

TOPIC as described in survey results:

HR – Is our promotion system fair or is it “it’s who you know”/favoritism/ cliques? How can we better recognize, reward and retain talent?

A. Scope

All city employees abide by the civil service rules. The vast majority (approximately 98%) of our workforce is also represented and abide by labor contracts. Rules for promotion are governed by these contracts. Employees can file a grievance if they feel they have been unfairly treated. The grievance process is outlined in City’s 22 negotiated labor contracts for represented employees.

Managers strive to maintain a respectful workforce and are obligated to investigate any report of employee misconduct. If it is found that an employee has violated acceptable city conduct, the employee is subject to reprimand which is outlined in civil service and labor contracts.

Employee recognition is also covered by labor contracts and civil service rules. Public finance laws, specifically public purpose laws, also play a role in any financial rewards that are given above and beyond those governed by the civil service rules and labor contracts.

As the City strives to attract new diverse employees, it is equally important to retain a diverse workforce. Toni Newborn has focused her efforts on racial equity throughout city government when she served in the Mayor’s office and now as director of Human Resources. There are racial equity teams in each of the departments with a goal in mind of maintaining respect in the workplace for all and retention of new employees.

Human resources have reported to the City Council on these racial equity efforts and shared statistics showing its progress in employee retention.

The scope for this topic area will need to be defined within the perimeters outlined above. The committee will need to decide specifically if there is an area it wants to focus on.

B. Cost

Unknown at this time.

C. Ability to Effect Change

The ability to effect change that is governed by a labor contract is very limited. Change would need to be negotiated.

Efforts to increase respect in the workplace can be directed by the Mayor and City Council. City leadership currently has the ability to play a role in promoting respect in the workplace and to demand better manager training.

D. Key Challenges

- Complexity of rules and contracts governing employment practices.
- Promoting respect in the workplace can be handled through City leadership and manager training rather than through a study.
- By promoting respect in the workplace, retention of employees increases.

E. Study Approach

At this point in time, it may be best for the Council to conduct a policy session focusing on respect in the workforce and employee retention. HR can outline all of its efforts as well as share the documentation that shows how well the City is doing at retaining a diverse workforce.

At the policy session, the Council may decide to focus on a specific area that needs addressing.