay current. Chairperson Tamagni asked how many employees they are short to which Director Etheridge responded that on average they have about a 14% vacancy rate for several reasons. Considering the volume of work received, they need an additional 40 PCNs hired and trained to be able to stay completely current. At any point in time they have vacant positions, but not all their vacant positions are in their field services section which have their eligibility technicians. For example, they have a vacant position in their research and analysis unit so it can be in other areas of the division.

Chairperson Tamagni asked if they are using any overtime to which Director Etheridge stated that they do authorize overtime. There have been only two days that they have not authorized overtime and that was for the past two holidays. Chairperson Tamagni stated that with a backlog going back to September 2022 the division may need to accelerate more overtime since people depend so much on these benefits. Director Etheridge stated that they aggressively encourage overtime at the division, but in the summer, they tend to see less overtime worked and more time off requests from staff. They have worked with the union for

approval to allow supervisors to earn overtime pay to encourage more individuals to work overtime.

Chairperson Tamagni asked when they expect to have only a 30-day or 60-day or 90-day backlog? Director Etheridge said that it was difficult to provide a 100% accurate projection, but that by October 2023 they expect to be through a significant number of their backlog, if not all of them.

Board Member Hamilton found it unusual that this division has not had a Deputy Director position previously when it is so commonplace with other divisions to which Director Etheridge agreed that for a division of this size this has been an unmet need for several years.

The extension of partially exempt service was approved by the Personnel Board for the Deputy Director in the Department of Health and the Division of Public Assistance. Unanimous consent.

6. REVIEW OF QUARTERLY ETHICS REPORTS AND SUBMITTAL COMPLIANCE

Board Member Hamilton referred to the quarterly ethics reports for most of 2022 and the first quarter for 2023 stating that there were a couple sections showing up multiple times in each of those reports with the Department of Environmental Conservation being one of them and workforce investment being another. Also, the Personnel Board for the first quarter of 2023 was dinged as well for not submitting their report timely. Board Member Hamilton asked for an explanation as to why the Personnel Board was late in submitting their ethics report, but Deputy Director Brill did not have an immediate answer and would investigate it further. Chairperson Tamagni stated that the board would like more information as to why the other sections are unable to comply with their ethics reporting requirements. Furthermore, if any section misses two quarters in a row the board would like to be made aware of the reason why they failed to comply with their reporting requirements.

Board Member Hamilton noted that there were quite a few spelling errors in the ethics reports and that since these documents that go into archives that there should be a double check for errors moving forward.

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION UNDER AS 44.62.310(c)(3)

None for executive session.

8. UPDATE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL & LABOR RELATIONS

Director Sheehan is currently at the National Association of State Personnel Executives convention for which she is the president, and she relayed to Deputy Director Brill that there were no updates for the board. Deputy Director Brill stated that they are getting ready to post for DOPLR's vacant Deputy Director of

Labor Relations position and they are hoping to get that filled ahead of bargaining with the unions in the fall. Chairperson Tamagni asked how many contracts they would be negotiating in the fall to which Deputy Director Brill responded that she did not have the exact number, but she believed at least four.

9. OTHER MATTERS THAT MAY COME BEFORE THE BOARD

The board tentatively agreed to meet next on November 15, 2023.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:21 p.m.