



CVFiber Policy Committee Special Meeting Minutes

Monday, Sept. 21, 2023 10:00 AM
Virtual meeting

Present: Allen Gilbert (Worcester), Linda Gravell (Waterbury), John Morris, (Marshfield), and Siobhan Perricone (Orange); and Jennille Smith, executive director.

- 1. Call to order.** A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 10 am. by Gilbert, chair.
- 2. Changes to agenda.** There were none.
- 3. Public comment.** There was none.
- 4. Continuation of Personnel Policy legal review.** Gilbert summarized, as he had at the last special meeting, what the committee has covered regarding review of the revised version of the CVFiber Personnel Policy by legal counsel. He said the goal for today's meeting remains what it was at the last meeting: to review Sections 16 (Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation) and 17 (Bullying) and get them in shape to pass on to the Executive Committee at its next meeting, on Oct. 3. Those two sections are of the greatest importance at the moment. If the two sections are reviewed and approved as revised (and amended, in some parts), the committee will move on to reviewing the remaining sections and give a final overall look at the document. Smith confirmed that the immediate goal is to approve Sections 16 and 17 and send it to the Executive Committee for review at its Oct. 3 meeting. We will need to send any other changes to other parts of the document to legal counsel for review before we are

able to consider them for approval and referral to the Executive Committee. Gilbert suggested that we need to work fast, but carefully.

Points made during the review discussion:

- Gilbert noted that in Section 16, the first paragraph states that this particular section applies to “any other person.” He felt this could be construed as including, literally, every other person in the entire world. Morris and Perricone offered alternatives, with “any other person doing business with CVFiber” chosen to replace “any other person.” Similar language was found in other parts of Section 16, and changed.
- The term “Garrity Warning” had been included in one paragraph of Section 16. Gilbert said he didn’t know what a “Garrity Warning” was. Perricone did some quick Googling, which resulted in the understanding that a “Garrity Warning” is similar to a “Miranda Warning.” Someone being investigated for improper behavior will be informed of their “Garrity” (presumably the plaintiff in a legal case) rights, which lay out fair conduct during the investigation. An explanation of the phrase is needed, everyone agreed.
- Gilbert questioned whether another phrase, “and as appropriate to others involved,” included the members of the CVFiber Board. This led to a discussion of the privacy rights of those under investigation. Perricone felt it was important to protect complainants, and reporting information to the board could discourage the filing of complaints. She said she wants always to be on the side of the people who are potentially being harassed or harmed. Morris suggested an opposite view – that revelation of an investigation would act as a protective shield for the complainant, minimizing additional harassment or bullying. Gilbert said that it was important to have “enough of a gate open” to show CVFiber was responding to problems affecting the organization. The committee settled on the revision, “and to others involved, including board members as appropriate.”
- After further discussion of other small details, Perricone moved, and Morris seconded, a motion to approve, as revised by legal counsel and amended by the Policy Committee, Sections 16 and 17 of the CVFiber Personnel Policy, and to forward these sections to the Executive Committee for its review. Approval was unanimous.
- Section 23 (Employee Benefits and Leave). Perricone felt that the only “knots” in this section are vacation and sick leave benefits, and the addition of flex (flexible) time. She doesn’t think the rest of the section is problematic. She suggested that vague phrases such as “any changes in the” be made more specific, such as 60 days’ advance notice. As to vacation and sick-leave time, Perricone suggested changes that she said tread a middle line between generous and miserly benefits. She also said she was trying to be sensitive to

new employees coming on board – they should be neither cheated nor lavished, but given a proportional benefit based on when they began employment. But, she stressed, she wants employees to use their leave time. If some circumstance arises and they need leave time they haven't yet accrued, they should be able to "borrow" against future leave time. Gravell suggested some changes to how the material is presented. There was discussion around specifics of use of leave time, and some changes were made.

- Perricone had to leave for another meeting. The remaining members stopped discussion of Section 23 until the committee's next meeting so Perricone could be present. A quick review of the sections that still must be reviewed concluded that we have gone through all other sections except Sections 24 (Drug-Free Workplace) and 25 (Performance Evaluations). Language concerning who is covered by Section 24 was broadened to include all people doing business with CVFiber. Gilbert said he was wary of CVFiber taking on excessive liability if it tried to monitor the actions and behavior of people who weren't directly working for, or associated with, CVFiber. Suggestions were made, and accepted, to focus on responsibilities. A paragraph on the serving and use of alcohol was discussed, not understood, and referred back to legal counsel for further explanation. The committee will return to Section 24 after receiving counsel's explanation of this paragraph, and when Perricone is present so she can be part of the discussion.
- Gilbert asked if anyone had comments about Section 25 (Performance Evaluations). All agreed it looked fine, as revisions to it were minimal.
- Gilbert said he appreciated all the work that the committee members, and Smith, were putting into the Personnel Policy review. We've been able to work together in a productive, thoughtful way, he said, with little acrimony, as we plow through a large amount of information and make judgments regarding the revisions. He suggested the committee could finish its review at the next regularly scheduled committee meeting, on Oct. 4, to which all agreed.

5. Other business. There was none.

6. Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 11:51 a.m.

-- Allen Gilbert

Approved Oct. 4, 2023