



CVFiber Policy Committee Draft Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, Oct. 4, 2023 5:00 PM
Virtual meeting

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

- 1. Call to order.** A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 5 p.m. by Gilbert, chair.
- 2. Changes to agenda.** There were none.
- 3. Public comment.** There was none.
- 4. Approval of Sept. 6, 2023 draft meeting minutes; Sept. 11, 2023 draft special meeting minutes; and Sept. 21, 2023 draft special meeting minutes.** Perricone moved to approve all three sets of minutes, seconded by Gravell, with Gravell noting she was abstaining from approval of Sept. 11, 2023 minutes since she wasn't at that meeting. Approval was unanimous.
- 5. Continuation of Personnel Policy legal review.** The committee first reviewed what sections of the policy still needed review of legal counsel's suggested revisions. There were only two: Section 23 (Employee Benefits and Leave) and Section 24 (Drug-Free Workplace). Once we are finished with our review of them, Smith will bundle together all of our suggestions for possible amendments to legal counsel's suggested revisions and ask counsel to review them for further comment.

The following points were made:

- Perricone said she had worked on the vacation time section of the Employee Benefits policy language to make it clearer as to who is entitled to which benefits. There was discussion around the definition of “vacation deficit,” which essentially means leave time borrowed but not yet accrued.
- “Black-out periods” for employees were defined as specific times when employees cannot take leave time because of operational constraints. Reasonable notice must be given beforehand by management.
- Only 40 days of unused vacation time can be accrued by an employee. The rationale of this rule is to encourage employees to use their vacation time on a somewhat regular basis.
- Unused sick days may not be cashed out at the end of someone’s employment.
- It was pointed out that a number of our leave-time specifications (such as crime victim leave) are required by state or federal law.
- Employees will continue to be paid if called for jury duty. It was felt that we might want to revisit this clause if it becomes problematic. Gilbert said the cost of the missed time could perhaps be shared between the state and the employer, but that was deemed problematic.
- The right of an employee to request flexible work time exists in state law, legal counsel noted. While a flex-time schedule might not be granted by the employer, the employee must be able to request such a work schedule twice a year.
- In the Drug-Free Workplace section (Section 24), we noted we had already spent a lot of time on this section and felt it looked acceptable.

Smith will note all the changes we’re suggesting, for all 25 sections of the policy, and have legal counsel review them. The next time the committee meets, we will review any additional comments counsel makes. How much more back-and-forth between us as a committee and legal counsel will be needed is to be determined. But we all agree to continue to move as quickly as possible, using a special meeting if necessary and additional comments are minimal, to approve the entire policy. It is noted that Sections 16 (Policy Against Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation) and 17 (Policy Against Bullying) have already been approved by the Policy Committee, as well as by the Executive Committee, and will come before the Governing Board at its next regular meeting (Oct. 10).

Gravell said she wanted to thank everyone for all the work that’s gone into review of a large and extremely important document.

6. **Update on digital equity efforts.** Smith reported that the VCBB (Vermont Community Broadband Board) is working hard on this issue because of anticipated language in the federal BEAD (Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment) program that will establish many restrictions and goals that must be met to receive BEAD equity funds. She noted that she is on the state’s “core team” that’s looking at digital equity. She said that the way “digital equity” is being defined is very good, and she notes a new state hire, Brittany Watson, is the point person for this issue.

7. **Other business.** There was none.

8. **Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 6 p.m.

-- Allen Gilbert

Approved Nov. 1, 2023