

City of Lee's Summit Human Resources Assessment

Report

October 2, 2017



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October 2, 2017

Mr. Stephen Arbo
City Manager
City of Lee's Summit
220 SE Green Street
Lee's Summit, MO 64063

Dear Mr. Arbo:

We are pleased to present this report regarding the Human Resources (HR) Department assessment. The HR Department is staffed by dedicated employees with a passion for the City and human resources functions. While these staff members provide essential services to other departments, there are opportunities to expand and develop the role of human resources in the City organization.

The recommendations included in this report are guided by feedback from HR Department staff and internal customers, and are intended to help the Department grow into a more effective role as a business partner for the organization. Implementing these recommendations will require change and adaptation on the part of Human Resources staff as well as the City's Management Team. However, we are confident that the recommended functions and structure of HR will serve as a useful framework for the Department and its leadership.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with the City of Lee's Summit on this project.

Sincerely,

Michelle Ferguson
Organizational Assessment Practice Leader

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Background and Methodology	4
Human Resources Stakeholder Input	9
Analysis and Recommendations.....	18
HR Structure and Performance	19
Hiring and Recruitment.....	21
Workforce Development	25
Safety and Wellness	29
Employee and Labor Relations	31
Policy Review	32
Conclusion	41
Appendix A: Open-Ended Survey Responses	43
Appendix B: Sample Personnel Policy Manual Table of Contents.....	64
Appendix C: Sample Employee Handbook Table of Contents.....	67

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Executive Summary

The provision of adequate and effective human resources (HR) functions is essential in modern organizations. An HR department impacts the lives and careers of employees in a unique way. HR is often the gateway to employment and the capstone of an employee's time in an organization. Organizationally, effective HR Departments play a central and strategic role to ensure other departments are appropriately staffed and to create an environment where employees and their supervisors can succeed. This requires dedicated leadership, a comprehensive understanding of internal customers and their business practices, and services tailored to meet the organization's needs as efficiently and effectively as possible.

HR operations are often structured in two primary ways to fill this organizational role, using a generalist or specialist model. A generalist model relies on HR staff who are broadly experienced in all HR functions and services. Generalists are typically assigned to specific organizational departments and serve as the main point of contact for that department's HR needs, from recruitment to workers' compensation to employee relations. By contrast, a specialist model utilizes HR staff with significant expertise in specific service areas, such as recruitment or benefits administration, among many others. These personnel typically provide services in their skillset to all organizational staff.

The City of Lee's Summit currently relies on a largely specialized approach. Many of the City's HR Department staff provide specific services in specialized fields, and little overlap or cross-training occurs among staff within the Department. While this is not an unusual arrangement for HR departments in public sector organizations, several aspects of the current structure and service delivery model complicate the Department's ability to meet the organization's needs.

One of the Department's most immediate needs relates to its leadership. In recent years, the HR Director position has been vacant or occupied by staff who left the organization after a short time. In interviews, focus groups, and survey results, staff in the HR Department and in other City departments frequently cited the lack of stable leadership as a detriment to HR's organizational performance. While the Director of Administration has played a critical role in shepherding the HR Department in lieu of a permanent HR Director, the Department requires a dedicated leader who can focus on building the capacity of the Department and play a central role in shaping workforce planning and development for the City. In addition to filling this leadership gap, a direct reporting relationship between HR and the City Manager is needed to help clearly define operations for HR staff and signal that developing HR is a core priority for the organization.

As a result of the leadership instability, the HR Department has been unable to focus on core HR service areas. The HR Department is currently composed of four individuals with varying experience performing critical HR tasks. To fulfill immediate needs, staff have been forced to assume different functions, some outside their areas of expertise. The current leadership vacuum, combined with confusion inside and outside the HR Department about staff responsibilities, has created an environment where staff roles are blurred.

City departments rely on HR to varying degrees for services, and some HR functions are better developed than others. Several departments have created their own internal capability to meet their department's HR needs. As a result, some departments avoid working with HR, which further exacerbates uncertainties about HR's organizational role and the services it should provide.

Additionally, throughout this study, HR customers reported concerns about the HR Department's procedures and expressed a desire for the Department to develop into a strategic business partner. Interviewees and survey respondents requested additional services from HR, including workforce development and training, policy development and review, and streamlined recruitment and workers' compensation processes. This indicates a lack of capacity to provide services that would benefit the organization, which is influenced by the leadership and structural issues experienced within the Department.

For the City of Lee's Summit, neither a pure generalist model nor a pure specialist model will create the capacity and division of labor necessary to clarify HR's roles and responsibilities. Rather, the recommendations in this report utilize a blended model of service delivery to bring the strengths of both generalist and specialist models to bear for critical HR functions. This model also recognizes the needs of some departments to maintain their own internal capacity for HR services, but also to develop a partnership with the HR Department to maintain organizational consistency. The result is an HR Department that is focused on developing the following core service functions:

- Hiring and Recruitment
- Workforce Development
- Safety and Wellness
- Employee and Labor Relations

The recommendations in this report are designed to help the HR Department lay an appropriate foundation for growing and developing these functions to better serve the City. The Department has an opportunity to evolve from being process-driven to providing additional strategic value by understanding, partnering, and collaborating with other departments to better meet their needs. The recommendations include a mixture of process and structural changes which, when fully implemented, will position the HR Department to render effective services and evaluate its performance more consistently.

Summary of Recommendations

The following table summarizes recommendations found in this report.

Table 1: Report Recommendations

Category	Recommendation
HR Structure and Performance	
1	Elevate the HR Director position to report directly to the City Manager.
2	Develop comprehensive HR workload and performance measures.
Hiring and Recruitment	
3	Invest in digital hiring and recruitment software.
4	Assign front-line customer service and office administrative support responsibilities to the Human Resources Assistant.
5	Reclassify the Human Resources Generalist as a Recruitment Specialist with responsibility for all hiring and recruitment functions.
6	Create a Classification and Compensation Specialist position.
Workforce Development	
7	Establish an employee Workforce Development Program.
8	Revise the current performance appraisal process.
9	Create a Workforce Development Specialist position.
Safety and Wellness	
10	Issue a request for proposals for workers' compensation claim management software.
11	Reclassify the Risk Management Officer as a Safety and Wellness Specialist.
Employee and Labor Relations	
12	Assign responsibilities for employee and labor relations functions to the HR Director.
Policy Review	
13	Create a Policy Advisory Committee led by Human Resources to periodically evaluate and update City policies.
14	Review and update the City's <i>Personnel Policy</i> .
15	Create an <i>Employee Handbook</i> .

Background and Methodology

In July 2017, the City of Lee's Summit engaged The Novak Consulting Group to perform an assessment of the City's HR Department. The purpose of this assessment was to review the HR Department's practices, procedures, and organizational structure, and to identify opportunities for improvement. To accomplish this work, The Novak Consulting Group utilized a multi-track approach consisting of individual interviews with HR staff and City stakeholders, as well as four focus group sessions with HR customers and the City's Management Team.

Additionally, The Novak Consulting Group developed a customer survey for City staff who regularly interact with the HR Department to rate their experience, interactions, and the services they receive. The survey was created in consultation with City management staff, and was distributed and tabulated by The Novak Consulting Group using SurveyMonkey®. The survey consisted of 13 questions in a variety of formats, including multiple choice questions; open-ended questions; and ratings scale questions where respondents were asked to rate their agreement with positive statements about the Department on a scale from Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

Survey invitations were distributed to 155 City staff members, and the survey was available to respondents from July 12 through July 31, 2017. A total of 115 respondents participated in the survey, resulting in an overall response rate of 74%. All information supplied by respondents was anonymized and aggregated as part of the survey analysis process. A complete list of open-ended survey responses is available in Appendix A.

The Novak Consulting Group also requested and received data related to the Department's budget, structure, operations, work practices, policies, and procedures. As part of this review and analysis, The Novak Consulting Group researched the human resources departments of 10 comparable communities regarding their budgets, size, and structure. All this information was analyzed and reviewed to evaluate opportunities for enhancing and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Lee's Summit HR Department.

About the Human Resources Department

The primary function of the City's HR Department is to administer and oversee all personnel and employee service programs including recruitment and hiring, performance management, labor relations, employee benefit programs, training and development, safety, workers' compensation, and risk management efforts.¹ The HR Department is a component of the Administration Department, which is also responsible for several other internal services including Information Technology Services, Fleet Operations, and Central Building Services.

The Lee's Summit HR Department is led by the HR Director who reports to the Director of Administration. The HR Director supervises four positions, which are responsible for carrying out various HR functions. These positions include: an HR Assistant, an HR Generalist, a Benefits Specialist, and a Risk Management Officer. The following figure illustrates the HR Department's current organizational structure.

¹ Lee's Summit Annual Budget – FY2017

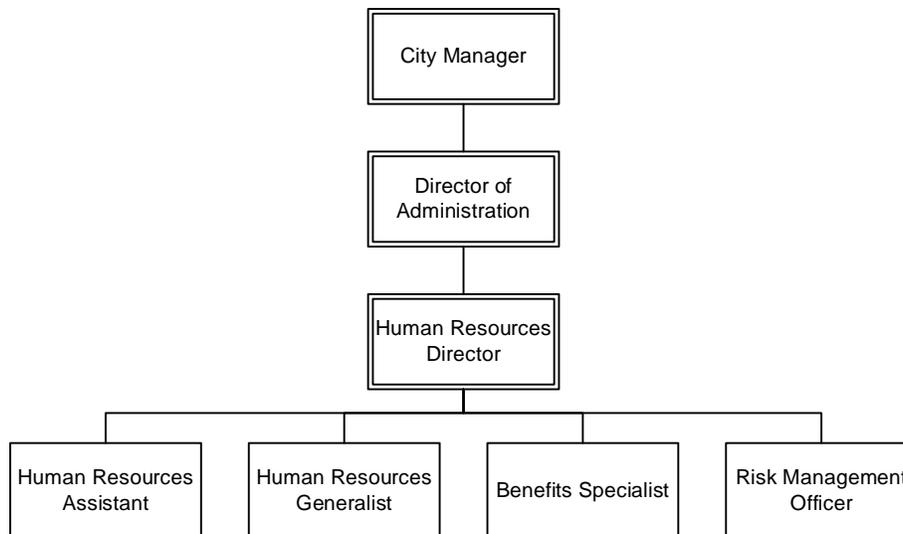


Figure 1: Human Resources Organizational Structure, FY2018

The HR Director is responsible for strategically guiding the HR Department as well as the City's merit-based pay-for-performance system. Core responsibilities of this position include supervising HR employees and functions, developing and implementing HR policies and programs, recommending changes to employee status (such as hiring, firing, and advancement), and preparing and managing the Department budget. The HR Director is also tasked with serving as the City's Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Coordinator, assisting with employee relations and collective bargaining negotiations, administering the City's classification and compensation plan, and performing exit interviews.

In recent years, turnover and transitions in the HR Director position have diluted the Department's leadership capacity. Since 2001, three HR Directors have led the Department, and the position is currently vacant. The Director of Administration has served as the Acting HR Director since February 2017, in addition to performing other regular job duties and supervising other Administration Department functions.

The Human Resources Assistant is a largely administrative position dedicated to customer service for the Department. Essential tasks include answering customer inquiries via telephone, email, and in-person; updating internet and intranet information regarding employment opportunities and employee information; and coordinating with other department staff to process personnel changes and generate reports. The HR Assistant is also responsible for assisting with the hiring and recruitment process, particularly regarding ad placement, posting open positions, compiling applications, and scheduling physicals and tests. In practice, this position coordinates the entire hiring process for many HR customers. The HR Assistant also helps organize new employee orientations and meets with new hires to complete paperwork such as tax forms and benefits elections. The HR Assistant is responsible for various data entry tasks related to recruitment and personnel action forms, as well as assisting with the Department's budget process, processing annual merit increases, and organizing Employee Awards Luncheons.

The Human Resources Generalist is responsible for managing the City's recruitment efforts, including creating and maintaining a talent profile of education and skill sets necessary for succession planning. In addition to cultivating sources for finding qualified applicants, the Generalist maintains the City's job

descriptions and develops new ones as circumstances warrant. This position also assists hiring managers with job posting, interviewing, candidate screening, offer negotiation, and reference checks. In addition to hiring and recruitment functions, the HR Generalist currently assists with employee relations investigations and interviews, and provides some training to City employees, such as policy and supervisory training.

The Benefits Specialist administers benefits programs available to City employees, including Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and other leave requests; health, dental, vision, and life insurance plans; various retirement plans; and short- and long-term disability programs. This position is responsible for overseeing the benefits module in the City's enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, Lawson™, to coordinate enrollment and termination of benefits for employees. This position also provides benefits-related training to employees, manages third-party provider relationships, and serves on the City's Safety Committee. Additionally, the Benefits Specialist currently provides backup for the Risk Management Officer in the event of the latter's absence.

The Risk Management Officer is responsible for several HR functions. Foremost among these is the development and administration of the City's workers' compensation program, including evaluating and processing employee claims, negotiating discounts and scheduling appointments with treatment providers, managing third-party claim administration, and auditing claim activity. Additionally, the Risk Management Officer is responsible for managing the City's safety policies and programs, including identifying safety-related training requirements for all City jobs, developing training materials, hosting a Safety Fair twice annually, and conducting on-site safety inspections. The Risk Management Officer oversees the City's wellness program and serves as the City's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator.

The HR Department provides HR support to all City Departments, including public safety (Police and Fire). Over the last several years, the City has averaged approximately 767 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, while the HR Department's structure and staffing level has remained relatively consistent at five authorized full-time positions. Since FY2014, the City has averaged 153 FTEs per HR position, as illustrated in the following table.

Table 2: Human Resources Staffing Ratios, FY2014-FY2017

Staff	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017
Authorized HR Positions	5	5	5	5
Total City FTE Positions	772.48	766.84	763.64	766.93
Ratio of City FTEs per HR Position	154	153	153	153

The HR budget is funded through the City's General Fund. Department expenses have increased approximately 19% since FY2014, driven primarily by increases in Other Supplies, Services, and Charges, as illustrated in the following table.

Table 3: Human Resources Budgeted Expenses, FY2014-FY2018

Expense Category	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	Percent Change FY14-FY18
Personal Services	\$448,744	\$518,476	\$472,360	\$471,674	\$472,020	5%
Other Supplies, Services, and Charges	\$289,118	\$257,064	\$291,412	\$315,941	\$409,210	42%
Interdepartment Charges	\$52,165	\$64,874	\$53,781	\$55,986	\$55,100	6%
Total Expenses	\$790,027	\$840,414	\$817,553	\$843,601	\$936,330	19%

The increase in Personal Services expenses in FY2015 is attributed to back-filling of the HR Director position. Other annual personal expenses increases are associated with typical salary adjustments (such as merit increases) and health care and retirement rate adjustments. Increases in Other Supplies, Services, and Charges reflect additional expenditures for outside services, including a benefits broker, property and liability insurance, and this HR assessment.

Peer Community Comparisons

The Novak Consulting Group performed comparison research on 10 peer communities selected by the City of Lee's Summit. This research was designed to investigate the relative size of HR staff among these organizations, as well as the structure of HR reporting relationships. Comparisons included:

- City of Ankeny, Iowa
- City of West Des Moines, Iowa
- City of Lawrence, Kansas
- City of Lenexa, Kansas
- City of Olathe, Kansas
- City of Overland Park, Kansas
- City of Shawnee, Kansas
- City of Blue Springs, Missouri
- City of Independence, Missouri
- City of Springfield, Missouri

One way to compare staffing sizes among peer communities is to evaluate the ratio of HR employees to overall FTEs served in the organization. Based on FY2018 budget information for each peer community, the average ratio of HR staff is one per 118 FTEs. The following table illustrates HR staffing ratios in each comparison community, from the smallest ratio to the largest.

Table 4: Comparison of Peer Community HR Budgets and Staffing Ratios, FY2018

Peer Community	FY18 General Fund Budgeted Expenditures	FY18 HR Budgeted Expenditures	FY18 Citywide Total FTEs	FY18 HR FTEs	Ratio of Citywide FTEs per HR FTE
City of Overland Park, KS	\$206,000,000	\$1,975,508	1,077.5	16.6	64.9
City of West Des Moines, IA	\$71,588,085	\$1,309,312	429.5	6.5	66.1
City of Lenexa, KS	\$77,800,000	\$1,136,110	537.5	7.0	76.8
City of Shawnee, KS ²	\$50,121,450	\$696,000	342.0	4.0	85.5
City of Springfield, MO	\$83,011,000	\$1,747,261	1,904.5	17.5	108.8
City of Blue Springs, MO	\$26,019,338	\$603,772	318.6	2.5	127.5
City of Olathe, KS	\$102,561,390	\$1,529,754	923.8	7.0	132.0
City of Ankeny, IA	\$31,550,765	\$331,755	268.4	2.0	134.2
City of Lawrence, KS	\$75,205,000	\$555,000	843.6	6.0	140.6
City of Lee's Summit, MO ²	\$64,397,020	\$843,601	766.9	5.0	153.4
City of Independence, MO	\$77,216,061	\$537,673	1,152.6	5.0	230.5

Notably, The City of Lee's Summit's HR staffing ratio is the second-highest among these communities. While many factors inform how these ratios actually impact HR staff capacity, this indicates that the City utilizes relatively fewer HR staff compared to other organizations.

² Due to limited or unavailable FY2018 budget information, these figures reflect FY2017 budget information.

Human Resources Stakeholder Input

Many of the key observations resulting from this assessment were derived from candid, confidential conversations with HR staff, customers, and through a customer survey distributed to supervisors and managers who interact closely with HR. This stakeholder input provided valuable insights into staff perceptions of HR and the delivery of HR services. There was widespread agreement among interviewees, focus group participants, and survey respondents about the present relationship between HR and other departments. Key themes that emerged from the stakeholder input process include:

- **HR requires dedicated leadership capacity.** Transitions in the leadership of the HR Department over the last several years have contributed to perceptions of a lack of effective leadership in HR. A consensus among HR staff, focus group participants, and survey respondents is that the Department's needs require a knowledgeable, experienced leader with the power to effect change and successfully interact with other management staff throughout the organization.
- **HR's role in the organization should be elevated to a more strategic level.** Feedback gathered through the stakeholder process often characterized HR's current organizational role in contradictory or uncertain terms. Stakeholders agreed that bringing clarity to the HR Department would require elevating the Department's role to a more strategic level in the organization, particularly with respect to policy formation and review, succession planning, and recruitment. In this capacity, stakeholders envision HR as a resource that can help ensure employees are treated equitably and policies are implemented uniformly in all departments, while meeting the City's larger strategic needs over the long term.
- **Stakeholders desire a business partner relationship with HR.** Survey respondents and focus groups expressed a desire for HR to play a more supportive role in the organization, functioning more like a business partner and a resource for departments who have questions and need help resolving issues. Stakeholders stressed the need for HR to more deeply understand the business practices and job requirements of their departments to more effectively assist them. Stakeholders desire an HR Department that functions as a resource of knowledge and a problem-solver, and not simply a transactional gatekeeper.
- **Workforce development functions are lacking, particularly related to training.** Stakeholders often mentioned a lack of available training opportunities, particularly regarding supervisory training and City policy interpretation. Additionally, over 50% of survey respondents reported dissatisfaction with current training efforts provided by HR. Stakeholders broadly requested additional training support for supervisors, as well as additional professional development opportunities to improve succession planning, certification, and employee skillsets.
- **The HR Department is heavily reliant on time-intensive, manual processes.** References to slow, inconsistent, and paper-based processes were common among stakeholders, particularly with respect to recruitment, workers' compensation, and personnel action form changes. When asked how the Department could improve service delivery, stakeholders advocated for more effective use of technology to streamline HR services, analyze HR performance, and communicate with employees.

While these key themes primarily characterize the HR Department’s needs and opportunities, it should be noted that stakeholders often mentioned the responsiveness, friendliness, and helpfulness of HR staff as key strengths of the Department. However, these words were often accompanied by descriptions of the Department as understaffed, disorganized, and antiquated. The contrast between these perceptions illustrates the varying perspectives stakeholders maintain about HR and validates a sense of organizational confusion about HR’s responsibilities and effectiveness.

The following word cloud illustrates this contrast using descriptors of HR supplied by survey respondents. Words and phrases mentioned frequently are displayed in larger text.

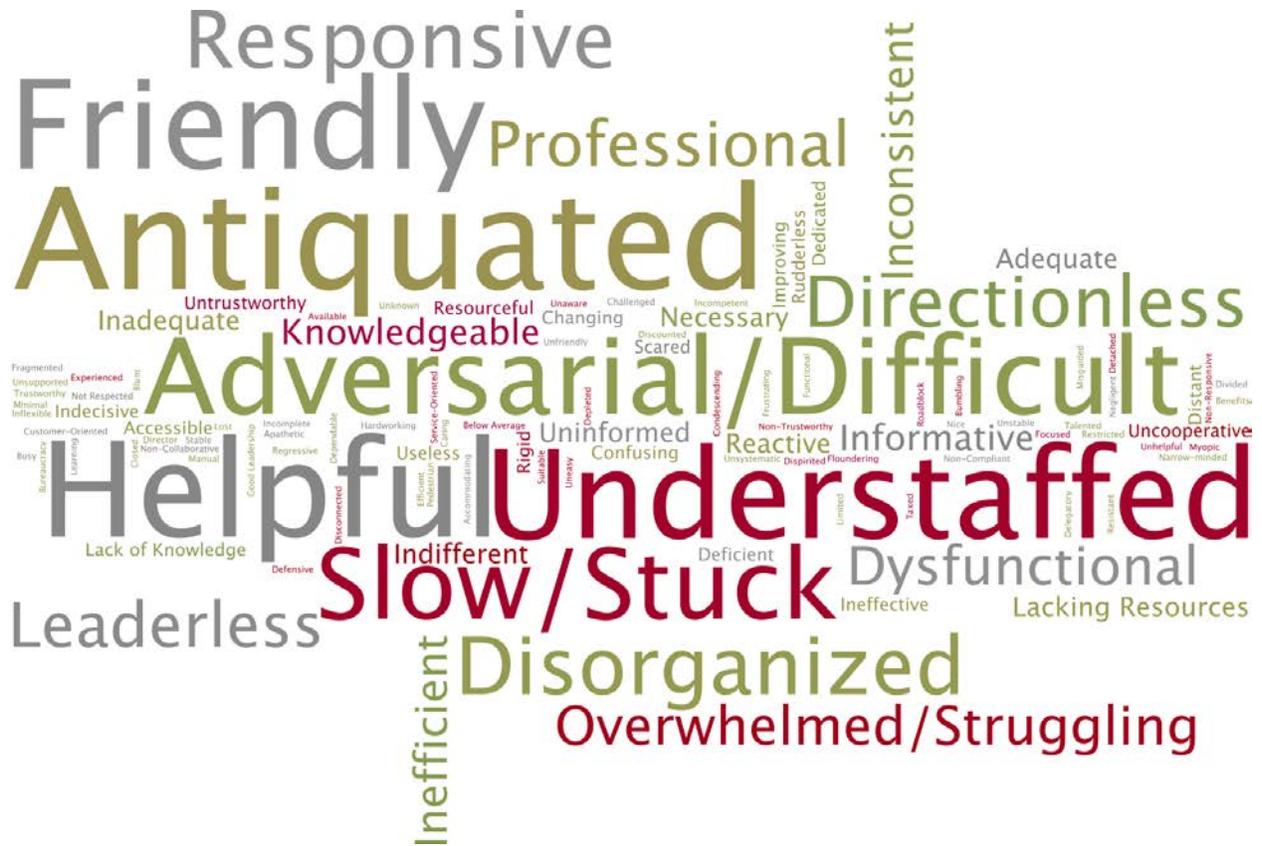


Figure 2: Words Describing the Human Resources Department

Survey Demographics

In total, 115 survey responses were received. Approximately 52% of responses were from public safety departments (Police, Fire) and Parks and Recreation, as illustrated in the following table.

Table 5: Respondents by Department

Department	Respondents	Percent of Total³
Police	23	20%
Fire	19	17%
Parks and Recreation	17	15%
Public Works	12	10%
Water	11	10%
Administration	10	9%
Development Center	5	4%
Finance	3	3%
Law	3	3%
(No Response)	2	2%
Fleet	2	2%
Planning and Special Projects	2	2%
Airport	1	1%
Central Building Services	1	1%
Codes Administration	1	1%
Information Technology Services	1	1%
Municipal Court	1	1%
Procurement and Contract Services	1	1%
Total	115	

Nearly one-quarter of respondents indicated they interact with the HR Department on a weekly basis or more frequently. Approximately 33% of respondents interact with HR monthly, while the remaining 43% of respondents interact less frequently or declined to answer this question.

The following figure illustrates the frequency of interactions with HR staff as reported by survey respondents.

³ Due to rounding, total is slightly greater than 100%.

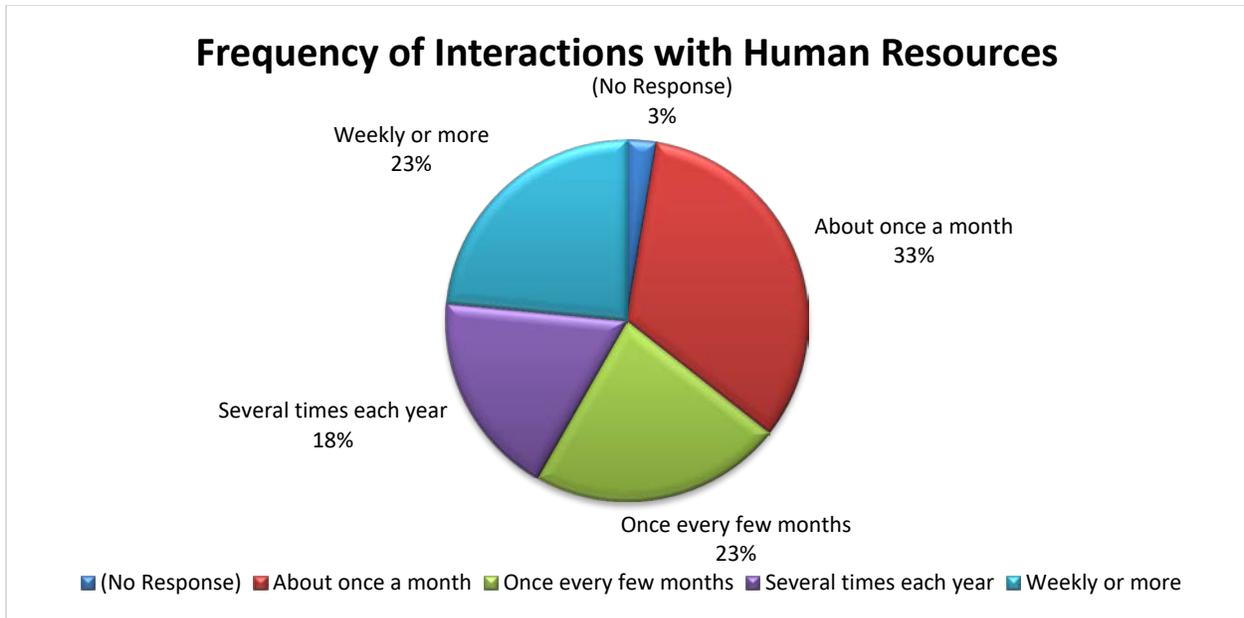


Figure 3: Frequency of Interactions with Human Resources

Over half of survey respondents reported that they are most likely to interact with HR regarding benefits issues. Safety and recruitment issues are also significant sources of HR interactions, while nearly one-third of survey respondents contact HR regarding training and development or labor and employee relations. Response rates for each of these issue areas are illustrated in the following figure.

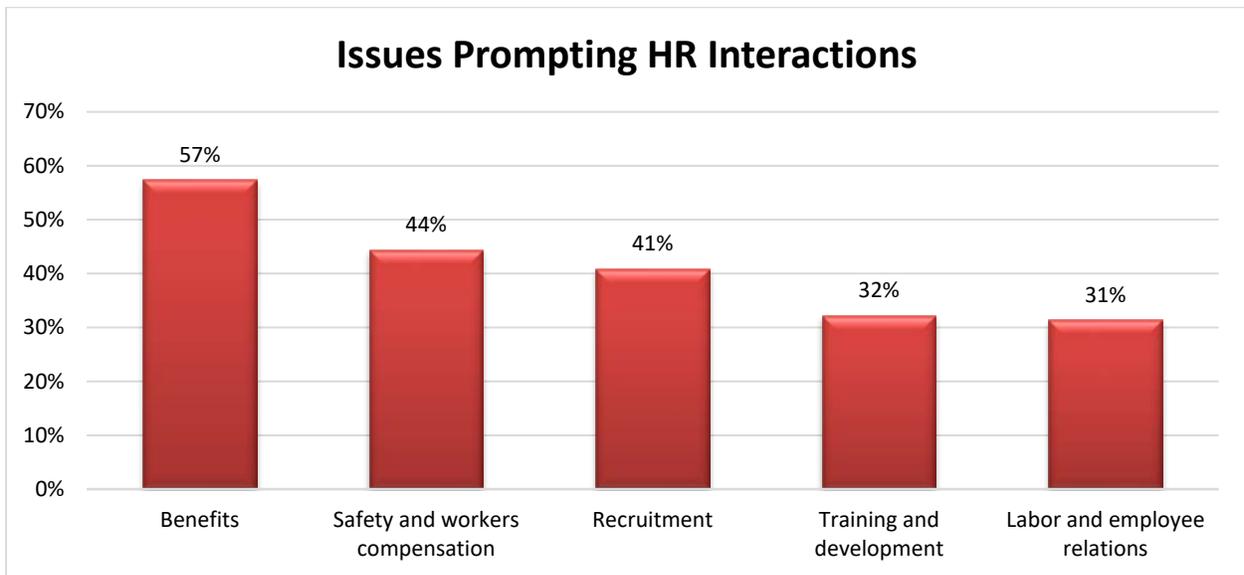


Figure 4: Issues Prompting Interactions with the Human Resources Department

Fifteen respondents supplied other, open-ended responses to this question. Themes cited in these open-ended responses included FMLA and Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) issues, policy-related issues and interpretations, employee discipline, and payroll/paperwork issues.

These responses are supported by conversations with interviewees and focus groups. Participants in these conversations were frequently complimentary of HR's benefits functions, particularly related to FMLA/FLSA, coordinating employee enrollment in insurance plans, and supervising the rebidding and renegotiation of benefits contracts. There was broad agreement among stakeholders that HR reliably and effectively delivers benefits services, which creates a sense of security for staff who contact HR with benefits questions.

Rating Scale Questions

Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with positive statements about the HR Department. Across all statements, 65% of respondents expressed overall agreement (Strongly Agree and Agree responses), while 35% expressed overall disagreement (Strongly Disagree and Disagree responses).

Questions that received 76% or greater overall agreement are generally considered to be departmental strengths, whereas questions receiving 48% overall disagreement are generally considered areas of weakness.⁴

The following table illustrates each statement along with the percentage of respondents who selected each rating. Percentages in bold indicate statements where respondents indicated significant agreement (greater than 76%) or significant disagreement (greater than 48%).

Table 6: Agreement with Positive Statements about HR

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
HR adequately addresses my inquiries or concerns.	11%	49%	35%	5%
HR procedures do not create an onerous burden on other departments/employees.	6%	42%	40%	12%
HR staff interact with me in a professional manner.	26%	61%	10%	3%
HR staff respond to my needs/concerns in a timely manner.	15%	60%	21%	4%
I am familiar with HR policies and procedures.	27%	56%	17%	1%
I am satisfied with HR's employee relations activities.	4%	36%	49%	12%
I am satisfied with the level of customer service I receive from HR.	11%	42%	38%	10%
I have sufficient training to effectively discipline employees.	9%	55%	27%	10%
I receive adequate training and support from HR to undertake my supervisory responsibilities.	2%	41%	38%	19%
I trust HR to maintain confidentiality when I share information with them.	24%	58%	13%	5%
I trust the information I receive from HR.	15%	45%	29%	11%
I understand the City's classification and compensation system.	13%	50%	26%	11%

⁴ These percentages reflect the median between average overall scores and maximum scores. Statements with overall agreement/disagreement scores above these thresholds represent outliers in the context of all responses.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I understand the role of the Human Resources Department in our organization.	24%	52%	21%	3%
I understand how to complete transaction forms.	6%	61%	28%	5%
It is easy to contact HR staff with questions or concerns.	20%	63%	11%	6%
Overall, my experience working with the Human Resources Department has been positive.	9%	50%	35%	6%

Areas of agreement that highlight departmental strengths include the professionalism of HR staff, familiarity with HR policies and procedures, the confidentiality of information shared with HR, the role of HR in the City organization, and the accessibility of HR staff. Conversely, a majority of respondents believe that HR's procedures create onerous burdens on City staff and indicate they are dissatisfied with employee relations activities. Respondents also do not believe that supervisory training and support from HR is adequate.

Many of these themes were echoed by focus group participants and during interviews. There is a sense among these participants that HR staff are polite and courteous, but that their ability to deliver comprehensive services is constrained by a lack of leadership and the overly complex processes. The resulting perception is of an HR Department that is generally pleasant to work with, but which cannot offer the depth of services to the City organization.

Human Resources Strengths and Opportunities

Survey respondents provided nearly 200 words and phrases describing HR Department strengths. To facilitate analysis, these responses were coded by theme. The 10 most-frequently mentioned themes capture approximately 86% of these responses, and are illustrated in the following table.

Table 7: Human Resources Strengths

Strength Themes	Mentions	Percent of Total
Courteous/Friendly	30	15%
Services	30	15%
Helpful	26	13%
Knowledgeable	20	10%
Responsive	15	8%
Accessible/Available	15	8%
Personnel	14	7%
Professional	6	3%
Dedication	6	3%
Informative	5	3%

Key HR Department strengths include the courteousness and professionalism of staff, as well as specific services performed by the Department (including benefits administration, safety, FMLA/FLSA assistance, and hiring/recruitment). Respondents also described staff as helpful, knowledgeable, responsive, and available to address their needs. Several specific personnel were also mentioned by name; to preserve anonymity, these responses were captured using the "Personnel" category in the table above.

These strengths were also described by focus group participants; however, participants tended to immediately follow praise with examples of where the HR Department lacked skills, services, or direction. Opportunity areas described during focus group sessions also closely correlate with survey results. In total, survey respondents generated 240 discrete responses describing areas of improvement for the HR Department. The 10 most-frequently mentioned themes are illustrated in the following table and represent 64% of all responses to this question.

Table 8: Human Resources Opportunities

Opportunity Themes	Mentions	Percent of Total
Training	36	15%
Hiring/Recruitment	21	9%
Communication	18	8%
Customer Service	16	7%
Leadership	14	6%
Digitization/Technology	11	5%
Understand Departments	10	4%
Policy Administration	10	4%
HR Role	9	4%
Additional Personnel	9	4%

A plurality of respondents highlighted additional opportunities for HR to provide training, particularly regarding supervisory and management training related to recruitment, performance evaluations, and employee relations. Other respondents specifically mentioned the current hiring/recruitment process as an opportunity area, indicating HR should speed up the process, provide more in-depth screening and hiring assistance, and onboard employees more efficiently. Other respondents mentioned communication and customer service improvements, such as increasing the frequency of communication, engaging departments equally, improving support for injured staff, and placing a greater emphasis on customer service to employees.

The lack of leadership in HR was also noted by respondents, along with opportunities for digitizing and modernizing existing processes by leveraging technology (such as the Lawson™ system and the City's intranet). Other respondents articulated a need for HR to understand and collaborate with customer departments in a more effective manner. Respondents also highlighted a need for HR to play a more significant role in policy administration, to more clearly define its organizational role, and the need for additional staff in HR.

These sentiments were echoed by interview and focus group participants. The breadth of agreement among survey respondents and focus group participants indicates that these perceptions are widespread among HR stakeholders.

Service Adjustments

Stakeholders desire several services from HR which the Department is not currently providing, or not providing in the manner expected. The following table illustrates the 10 most-mentioned service requests among approximately 70 discrete responses to a survey question about additional services the HR Department could provide. The themes below capture approximately 93% of all responses to this question.

Table 9: Services Not Provided by Human Resources

Additional Service Themes	Mentions	Percent of Total
Training	25	41%
Hiring/Recruitment	11	18%
Updated Policies	7	11%
Communication	4	7%
Liaison	3	5%
Analytics	2	3%
Consistency	2	3%
Care	1	2%
Culture	1	2%
Discipline	1	2%

Over 40% of respondents mentioned a lack of training opportunities, particularly related to supervisory and management training. Other training needs identified by respondents include professional development, safety, employee benefits, and personnel policy training. These training and workforce development services also received significant attention during focus groups and interviews, with staff in these sessions particularly stressing the need for additional professional development opportunities in the City organization.

Additional services related to hiring and recruitment were also mentioned by 18% of survey respondents, including clear direction on how to interact with HR during the hiring process, additional application review, and more rapid vetting and onboarding for new employees. Eleven percent of respondents also directly requested that HR update and coordinate City policies and procedures in a more centralized manner, and create additional policies in collaboration with other departments. These two themes were also frequently mentioned during focus groups, particularly with respect to HR's role in the City policy formation process and improving the current recruitment process.

The survey invited respondents to submit one change that would improve HR's service to the City organization. This open-ended question generated 90 unique responses; frequent responses by theme are illustrated on the following table and reflect 85% of all responses to this question.

Table 10: One Change to Improve Human Resources Services to the City

One Change Theme	Mentions	Percent of Total
Hiring/Recruitment	13	15%
Leadership	12	14%
HR Role	10	12%
Technology	8	9%
Training	8	9%
Communication	7	8%
Workers' Compensation	6	7%
Additional Staff	3	3%
Policies	3	3%
Responsiveness	3	3%

Half of all responses to this question concerned modernizing or improving the hiring process, finding talented leadership for the HR Department, clarifying the role of HR in the organization, and leveraging technology to streamline HR interactions with other departments. Improvements to training and communication were also frequently mentioned. These themes also broadly reflect in-person feedback obtained during field work.

The Future of Human Resources

Survey respondents were also asked to indicate what the City's HR Department should be known for internally over the next three to five years. This open-ended question sought to elicit keywords regarding the ideal reputation of HR from the perspective of internal customers and stakeholders. Ninety-three responses were submitted; the top themes illustrated in the table below reflect 87% of all responses to this question.

Table 11: What Should the Reputation of HR Be?

Reputation of HR Theme	Mentions	Percent of Total
Employee Advocate	21	23%
Knowledgeable/Competent Resource	20	22%
Excellent Customer Service	9	10%
Proactive/Responsive	8	9%
Trusted	7	8%
Business Partner	5	5%
Effective Hiring/Recruitment	4	4%
Outstanding	4	4%
Positive Employee Culture	3	3%
Organizational Leaders	2	2%

Nearly a quarter of respondents articulated a desire for HR to be known as an employee advocate that supports line employees as well as the City organization. Respondents also described an HR Department that was knowledgeable and served as a competent resource for other City staff, from line employees to mid-level managers to department directors. These two themes accounted for nearly half of all responses to this question, and dovetail with focus group suggestions to transform HR into a true business partner for City staff and other departments.

Other frequently-mentioned themes described the future of HR as a department with excellent customer service, and specifically indicated increased HR proactivity and responsiveness as a desired goal. Other keywords used by respondents included characterizing HR as a business partnership with departments, improving the hiring/recruitment process, creating an "outstanding" HR Department, and better cultivating a positive employee culture.

Analysis and Recommendations

In many ways, the Lee's Summit HR Department has struggled to effectively engage stakeholders and provide the level of service desired by the organization. Many factors have contributed to this situation, including previous leadership instability at the HR Director level, the current HR Director vacancy, overlapping and unclear responsibilities among HR staff, and the lack of a clear strategic role for the HR Department.

These factors create negative perceptions about the HR Department and its ability to provide effective services and support stakeholders. While these perceptions are based in some fact, they have spread through the City organization and contributed to stakeholder disengagement with HR. In order to avoid interacting with HR, some stakeholders have adopted their own informal practices and procedures, as well as internal capacity, for dealing with human resources issues within their own departments. Working around HR in this manner has allowed departments to more quickly accomplish their goals, but has also led to inconsistent policy implementation within the City organization and has fragmented the City's approach to provision of HR services.

These challenges are particularly evident in the recruiting process, where hiring managers express confusion about the role of HR staff and have started performing hiring tasks, such as writing job advertisements and posting positions, which are nominally the responsibility of HR staff. Another example involves policy interpretation and management supervision practices, where departments sometimes interpret (and then implement) policies in conflicting ways. These opposing interpretations are not lost on employees, and much of the stakeholder feedback requesting more HR involvement in policy formation is the result of inequities in policy enforcement.

These circumstances have created an opportunity for the Lee's Summit HR Department to play a more strategic and focused role in the City organization. To effect this change, several adaptations are necessary. The first involves elevating the role of HR by assigning supervision of the HR Director to the City Manager. This supervisory shift will signal the City's intention to emphasize HR development and create opportunities for the City Manager and HR Director to further develop the Department's organizational role as a strategic business partner. It is also essential to establish formal, permanent leadership in the HR Department by filling the HR Director position. An effective HR Director will coordinate the Department's day-to-day affairs while rebuilding trust among stakeholders and positioning HR to more effectively meet their needs.

Filling the current leadership vacuum will create capacity for the HR Department to concentrate on service delivery in core functional areas. It is recommended that the Department initially focus on the following core areas: Hiring and Recruitment, Workforce Development, Safety and Wellness, and Employee and Labor Relations. While these functions represent the basic building blocks of an effective HR operation, it is essential to optimize these functions before providing more advanced HR services. As the Department continues to develop, it may consider growing advisory and consultative services to departments and employees, developing highly customized succession and professional development plans, or performing other services needed in the organization. In the near term, however, it is unreasonable to expect HR to accomplish these additional tasks without first reestablishing its organizational role and improving core services.

The following recommendations are intended to illustrate short, medium, and long-term solutions designed to help the Department implement these changes.

HR Structure and Performance

While an intensive focus on the four core functional areas described above will position the HR Department to render more effective services, other steps must be taken to improve the Department's processes and structure. These steps principally involve how the Department is currently organized at the leadership level, as well as how it measures performance and tracks relevant data.

Recommendation 1: Elevate the HR Director position to report directly to the City Manager.

In recent years, the Lee's Summit HR Director has reported to the Director of Administration. While this is an appropriate way to structure HR for many organizations, several factors challenge the viability of this arrangement in Lee's Summit.

First, for the Department to truly make the transition away from transactional services and towards a strategic business partnership model, it will need to have an experienced, strong Director at the helm. The HR Director position should be a peer among other senior management staff. A new Director must have the support of the City Manager in order to be successful and will benefit from a close mentoring relationship with the Manager during this transitional period.

While much of the relationship-building between HR and other departments will result from the hard work of Directors in these positions, elevating the HR Director creates implicitly closer lines of communication between HR, the City Manager, and other department leaders. The HR Director will have the unique opportunity to help set a new tone and climate for the organization. For the Director to implement organization-wide changes effectively, it is imperative that the position is given the appropriate level of authority and credibility. Changing the reporting structure elevates the position within the organization, and shows other members of the Management Team that the HR Director is a peer and has the ability, authority, and trust of the City Manager to make decisions.

Secondly, the HR Director will be tasked with many high-priority and specialized efforts that will require significant expertise, professionalism, coordination, and resilience. Growing and developing the HR Department will involve managing institutional change that impacts HR staff, as well as process and procedural changes that affect all other City staff. These functions are naturally suited to a Department Director-level position that enjoys a close working relationship with other senior City staff.

The HR Director will be responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the HR Department and supervising HR staff, as well as managing the core functions described in this report. Ideally, the HR Director will possess strong interpersonal skills as well as experience in labor and employee relations, particularly regarding union contract negotiations. Especially in this latter capacity, the HR Director will be responsible to provide managers and supervisors with guidance and technical assistance in areas relating to employee relations, labor issues, classification and compensation, training, and conflict resolution. It may be difficult to find qualified candidates with this skill set who are willing to undertake these challenges if the HR Director position does not function as a senior executive within the City.

Notably, most of the peer communities researched by The Novak Consulting Group for comparative purposes utilize a structure where the HR Director reports to the City Manager or a Deputy/Assistant City

Manager (or to an equivalent City Administrator or Assistant City Administrator position). Only one of the peer communities – Olathe, Kansas – utilizes an HR reporting structure similar to the configuration currently used by Lee's Summit. In Olathe, Human Resources reports to the Resource Management Director. Transitioning to this structure would not be unusual for a community like Lee's Summit, given its size and the practices of comparable communities.

Recommendation 2: Develop comprehensive HR workload and performance measures.

Developing the role of HR in the Lee's Summit organization will require focused management oversight and a consistent way of measuring the Department's performance. While HR staff currently report basic workload measures as part of the City's annual reporting process, more useful performance and outcome measurement data is limited due to the Department's manual processes.

To more effectively measure the Department's progress and provide meaningful reports to internal and external customers, the HR Department should begin tracking indicators that better describe the Department's performance over time and in specific contexts. By measuring performance in this way, the Department will be able to more effectively analyze its workload and staffing needs, and evaluate gaps in process delivery.

Examples of performance measures that should be tracked by the HR Department include but are not limited to those listed in the table below.

Table 12: Proposed Performance and Workload Measures

Core Functional Area	Performance and Workload Measures
Hiring and Recruitment	Number of recruitments performed
	Number of applicants per recruitment
	Average length of time for each stage of the recruitment process, including job description review, ad creation, posting, application review, interviewing, and total process time
	Percentage of applicants who were qualified for each position
	Percentage of recruitments completed on-time
	Percentage of hires approved within current compensation/classification limits
Workforce Development	Number of trainings and development events offered by type
	Number of staff invited to development events
	Number of attendees at development events
	Attendance rate at training events
	Attendee satisfaction with development events
Safety and Wellness	Employee participation rate in safety and wellness programs
	Average cost of workers' compensation claims
	Average time associated with processing workers' compensation and other insurance claims
Employee and Labor Relations	Number of grievances and disciplinary actions initiated
	Average length of time associated with resolving grievances and disciplinary actions
	Average staff time associated with employee relations investigations

Where possible, performance measures should enable the Department to evaluate how trends in process times and achieving goals evolve over time. This information should be included in the Department's annual report. It is also important to periodically evaluate and revise performance metrics tracked by the Department to ensure that relevant, useful data is captured. While revising indicators, the Department should ensure that workload and performance metrics are informed by relevant strategic and long-range plans for Human Resources and the City organization.

Hiring and Recruitment

Hiring and recruitment functions are the lifeblood of organizations. Inefficiencies in hiring and recruitment are felt throughout organizations, as under-developed recruitment functions result in limited applicant pools and inefficient hiring processes reduce the speed of filling positions. Providing quality public services requires appropriately staffing positions and equitably compensating employees. High-functioning Human Resources departments, those serving as strategic business partners, utilize a proactive approach to understand the hiring needs of customer departments, recruit staff who most closely meet position requirements, and propose compensation appropriate to attract and retain staff.

While HR staff in the City of Lee's Summit are responsible for developing and implementing programs to effectively recruit, hire, and retain employees, several factors negatively impact the Department's hiring and recruitment functions. These include an over-reliance on paper processes, unclear responsibilities among staff, and a lack of organizational capacity to address classification and compensation issues.

As a first step toward building a high-performing hiring and recruitment function, it is essential for the Department to reexamine the impact of its processes on staff performance. For the HR Department to transition into the role of a strategic business partner, it must have effective tools and processes in place to recruit new talent.

Recommendation 3: Invest in digital hiring and recruitment software.

The City currently relies on the use of traditional tools to recruit employees, such as paper-based application forms and advertisements in local newspapers. While the City's employment application packet is available electronically as a PDF and can be submitted via email, it must be filled out by hand (unless an applicant has access to a typewriter). Once the application is received, the HR Assistant and the HR Generalist print out each application to screen for minimum qualifications, and then pass the screened applications on to the hiring manager.

This is a cumbersome process for both the applicant and the City because it involves transporting paper physically between staff members and locations. It also complicates the data entry process associated with hiring and recruitment, as any information the City wishes to track about applicants and recruitment efforts must be entered by hand into a custom Microsoft Access® database. As a consequence, the HR Department is unable to accurately measure its performance and spends a significant amount of staff time managing paper. This negatively impacts staff's ability to proactively assist customers with recruitment efforts.

Investing in a digital hiring and recruitment software solution is essential in creating a high-performing HR unit. This software is often a foundational building block of modern HR departments because it automates slow, error-prone, and inefficient processes. Products such as CivicPlus®, JobAps®, and Neogov® are HR software tools that can help automate and enhance the entire recruitment, hiring, and onboarding

process. These tools allow organizations to post positions online in a variety of formats for easy distribution on the City's website, to professional associations, and in job-related search engines. Once a job is posted, applicants can complete the entire application process electronically and digitally submit materials to the City. The software can then be used to screen applicants for minimum qualifications, and applicant information is automatically stored in the system for easy follow-up and analysis. Hiring managers have access to the information in the system as well, reducing the need for paper applications to be printed and passed along.

HR software tools also make it much easier to capture and analyze data, such as the time involved in filling a recruitment, the percentage of recruitments completed on-time, the number of recruitments filled in a given period, employee turnover and vacancy rates, as well as the time it takes to complete a reclassification request. This level of analytical support is not currently provided by HR staff due in large part to the manual nature of the hiring process. Measuring this information using a software program will provide the HR Department with more sophisticated tools to help hiring managers understand the hiring process and estimate the amount of time necessary to fill positions.

As it becomes more competitive to recruit qualified employees in the region, adopting creative and innovative ways to attract employees will become increasingly important. As technology has changed, recruitment strategies have also evolved to include broader avenues of attracting qualified candidates. Utilizing traditional recruitment tools like job postings (print and online), attending job fairs, and using social media tools such as LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook should always be considered. However, the City should also start looking at new and innovative ways to attract employees such as the use of podcasts, videos, hosting open houses, and working with the local media.

Software solutions will not build a high-performing recruitment function by themselves. It is also necessary to adjust functional responsibilities among HR staff to streamline the hiring process and provide greater clarity to Department staff and internal customers.

Recommendation 4: Assign front-line customer service and office administrative support responsibilities to the Human Resources Assistant.

The current Human Resources Assistant has been with the City for over 30 years. During this time, the functions performed by the HR Assistant have outgrown those enumerated in the position's job description. For example, many focus group participants and survey respondents reported utilizing the HR Assistant as a primary contact for general hiring and recruitment efforts, when these functions are ostensibly the responsibility of the HR Generalist. In practice, the HR Assistant position effectively manages the entire recruitment process for some recruitment efforts, while the HR Generalist manages others. This pattern of activity blurs the distinction between the HR Generalist and HR Assistant positions, and reduces the HR Assistant's availability to perform needed office support and administrative functions for other Department staff.

It is essential to realign staff practices with job descriptions and functional distinctions to streamline the hiring and recruitment process. Based on current job descriptions (last updated in 2016), the HR Assistant position should primarily serve as the main customer service contact for the Department and provide administrative support for all HR staff. This requires disentangling the HR Assistant from much of the recruitment process.

Adopting a hiring software solution will automate many of the clerical hiring tasks currently assigned to the HR Assistant. However, there are other important tasks that must be accomplished on a regular basis

to effectively serve Department staff and internal customers. The HR Assistant should be responsible for answering customer inquiries, assisting Department staff with clerical needs, tracking data using software systems, maintaining personnel files and other Human Resources Information Systems (HRIS) data, assisting with payroll, paying bills, processing annual merit increases, working with departments to hire temporary labor, updating the Department website, and organizing the Employee Awards Luncheon.

Refocusing the HR Assistant's efforts primarily on clerical support and customer service will create clearer distinction among staff responsibilities. It should be noted that while the HR Assistant will be available to support existing staff, the primary responsibility for administering core functions and programs, such as new employee orientation, onboarding, and hiring, should lie with other specialized HR staff as discussed in this report. The HR Assistant should not assume a lead role in these functions.

Clearly defining the HR Assistant's role as an administrative support position will address a key concern among internal customers. They described highly specialized HR staff who function with little backup or administrative support, which requires them to perform administrative tasks like filing, regularly managing the personnel files, tracking data, and looking at new ways of streamlining processes. The HR Assistant should take a more proactive role in these tasks going forward. By taking responsibility for providing basic customer service and staff support across all HR functions, including hiring, safety, benefits, classification and compensation, training and workforce development, the HR Assistant can function as a centralized source of knowledge and serve as a more effective resource for internal and external customers.

Shifting responsibilities for hiring and recruitment away from the HR Assistant to the HR Generalist will also require adjusting the HR Generalist position. This represents an excellent opportunity to achieve process improvements.

Recommendation 5: Reclassify the Human Resources Generalist as a Recruitment Specialist with responsibility for all hiring and recruitment functions.

Currently, the way in which hiring managers utilize HR for recruitment and hiring services varies from department to department. In some instances, the hiring department may lead the recruitment and create the job posting/advertisement and direct HR where to post the position. For other recruitments, the HR Generalist or HR Assistant may write the job posting and determine where to post the position based on history and experience. Departments also rely on HR staff for different hiring functions such as applicant screening, interview scheduling, assisting with interviews, and negotiating salary offers.

According to the latest available job description, the HR Generalist is responsible for managing the hiring and recruitment process. This includes creating job descriptions and advertisements (in consultation with the hiring manager), screening resumes, participating on interview panels, checking applicant references, completing internal equity analyses, and evaluating requests to exceed minimum range employment offers. After fully transferring recruitment responsibilities from the HR Assistant to the HR Generalist and providing the HR Generalist with appropriate software to accomplish these tasks, the HR Generalist will have more capacity to develop and provide robust hiring services to internal customers and external applicants.

These changes effectively specialize the HR Generalist position and narrow the position's scope of responsibilities to primarily hiring and recruitment efforts. To reflect this specialization, the HR Generalist should be reclassified as a Recruitment Specialist with responsibilities to better understand the staffing needs and operations of City departments, cultivate close working relationships with hiring managers,

grow a network of available resources for distributing job advertisements, and meet the City's hiring needs as rapidly as possible. While the responsibilities of this position will change, the recommended reclassification may not justify a corresponding change in the HR Generalist's salary. Any decision to modify this salary should occur based on an analysis of similar jobs in the area and reflect the City's revised compensation and classification system.

While some departments such as Police, Fire, and Parks and Recreation are responsible for many of their own hiring and recruitment processes, it is important for the Recruitment Specialist to understand the needs and operations of these departments so that effective assistance and support can be rendered if needed. Cultivating this understanding and building relationships with staff will place the Recruitment Specialist in a consultative and advisory role for recruitment processes, which will be of greater assistance to hiring managers in the future.

For all other departments, the Recruitment Specialist should develop a clear and consistent process for hiring and recruitment that involves HR taking the lead on the job description, advertisement, and posting. Each stage of this initial process should be performed in close coordination with the hiring manager, and the Recruitment Specialist should take a proactive role in meeting with the hiring manager at the beginning of the process to discuss the ideal candidate and the qualifications and skills needed for the position. These conversations will inform the Recruitment Specialist's decisions regarding where to post the job ad and how to configure software for applicant screening. The Recruitment Specialist should also work closely with hiring managers during the interview process, particularly by assisting with the development of appropriate interview questions and offering to sit in during interviews if necessary.

Recommendation 6: Create a Classification and Compensation Specialist position.

Classification and compensation systems help organizations develop an equitable, consistent, and competitive structure for categorizing employee positions and providing appropriate compensation. These systems are often informed by studies to evaluate the current labor market and determine whether the organization's pay structure is equitable, or if it needs adjustment. They also help determine if the current job classification structure is appropriate, if new job classes are needed, or if classes should be merged or renamed.

Responsibilities for managing the City's classification system are currently assigned to the HR Director. Because this position is currently unfilled, there is no one with expertise or significant knowledge of classification and compensation in the HR Department. The HR Generalist has been used to gather backup documentation and research when a request has been made regarding a reclassification or pay change, but these requests are then forwarded to upper City management for review and approval.

The City is in the process of completing a classification and compensation study, which evaluated its existing structures. This study is expected to result in changes to the employee classes and compensation that will impact the organization for years to come. For the City to more effectively manage and maintain its new classification and compensation system, it is recommended that the HR Department create a Classification and Compensation (Class & Comp) Specialist position. This position will be responsible for managing the existing classification and compensation plan for all City departments and analyzing all new position (classification) and reclassification requests. The Class & Comp Specialist will work with the HR Director and the City Manager to plan, develop, and implement new and revised compensation programs, policies, and procedures.

Other responsibilities of this position will include working with Human Resources Information Software (HRIS) and Information Technology staff to ensure that the system meets compensation needs and is updated to reflect changes to salary structures, bonus programs, etc. The Class & Comp Specialist will also be available to assist managers and employees with compensation-related issues, and should serve as the HR Department's diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity coordinator. These latter responsibilities are appropriate given the Class & Comp Specialist's role in ensuring equitable compensation for all employees across the City organization.

A classification and compensation plan that is continuously maintained by dedicated staff results in fewer reclassification requests, job dispute grievances, and pay equity issues. It can also help improve employee morale and becomes a solid basis for evaluating work performance. Assuming this position is paid at the midpoint range for Grade 13 (similar to the current HR Generalist position), the estimated total compensation cost for a Classification and Compensation Specialist is approximately \$72,300 including base salary, taxes, health, dental, and vision benefits.⁵

Workforce Development

Workforce development, particularly related to training and professional development opportunities, is another core functional area that should be developed in the HR Department. As the Department transitions into becoming more of a strategic business partner, there are opportunities for HR to assist in supporting the organization's greatest assets – its employees. Caring for employees can best be explained as “developing policies, programs and practices that support the employees’ physical, social, familial, mental and financial well-being which allow the employees to bring their best selves to work.”⁶

It is essential that employees are provided with the necessary tools for success. Training and development can provide employees with the skills to succeed in their current position as well as prepare them for career advancement. In focus groups and survey responses, HR customers requested significant additional attention to workforce development opportunities such as supervisory and management training. Additional focus on developing this function will require a mixture of process and structural changes designed to create staff capacity and set known expectations among City staff.

Recommendation 7: Establish an employee Workforce Development Program.

The Human Resources Department's Risk Management Officer currently provides City staff with regular safety and risk management training, with additional support from other HR staff as needed. This position is also tasked with other major functions, such as wellness programming and workers' compensation administration, which require significant staff time and attention. As a result, there is little staff capacity to develop training programs beyond safety and risk management issues, and the Department does not maintain a formal, comprehensive employee Workforce Development Program.

In high-performing HR organizations, workforce development programming plays a critical role in educating the workforce and retaining skilled employees. Effective workforce development programs create an environment of continuous learning where employees are encouraged to participate in

⁵ This estimated cost calculation assumes the Classification and Compensation Specialist will be paid \$51,751 at the midpoint of Grade 13 (the same pay grade as the HR Generalist) and includes 7.65% additional costs for employer Social Security and Medicare taxes as well as \$16,575 in estimated employer health, dental, and vision insurance premiums.

⁶ IPMA-HR2020 – Shifting Perspectives: A Vision for Public Sector HR

improving their skillsets and applying these skills to their current jobs. These programs are also designed to provide employees with the tools and opportunities to prepare them for career advancement.

It is recommended that the City establish a formal Workforce Development Program designed to achieve several goals. First, the Program should seek to understand perceived training needs in the organization, such as by surveying employees to determine where training deficiencies or needs exist within the organization. Alternatively, HR staff should evaluate performance reviews and look for common themes in terms of areas of improvement or professional development needs, and then create corresponding training programs.

Workforce development programs typically offer employee training that touches on several themes and categories related to law, culture, and safety practices. Examples of these training and development topics that impact all employees include:

- Respect in the Workplace
- Workplace Communication
- Time Management
- Project Management
- Safety
- Cultural Competence/Diversity
- New Employee Onboarding
- Negotiation Skills
- Computer/Technical Skills
- Management and Supervisory Development
- Managing Generations in the Workplace
- Customer Service
- Business Writing
- Social Media
- Accounting/Budget

Other workforce development programming should be tailored to employees with specific needs and duties in the organization, such as supervisors and managers. One of the common themes heard during interviews was that the City did not provide training or support for supervisors and managers. This can create inconsistencies in how policies, procedures, and processes are implemented throughout the organization as well as accountability issues with staff.

As HR develops training programs, it should create a “Supervisors Series” training program that focuses on developing the skills of aspiring, newly appointed and long-term supervisors looking to enhance their skills. A Supervisors Series or Training Program should focus on topics such as:

- The Core Values of a Successful Supervisor
- Time Management
- Performance Management
- Effective Communication
- Employee Relations
- Importance of Documentation and Follow-up
- Developing a Mentoring and Coaching Plan

- How to Properly Delegate and Hold Employees Accountable
- How to Manage Conflict
- How to Motivate Employees
- How to Provide Positive and Constructive Feedback
- Selecting and Hiring Employees
- Diversity in the Workplace

“When leaders value their employees as a critical part of the [organization’s] success, they treat training and development as a top priority. Great workplaces foster a culture of learning, and provide all employees a variety of channels to further both their professional growth and personal interests.”⁷ When employees know they are cared for and being invested in, they have a better view of the organization, and morale goes up. As morale increases, employees tend to work harder and more efficiently. It is easier for an organization to retain employees who feel valued, are satisfied, and believe there is an opportunity for future career advancement.

Investing time, energy, and funding into a formal Workforce Development Program can have long-term benefits for the organization, including improved job satisfaction and reduced employee turnover.⁸ Formalizing this program will have the added benefit of creating known professional development opportunities for City staff and will help to ensure that the City will maintain an educated, knowledgeable, and diverse workforce.

Recognizing the limited number of staff within the Human Resources Department, it is not reasonable to expect HR staff to conduct all the training sessions and workshops, but staff will need to coordinate and schedule trainings and workshops. It is not unusual for organizations to outsource training. According to industry surveys conducted by the Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM), approximately 46% of organizations outsource training and development programs partially or completely. Many organizations base decisions to outsource on available expertise and service level expectations. The City may also find that in-house expertise on topics such as finance, technology, and communications may be leveraged to train staff. Other training opportunities may exist using webinars, online training courses, and partnerships with the local higher education institutions in the surrounding area.

Recommendation 8: Revise the current performance appraisal process.

Aside from creating additional development opportunities for City staff, a second core component of workforce development involves regularly assessing employee performance and providing appropriate feedback. The City requires that employee performance reviews are completed each year. According to the City’s Personnel Policy, “Merit reviews shall be conducted each year on a designated date prior to July 1 by the employee’s supervisor. An employee service rating form is completed and forwarded to the Department Director for approval. The supervisor will advise the employee of the rating given and discuss any positive or negative aspects of the rating. The Personnel Officer will provide forms necessary to affect these merit procedures. Annually, the City Council shall determine the amount of employee pay raises to be awarded based on the performance ratings scale and budgetary considerations.”⁹

This commitment to annual performance reviews is commendable. Annual reviews, as well as more frequent check-in conversations, ensure that supervisors and staff communicate about performance,

⁷ Great Place to Work® - 15 Practice Areas Critical to Achieving a Great Workplace, July 2015

⁸ Adapted from *The Benefits of Employee Training and Development*

⁹ City of Lee’s Summit Personnel Policy

expectations, and aspirations. In a well-structured functioning performance system, these reviews and conversations can strengthen management and employee relationships. The most effective performance review processes are those that are used as a professional development tool that supports employee development and organizational accountability. The HR Department should work with departments to ensure that annual reviews, as well as frequent check-ins, are taking place.

A common concern expressed by focus group participants included frustration with the City's current performance appraisal process. Many staff members felt that the process was outdated, ineffective, and inconsistent. While some departments are completing reviews regularly and on-time, others are not. Additionally, while some supervisors develop annual goals and/or an annual work plan with employees, this is not a universal practice. During interviews, many participants shared that they had never been trained or provided direction on how to properly evaluate an employee, or effectively conduct a performance evaluation with an employee. The result is limited accountability regarding how performance appraisals are conducted throughout the organization, which contributes to employee perceptions of the current system as unfair and insufficient.

Additionally, some of the performance review tools utilized by the City are outdated. The performance appraisal form used for hourly employees was last updated in 2008, while the form for exempt non-supervisory positions was updated more recently in May 2017.

Given the impact of performance appraisals on compensation as well as supervisory relationships across the City, it is recommended that the City revise the current performance appraisal process. This includes updating the review tool used throughout the organization and providing adequate training to supervisors. Training sessions should be incorporated into the Supervisors Series described previously in this report, and should include tools and skills necessary to engage in productive and meaningful conversations with staff, techniques for tackling difficult conversations, and tips on how to provide constructive feedback.

Recommendation 9: Create a Workforce Development Specialist position.

The proposed Workforce Development program and changes to the City's performance review processes will likely require significant staff time and attention to implement and maintain. As indicated previously, the HR Department does not currently dedicate a staff member to training and development – these responsibilities are part of the Risk Management Officer's job description.

It is unreasonable to expect the Risk Management Officer to manage several significant, time-intensive functions and programs, particularly when it is necessary to further specialize and develop those programs as discussed in this report. To effectively foster an environment of continuous learning for the City of Lee's Summit and implement a robust Workforce Development Program, it is recommended that the City create a Workforce Development Specialist position. This position would be responsible for formalizing the Workforce Development Program and associated training curriculum, as well as revising the City's performance review process.

Importantly, the Workforce Development Specialist should partner with internal subject matter experts, such as the Risk Management Officer and the Information Technology Director, regarding employee training needs and incorporate required safety or technology training into the training program curriculum. Also within the scope of employee training, the Workforce Development Specialist will be responsible for coordinating and leading the Employee Onboarding Program, and will work with outside

providers to identify training opportunities for the organization including workshops, speakers, classes, and partnerships.

This position will also play a critical role in the dissemination of City policies to current employees, and should be available to assist and coach supervisors; work with individual employees to develop training or professional development plans; and track, evaluate, and report on training outcomes. Assuming this position is paid at the midpoint range for Grade 13 (similar to the current HR Generalist position), the estimated total compensation cost for a Workforce Development Specialist is approximately \$72,300 including base salary, taxes, health, dental, and vision benefits.¹⁰

Safety and Wellness

Safety and wellness functions are examples of other critical areas that should be addressed in high-performing HR organizations. These functions include preventive measures, such as building a culture of safety awareness and promoting healthy lifestyles among employees, as well as employee benefits such as health and dental insurance. For Human Resources staff to support the needs of all Lee's Summit's employees, it is essential for the Department to develop appropriate tools and programs designed to support employee well-being. Currently, HR staff provide the organization with such services as benefits administration (medical, dental, vision, disability), FMLA requests, a safety program and training, workers' compensation, and an employee wellness program.

Recommendation 10: Issue a request for proposals for workers' compensation claim management software.

As with hiring and recruitment functions, it is important for the HR Department to capitalize on technological advancements to maximize available staff capacity and leverage existing resources more effectively. With respect to safety and wellness functions, the City's current workers' compensation process is ripe for modernization and improvement. Workers' compensation administration is currently the function of the Risk Management Officer. Much of this work is manual, time-intensive, paper-based, and involves processing applications, scheduling doctor's appointments, coordinating care with employees, and filing physical paperwork. The current process was mentioned by survey participants and across focus groups as an example of a cumbersome interaction with HR staff.

The amount of paperwork generated by workers' compensation requests has a direct impact on staff's capacity to adequately coordinate care for additional cases. Processing these claims, particularly when they are on paper, requires significant staff time and detracts from HR's ability to provide additional safety and wellness services. Additionally, staff have limited data tracking and performance measurement capabilities under the current system, which consists of mainly inputting and managing data and information in Microsoft® Excel. The organization could benefit from a workers' compensation claim management software program, which would be designed to automate and manage claim administration as well as assist with reporting.

Workers' compensation claim management software programs create a single electronic folder for each employee's case and can integrate multiple sources of information and data such as medical

¹⁰ This estimated cost calculation assumes the Workforce Development Specialist will be paid \$51,751 at the midpoint of Grade 13 (the same pay grade as the HR Generalist) and includes 7.65% additional costs for employer Social Security and Medicare taxes as well as \$16,575 in estimated employer health, dental, and vision insurance premiums.

examinations, compensation board determinations, prescriptions, treatments, re-evaluations, and often appeals. In addition, the systems can help easily track and manage medical costs, wages/disability rates, lost time cases, employee injuries, and other employee safety issues. These software tools allow users to quickly enter and identify long-term disability, short-term disability or medical-only cases and assist with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) reporting. Their flexible database design and user interface allows users to link pertinent claim data to employee records in order to maintain a comprehensive history.

A benefit of workers' compensation software tools is the elimination of paper forms and reduced time involved in processing requests. Software capabilities now permit HR staff to input all data through a web-based interface that can be reviewed, updated, and approved by the employee, the employee's supervisor, and HR managers as necessary throughout the process. This eliminates the requirement to complete, transport, transcribe, file, and maintain paper records.

To streamline the process, improve data tracking and claim management, as well as increase staff capacity, the City should issue a request for proposals for workers' compensation claim management software. If possible, vendors should provide solutions that are compatible with the City's existing software platforms such as Lawson™, the City's current enterprise resource planning software solution.

The implementation of a workers' compensation claim management software program will accelerate the processing of claims, reduce the cost of claims processing, as well as automate and streamline the process for HR staff as well as City employees who need to file a claim. The utilization of software to accomplish claim management tasks will also reduce transcription errors and time associated with managing paper copies, as well as create a dataset that can be queried to evaluate employee performance and workload trends.

Recommendation 11: Reclassify the Risk Management Officer as a Safety and Wellness Specialist.

As previously stated, the Risk Management Officer is currently responsible for safety and wellness functions, as well as employee training. By transferring responsibilities for most training and workforce development efforts to the Training and Development Specialist, the Risk Management Officer's primary duties will consist of efforts to improve the organization's safety culture and foster improved wellness among City employees. In short, the Risk Management Officer will take on a more specialized safety and wellness role in the organization.

This specialization justifies reclassifying the Risk Management Officer position as a Safety and Wellness Specialist for the HR Department. While the Safety and Wellness Specialist will still be responsible for coordinating the City's workers' compensation program and developing additional safety and wellness programming, implementing other recommendations in this report will fundamentally change how the Safety and Wellness Specialist provides services to City staff and interacts with other HR Department personnel. Because the scope of the Safety and Wellness Specialist's responsibilities would narrow and exclude most training functions, adjustments to this position's compensation are not immediately warranted.

First, by leveraging software and electronic tools, the Safety and Wellness Specialist will be able to undertake a more comprehensive, analytical approach to workers' compensation and administration. This will free the Safety and Wellness Specialist to engage in more robust safety analysis and wellness programming that touches all City departments.

Secondly, the Safety and Wellness Specialist will be required to work in close concert with the Training and Development Specialist to develop effective, regular safety training programs and events for City staff. A primary goal of these efforts should be to devise and procure relevant safety trainings for all departments that address specific operational concerns in each department. This position should also be responsible for planning and administering the City's annual Safety Fair events.

Third, additional capacity created by modernizing paper-based processes and reassigning training responsibilities will allow the Safety and Wellness Specialist to devote additional time to developing attractive wellness program options and useful incentives for engaging City employees. While the Risk Management Officer has performed commendably by planning wellness events such as Turkey Trots, lunch walks, and other educational events, a lack of staff capacity prevents the Risk Management Officer from expanding on these initiatives. In many ways, the goal of reclassifying the Risk Management Officer to a Safety and Wellness Specialist is to help encourage staff in this position to devote additional time to wellness issues and implement innovative safety and wellness initiatives. This emphasis and additional staff capacity will help the HR Department to more fully embrace safety and wellness issues.

Employee and Labor Relations

Employee relations functions often include a wide range of activities, such as identifying workplace issues, investigating employee complaints and misconduct, and ensuring HR compliance with employment laws and regulations. Employee relations also involves working directly with supervisors and managers to provide coaching and support during difficult staff issues and conversations, particularly during difficult performance appraisals or discipline cases. Employee relations staff often serve as a resource for supervisors and help provide tools such as assistance developing employee performance improvement plans and providing explanations regarding the organization's discipline and/or grievance process.

Employee relations often includes labor relations, which includes negotiating union contracts or collective bargaining agreements, working with union stewards, and handling employee grievances covered by the contracts as well as the mediation and arbitration processes. In some organizations, like Lee's Summit, there may be multiple unions and contracts, as well as non-union employees. This environment can create challenges for management, and it is important for HR to be familiar with and understand each contract so that it can effectively support both staff and management.

The relative intimacy of these interactions and conversations often makes employee relations a highly challenging function for HR organizations to successfully administer because they directly relate to the relationship between the employer and employee. However, successfully navigating these relationships and delivering essential employee relations services is crucial to any organization. Successful employee relations functions provide sound guidance and demonstrate fair and consistent treatment of all employees.

Recommendation 12: Assign responsibilities for employee and labor relations functions to the HR Director.

Without a permanent HR Director and a lack of relevant expertise among existing staff, the HR Department is currently unable to take a leadership role on employee relations issues. Consequently, most issues involving discipline, labor union negotiations and concerns, grievances, or policy interpretation are handled by the City Attorney's Office or the Director of Administration.

It should be noted that assigning employee relations concerns to other departments (particularly the City Attorney's Office) was a common practice prior to vacancies in the HR Director's position. However, this division of responsibilities is not sustainable over the long term because not all employee relations questions are legal questions. Ideally, staff support for employee relations should come primarily from Human Resources with additional input from legal staff when necessary.

To help develop this expertise, it is recommended that all responsibilities for employee and labor relations functions be assigned to the HR Director once the position is filled. The Director will have the opportunity to revise, develop, and implement as well as reinforce the importance of fair and consistent employee relations policies in the organization. This includes such things as reviewing and updating the Personnel Policy and developing new tools such as an *Employee Handbook* and *Supervisors Handbook*. In addition to helping develop and reinforce these policies, the Director will also provide advice and counsel to managers and supervisors regarding personnel practices, policies, and employment laws.

The HR Director should also be responsible for administering and interpreting labor agreements, administering grievance procedures, and providing labor relations support during contract negotiations. These tasks require close coordination with the City Attorney's Office and the City Manager, and thus fall appropriately into the scope of the HR Director's responsibility.

Assigning employee relations functions to the HR Director creates an environment where the HR Department is not only providing transactional services, but meeting the broader needs of the organization and serving as a strategic business partner to cultivate productive working relationships with employees. In this role, the Director will be helping to strengthen relationships between management and employees – both union and non-union – throughout the organization.

In the future, if employee relations functions prove to be a significant workload responsibility, the City should consider creating a dedicated employee and labor relations position to coordinate contract agreements as well as disciplinary investigations.

Policy Review

An area of particular concern for Department staff and internal customers involves the HR Department's role in human resources policy formation and interpretation. The development and distribution of effective City policies touches all of HR's core functional areas and represents a critical focus area for the HR Director. Streamlining policy formation and distribution achieves several important functions for the City, including:

- Defining values and expectations
- Ensuring the organization is following local, state, and federal laws/requirements
- Encouraging transparency, consistency and equity throughout the organization
- Providing management with the tools to make consistent decisions
- Protecting employees and management

Recommendation 13: Create a Policy Advisory Committee led by Human Resources to periodically evaluate and update City policies.

The City currently maintains a *Personnel Policy* that is updated as needed and was last revised in January 2014. It is a detailed document outlining many of the organization's operations, rules, and regulations,

and serves as a useful tool for supervisors and management to utilize when working with employees and managing their departments. It specifically provides guidance regarding employment, compensation, benefits, rules and regulations, travel and training, safety and risk management, separation, and financial policies. Employees often reference the policy manual when seeking information about their health benefits, leave accrual, and the City's grievance policy.

Traditionally, an organization's policy and procedures manual is an in-depth document that outlines how an organization operates. As noted in the City's *Personnel Policy*, "It is the purpose of these Personnel Policies to establish guidelines and procedures which will be followed by the City in the administration of its personnel system and administration."¹¹ The manual itself appears to be designed more for management and supervisors, while information can be accessed by employees. In addition, it protects the organization as many of the local, state, and federal regulations are included in the *Personnel Policy*.

Based on focus group and survey feedback, there is a clear need for HR to play a more proactive role in City policy formation and education. To accomplish this, the HR Director should create a Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) to periodically evaluate and update City policies. Committee membership should consist of a subset of the Management Team. The committee should review existing policies, propose uniform interpretations for City departments, evaluate the unintended consequences of policy changes, and assist with education initiatives.

One of the first goals of the PAC should be to create a clear distinction among the City's existing policy areas. Many organizations have begun developing both a *Personnel Policy* as well as an *Employee Handbook*. An essential difference between these documents is that the personnel policy manual contains a comprehensive compilation of City-related policies, including supervisory and management policies, whereas the employee handbook is crafted with employees in mind and is easier to read and understand. Employee handbooks often contain other general information about the organization such as its mission, vision, and goals as well as an organizational chart and job classifications. Information on bargaining units may also be included. Employee handbooks are often provided to employees during the onboarding process, in addition to the organization's policy manual.

A second goal to be considered by the PAC is consistency. While policies will impact different departments in various ways, all departments should implement policies uniformly. This ensures all staff follow consistent practices and safeguards against employee equity concerns. An essential function of the PAC will be to brainstorm policy positions that can be implemented across departments, and to evaluate potential unintended consequences that may impact some departments more than others.

Third, the PAC should provide input on training and/or information sessions for employees related to policy changes. The HR Department can then act on this input to provide meaningful policy information to staff, as well as create opportunities for employee feedback.

Recommendation 14: Review and update the City's *Personnel Policy*.

While the PAC will serve as an important resource for the HR Director, the real work of creating and proposing revisions to the City's *Personnel Policy* should be assigned to HR. While the City's current *Personnel Policy* has been updated many times, most recently in 2014, the document itself is rather disjointed and is missing several critical pieces that relate to the work environment and employee relations. Over time, many of the document's sections have become rather large in scope, featuring many

¹¹ *Lee's Summit Personnel Policy*

different topic areas. These larger sections should be condensed into a more manageable, easier to understand document.

Along with condensing and reorganizing policies contained in the existing manual, it is important for HR to standardize terms used throughout the document. The manual uses several outdated terms such as City Administrator and Personnel Director interchangeably with the terms City Manager and HR Director. It should be noted that while the definition section of the document does reference these terms, they are not used consistently throughout the document. While there is a definition section, it is only provided for the Employment section of the manual. As the manual is updated, the City should determine a consistent way to handle definitions or decide to remove them all together.

Another important piece missing in the current manual is language referencing Management Rights and/or functions. Because the City has labor organizations and the associated contracts, it is important that it clearly define its rights. Oftentimes, if issues are not specifically outlined in a union contract, the City's *Personnel Policy* takes precedence (or if there is conflict, the contract takes precedence). That being the case, it is important for the City to clearly define the rights and role of Management.

Sample language relating to Management Rights and/or Functions within the manual include the following:

Management Rights

Except as otherwise provided by law, contract, or elsewhere in this Manual, management reserves the right to operate and manage the City. These rights include, but are not limited to, the right to:

- Direct employees.
- Determine the methods, means, job classifications, and personnel by which operations are conducted and subsequently hire, promote, transfer, assign, and retain employees.
- Relieve employees from duties because of lack of work or funds or under conditions where continuation of such work would be inefficient and/or non-productive.
- Maintain the efficiency of operations.
- Establish minimum performance standards, methods, and processes by which work is performed.¹²

While the manual does include language stating the City Manager has the authority to approve amendments to the manual, it does not explain why these changes may be necessary or how they would be communicated throughout the organization. It is recommended that sample language like the following be included in the update:

Changes and Updates

The policies, procedures, and benefits in this Manual may be altered at any time by the City Manager or because of action taken by the City Council, Congress, Missouri General Assembly, or courts. Procedures and practices are subject to modification. Changes will be provided to employees when necessary. When a policy, procedure, or benefit is altered, employees will

¹² City of Great Falls Personnel Policy Manual, 2016

be notified in writing or by electronic means through supplements to this Manual. This Manual will also be updated on the City intranet.¹³

Disclaimer

The policies and procedures established and set forth in this Policy Manual provide guidelines for the supervisors and employees during employment with Lee's Summit to ensure, to the extent practicable, uniformity and nondiscriminatory application of conditions of employment.

Nothing is intended to, nor shall it be construed or interpreted, to create contractual or vested rights for employees with respect to continued employment, benefits, policies, procedures or any other provisions of this Manual other than those rights created by applicable state or federal law.

If any of the provisions of these policies conflict with a negotiated labor agreement, the labor agreement will take precedence to the extent applicable.¹⁴

After careful review of the City's existing *Personnel Policy*, it is recommended that the following sections be reviewed and updated to meet human resources best practices.

Table 13: Review of Lee's Summit Current Personnel Policy

Section of Personnel Policy	Opportunities for Improvement	Suggested Improvements/Best Practices
Personnel Policy Manual - Purpose	Limited information is included in this section.	This section is often utilized to include general organizational introduction information such as structure of government, organizational philosophy (mission, vision, etc.), applicability of the manual, acknowledgement of receipt, Equal Employment Opportunity Statement, and management rights.
Employment – Definitions	Definitions are provided sporadically throughout the Policy Manual and not in a consistent manner. Terms are not used consistently throughout the document. The Employment Section is the only section to include definitions; while some policy statements include definitions, others do not.	Definitions should be provided for the entire <i>Policy Manual</i> in a consistent format or removed completely. Many manuals do not include definitions.
Employment – Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)	EEO Language appears to be outdated (reference to Personnel Officer, recruitment and advertising language outdated, etc.).	Revised language should include language regarding compliance with the American with Disability Act (ADA). EEO policy/compliance statements are often included at the beginning of a <i>Policy Manual</i> , versus the employment section.

¹³ Adapted from the City of Peachtree (2013), City of Great Falls (2016) and County of Fairfield (2017) Personnel Policy Manuals

¹⁴ Adapted from the City of Great Falls (2016) and County of Fairfield (2017) Personnel Policy Manuals

Section of Personnel Policy	Opportunities for Improvement	Suggested Improvements/Best Practices
Employment – Hiring Policy	Hiring language needs to be updated; certain steps are not included in the Hiring Policy.	Revised language should include a standardized selection and recruitment policy; manuals often include the entire recruitment process – from vacation of position, creation of job description, to placement of position announcement to the screening of applications, interview process, and selection. Standardize in-house posting of positions. Determine when it is required and for how long.
Employment – Background Checks	Opportunity to incorporate multiple sections and condense language.	Background check language is often included in the Recruitment/Hiring section or in a Prerequisites for Initial or Continued Employment section that incorporates medical tests, drug testing, and other job-related reference checks (while this language is included in the existing <i>Policy Manual</i> , it is not found in one location).
Employment – Residency Requirements	Currently the <i>Policy Manual</i> includes language about residency requirements.	Residency requirements are not typically included in a <i>Personnel Policy Manual</i> ; many municipalities have moved away from these types of requirements. Language may be included in labor agreements regarding response times.
Compensation – Merit Increases	This section does not include language regarding the City's performance review (service rating) process or how a merit increase is achieved.	Language should be added specifically about the City's performance review process including the purpose of reviews and their frequency.
Benefits – Accrual Maximums (sick and vacation)	The City has established different vacation and sick time accrual rates (and maximums) for regular and shift employees. This policy may be creating a financial and personnel burden for the City.	Most organizations base leave accrual on years of service; not type of work. In some cases, labor contracts may stipulate different pay or leave accrual rates, but not in the <i>Personnel Policy Manual</i> . The City should review and evaluate this practice.
Benefits – Vacation Payout	Currently the City has a policy that allows an employee to be paid out if they are unable to take a vacation due to work. While this is a nice benefit for those employees it creates a financial burden for the organization.	The existing language does not limit the amount of vacation time that can be paid out in cash or taken as time on the job.
Benefits – Bereavement Leave	The City's current policy is bereavement leave of 3 days with pay (two more days can be requested without pay).	Policies tend to range from 3-5 days of paid bereavement leave. 5 days for immediate family members and 3 days for extended family. Policies often have language allowing directors/department heads the ability to make exceptions when needed.
Benefits – Personal Leave	All regular employees are granted 16 hours (2 days) of personal leave each year. This policy did not differentiate between regular and shift employees. This is in addition to sick and	Multiple categories of leave can lead to confusion and error. Some organizations have switched to a simplified paid time off (PTO) option with all leave accrued in the same

Section of Personnel Policy	Opportunities for Improvement	Suggested Improvements/Best Practices
	vacation leave. The City has multiple categories of leave, which can create confusion for both employees and supervisors.	bucket. Another option would be for the City to incorporate the existing personal leave into vacation accrual and increase the annual accrual rate.
Rules & Regulations	This section appears to be utilized as a catch-all when new policies and topics are added to the manual. It includes a wide range of topics including the Code of Ethics and Attendance to the City's Grievance and Sexual Harassment Policy to the Use of City Equipment and Property.	These topics should be divided into smaller sections that better fit the topic. Better section headings include: Problem Resolution and Grievance Procedure, Discipline, Violence in the Workplace, Substance Abuse in the Workplace, Ethics and Standards of Conduct, Technology Policies, etc.
Rules & Regulations – Code of Ethics	The City's Code of Ethics Policy deals specifically with the integrity and honesty of employees, fair and equal treatment, confidentiality, conflicts of interest, and complaints/procedures. Many important ethical issues are included within the conflicts of interest topic area. There is an opportunity to create a stand-alone section that deals specifically with Ethics and Standards of Conduct.	Most policies include a specific Code or Standard of Conduct (expectations for employees) for Employees within the Ethics Section. In addition, the Ethics section covers topics such as nepotism, conflict of interest, confidential information, political activity, public statements, outside employment, dress code, etc. While the <i>Lee's Summit Policy Manual</i> includes many of these topics, they are spread out or included within other sections (e.g., nepotism and off duty employment is included in the Employment section).
Rules & Regulations – Attendance and Punctuality	This section does not include language on the scheduling of work and does not include a definition of "absent" or what an employee should do if they know they are going to be absent from work. The Sick Leave section includes language that the City may require a note from the doctor if an employee is out more than three days, but no process is included about reporting an absence.	Policies often include language on time and attendance and the schedule of work. This would include the operating hours of City Hall or stating that employees report to work at the time and place set by their supervisor. Language is traditionally included about what to do if an employee is going to be absent or late to work; the existing policy states what is an exception.
Rules & Regulations – Provision and Use of Portable Communication Devices	The Employee Telephone Use and Computing Policy was removed from the Personnel Policy Manual and placed online.	Most policy manuals include some language about a standard code of conduct relating to technology, e-mail, internet, social media, etc.
Rules & Regulations – Disciplinary Actions	The <i>Policy Manual</i> outlines in detail the City's classification of discipline offenses. However, it does not include the Disciplinary Process. The manual states that the City has established a process to address disciplinary issues but it is not included nor is a reference.	Most policies include a definition and Discipline Statement as well as a Discipline Policy and the associated progressive steps, both informal and formal (e.g., corrective counseling, oral warning, written warning, suspension, discharge).
Travel and Training – New Employee Orientation	New Employee Orientation appears out of place in this section.	Most policies include the New Employee Orientation in the Employment section. This section does not include any general

Section of Personnel Policy	Opportunities for Improvement	Suggested Improvements/Best Practices
		information about the City's commitment to professional development and/or training.
Separation	This section does not include information on involuntary terminations.	Most policies include language about involuntary terminations or "at-will employment."
Separation – Layoffs, Downsizing, Outsourcing	Language is very short and brief and does not detail the process for layoffs, reduction in force, downsizing, etc. or the recall of employees.	Most policies include language regarding management rights, as well as the lack of work and funds. In addition, there is traditionally a process included for the layoff and recall of employees.
Administrative and Financial Policies	This section includes such things as debt management, bond sales, refunding debt, and federal arbitrage as well as the City's Cash Receipt and Audit Policy.	Most personnel policy manuals do not include Administrative and Financial Policies. These are best included in stand-alone Financial or Purchasing Policies. Only those financial policies relating to personnel issues would be included in a Personnel Policy (compensation, travel, training, education, time and attendance, etc.).

Many topics are not included in the existing manual, which should be considered for inclusion as the HR Director begins reviewing and updating the *Personnel Policy* with the PAC:

- Management Practices & Rights
- Employee Conduct & Rights/Standard of Conduct
- Reduction in Force/Recall Process
- Americans with Disability Act
- Employee Performance Appraisals, Performance Improvement Plans
- Learning and Professional Development
- Progressive Disciplinary Procedures
- Technology/Social Media/Computer Usage
- Public Statements
- Time Records, Time Entry, and Payroll
- Termination (Involuntary)
- Conflict Resolution
- Workplace Bullying Policy
- Maternity/Paternity Leave Policy
- Wellness Program/Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Public Records Policy
- General policy on the review and update of organization policies

A sample *Personnel Policy* table of contents is included in Appendix B. An updated *Personnel Policy* table of contents would include the following sections:

1. Organizational Philosophy
2. Introduction and General Information
3. Administration
4. Ethics and Standards of Conduct
5. Employment Policies
6. Compensation
7. Benefits
8. Risk Management
9. Problem Resolution and Grievance Procedure
10. Disciplinary Policy
11. Harassment in the Workplace
12. Violence in the Workplace
13. Substance Abuse in the Workplace
14. Technology Policies
15. Travel and Expense Policies
16. Receipt and Acknowledgement Form

Having an updated and revised *Personnel Policy* for the City of Lee's Summit will benefit both management and its employees. A clearly written *Personnel Policy* with policies and procedures that are updated and followed consistently provides transparency and structure within the organization. Once revised, the manual should be developed to serve as a useful tool for management as well as employees, and should be reviewed and updated regularly (at least every 2-3 years). This ensures that the *Personnel Policy* is current, reflects the organizational policies, follows local and state laws, and addresses other changes throughout the organization.

Recommendation 15: Create an *Employee Handbook*.

Many municipal organizations today have chosen to implement an *Employee Handbook* in addition to the traditional *Personnel Policy*. While the *Employee Handbook* incorporates many of the same elements of the policy manual, they are intended to be more employee friendly. *Employee Handbooks* are a way to communicate an organization's expectations including work rules, standards, and policies as well as the consequences for not meeting those expectations. Handbooks are usually first presented or reviewed with employees during onboarding or at New Employee Orientation.

It is recommended that the HR Director create an *Employee Handbook*. The established PAC can be utilized to help the Director create, organize, and develop the final product. An *Employee Handbook* has relevance to every employee of the organization regardless of position, title or job duties. Ideally, the handbook should provide useful information and help answer employee questions and reduce confusion in the workplace. However, the success of an *Employee Handbook* is dependent on what is included and how well it is written.

The *Employee Handbook* should generally include summaries of the policies and procedures that are described in greater detail in the City's *Personnel Policy*. The handbook should be clearly written and for the most part should avoid legalese, although certain topics in the handbook must be drafted to ensure maximum legal protection (e.g., employment-at-will and benefits disclaimers).¹⁵

¹⁵ *Must Haves for Effective Employee Handbooks*, Bond, Shoeneck & King, 2012

A well-developed *Employee Handbook* can be a tool for employees, a guide for managers, and is an effective way to communicate the organization's expectations. Employees often reference the *Employee Handbook* for items such as safety and security, and for understanding the organization's processes for handling items such as grievances, attendance issues, workers' compensation, and FMLA.

As mentioned earlier in this report, the City has both union and non-union employees. As such, the *Employee Handbook* should mention that fact, and include language that indicates that if an employee's position is part of a recognized bargaining unit, the employee should always consult his or her labor agreement.

Topics often included in an *Employee Handbook* include: the organization's vision, mission and values, Integrity and Ethics, Employment Policies, Employee Communications, Compensation and Benefits, Leave/Time and General Organizational Information. A sample table of contents from an *Employee Handbook* is included in Appendix C.

There are several benefits to having an *Employee Handbook*, in addition to the organization's *Personnel Policy Manual*:

- Introduces employees to the organization
- Communicates expectations
- Educates employees about what they can expect from management/leadership
- Ensures policies are clearly and consistently communicated
- Provides benefits information
- Ensures compliance with federal and state laws
- Helps defend against employee claims
- Educates employees on where to turn for help¹⁶

It is important to always have employees acknowledge that they have received a copy of the *Employee Handbook*. This should also be done each time it is updated or changed. Employees should be provided access to a copy of the handbook, whether at New Employee Orientation or through their supervisor and it should also be made available electronically on the City's website or intranet.

¹⁶ Adapted from HR Management – *8 Reasons You Should Have a Company Employee Handbook*, May 16, 2017

Conclusion

The recommendations in this report are designed to address the HR Department's high-priority needs by laying the groundwork for more effective leadership and emphasizing the development of core HR functions. Diligent attention to these issues will create the staff capacity necessary to transform the Department by filling vacant positions (particularly the HR Director position), creating additional positions to perform needed functions, and streamlining processes related to HR's primary customer service responsibilities. The intended result is an HR Department that can function as a strategic business partner, working with all departments to accomplish their goals.

Implementing the recommendations in this report will result in the proposed organizational structure illustrated in the following figure. New and modified positions appear in green boxes.

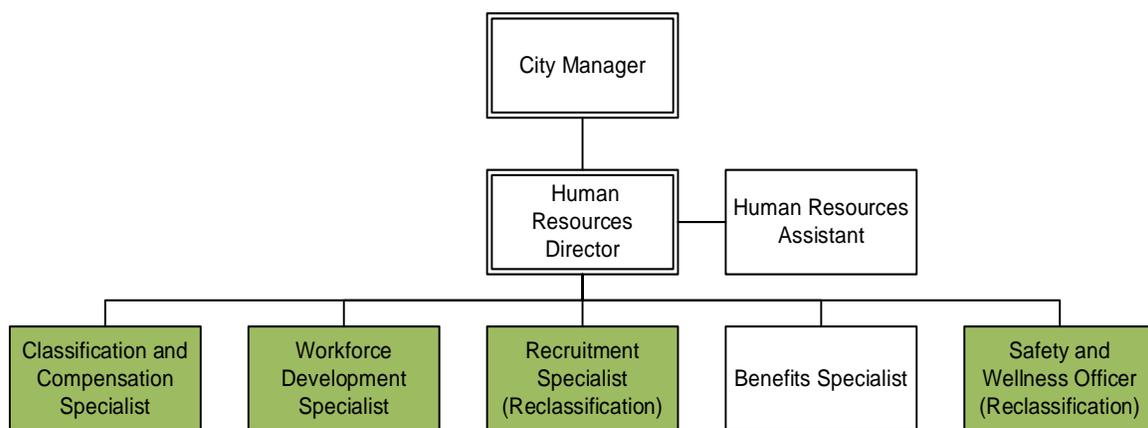


Figure 5: Proposed Human Resources Department Structure

It is essential that HR staff undertake specific responsibilities and tasks that are directly related to their primary service areas. It will be the HR Director's responsibility to assign, supervise, and manage these tasks, as well as to develop staff's capacity to backfill for each other where appropriate. The following table lists core primary responsibilities and tasks associated with each position in the HR Department's proposed structure. This information should be utilized to update relevant job descriptions or create new job descriptions where appropriate. It should also be noted that the new HR Director must be provided the latitude to make adjustments to these assignments as needed, based on workload, skill sets, or other organizational needs.

Table 14: Human Resources Proposed Primary Responsibilities and Tasks

Position	Proposed Primary Responsibilities and Tasks
HR Director	Provide strategic guidance on human resource issues as a member of the Management Team
	Supervise HR functions
	Develop and implement HR policies and programs
	Recommend changes to employee status (hiring, firing, etc.)
	Prepare HR budget

Position	Proposed Primary Responsibilities and Tasks
	Manage employee relations with assistance from the Workforce Development Specialist
Human Resources Assistant	Provide administrative support to the HR Director
	Answer customer inquiries
	Update intranet/internet resources
	Assist with HR budget process
	Organize employee awards luncheons
	Track HR performance, workload, and data metrics
Classification and Compensation Specialist	Perform position studies for new hiring and recruitment efforts
	Perform survey salaries and associated analysis
	Manage the City's classification and compensation system
	Recommend appropriate salary changes and compensation policies to the HR Director
	Serve as Equal Employment Opportunity/Diversity Coordinator
Workforce Development Specialist	Create a comprehensive workforce development program for all City employees
	Schedule and provide relevant professional development training opportunities
	Coordinate closely with the Risk Management Officer to provide safety training
Recruitment Specialist	Manage the hiring/recruitment process, including job posting creation, ad placement, candidate selection, etc.
	Create and maintain talent profile
	Maintain job descriptions
	Provide relevant recruitment training to City staff
	Address general employee questions about recruitment
Benefits Specialist	Administer benefits programs (FMLA, health, dental vision, disability, life insurance, etc.)
	Oversee Lawson™ benefits module
	Coordinate enrollment and termination of benefits for employees
	Provide benefits-related training
	Manage third-party relationships
Safety and Wellness Officer	Develop and administer workers' compensation program (evaluate claims, negotiate discounts, schedule appointments, etc.)
	Manage safety policies and programs (including Safety Fair)
	Serve as ADA Coordinator
	Manage Wellness program
	Serve on City Safety Committee

The Lee's Summit Human Resources Department possesses strong staff resources and faces a unique opportunity to develop its core services. While these changes will benefit the Department and the City organization, it will take time and dedicated resources to develop the Department into a high-performing, strategic business partner for City staff.

Appendix A: Open-Ended Survey Responses

The following sections include open-ended responses received during the stakeholder survey. Numbers next to adjacent responses – e.g. (2) – indicate the number of respondents who used exact or highly similar verbiage. Names of individual employees have been deleted to preserve anonymity.

Please indicate three words you feel best describe the Human Resources Department today.

- Accessible - (2)
- Accommodating - (1)
- Adequate - (6)
- Adversarial/Difficult - (12)
- Antiquated - (16)
- Apathetic - (1)
- Below Average - (1)
- Benefits - (1)
- Blunt - (1)
- Bureaucracy - (1)
- Caring - (1)
- Changing - (2)
- Closed - (1)
- Condescending - (1)
- Confusing - (2)
- Customer-Oriented - (1)
- Dedicated - (2)
- Defensive - (1)
- Deficient - (2)
- Delegatory - (1)
- Dependable - (1)
- Director - (1)
- Disconnected - (3)
- Discounted - (1)
- Dispirited - (1)
- Distant - (2)
- Divided - (1)
- Dysfunctional - (25)
- Efficient - (1)
- Experienced - (1)
- Focused - (1)
- Fragmented - (1)
- Friendly - (14)
- Frustrating - (1)
- Functional - (1)
- Good Leadership - (1)
- Hardworking - (1)
- Helpful - (15)
- Improving - (2)
- Incompetent - (1)
- Incomplete - (1)
- Inconsistent - (5)
- Indecisive - (2)
- Indifferent - (3)
- Ineffective - (2)
- Inefficient - (5)
- Inflexible - (1)
- Knowledgeable - (8)
- Lack of Knowledge - (2)
- Lacking Resources - (3)
- Leaderless - (7)
- Learning - (1)
- Limited - (1)
- Manual - (1)
- Minimal - (1)
- Misguided - (1)
- Myopic - (1)
- Narrow-minded - (1)
- Necessary - (3)
- Negligent - (1)
- Nice - (1)
- Non-Trustworthy - (1)
- Not Respected - (1)
- Overwhelmed/Struggling - (15)
- Pedestrian - (1)
- Professional - (9)
- Reactive - (3)
- Regressive - (1)
- Resistant - (1)
- Resourceful - (2)
- Responsive - (9)
- Restricted - (1)
- Rigid - (2)
- Roadblock - (1)
- Scared - (2)
- Service-Oriented - (1)
- Slow/Stuck - (11)
- Taxed - (1)
- Understaffed - (14)
- Uneasy - (1)
- Unfriendly - (1)
- Unhelpful - (9)
- Unknown - (1)
- Unstable - (1)
- Unsupported - (1)
- Unsystematic - (1)
- Untrustworthy - (2)
- Useless - (2)

Please indicate three strengths of the Human Resources Department.

- Accessible – (2)
- Approachable – (2)
- Approachable / Accessible
- Availability – (4)

- Always seem available when needed
- Easy to contact – (2)
- Easy to work with, friendly staff
- Open Communications
- Telephone Access
- Accurate
- adaptive
- Tend to have candy available
- genuine compassion
- Most want the best for the employees
- Some care
- Consistent
- Courteous – (4)
- Friendliness/Friendly – (16)
- friendly with a couple of exceptions
- Individuals below the Director are friendly and truly want to help you in spite of their lack of direction.
- Nice – (2)
- personable
- Polite – (2)
- polite and friendly when there in person
- Some are pleasant people
- Working level staff polite and responsive to deal with.
- Commitment – (2)
- Dedicated
- Dedicated and Passionate Staff committed to improvement
- Dedication of staff
- diligent
- I can do much of it on-line with little interaction.
- Online portal to view paystubs
- Forms and information available on line.
- Clear in direction
- Efficient in record keeping
- Facilities
- They get by
- They help as much as they can in the areas they do work in.
- They try
- Withstanding of sheer volume
- Ability and desire to explain and assist with benefit related issues
- Always attempts to find correct information
- Answers questions
- Assistance with problems
- Being Supportive
- Current staff try hard to help
- Customer/employee Service
- Customer-oriented

- Good intentions
- Guidance
- Helpful – (3)
- Listen to problems to understand what is needed
- Most staff have a desire to help
- Some staff have strong customer service skills and ability
- Supportive – (2)
- Very helpful
- Will to help
- Willing – (2)
- Willing to help – (3)
- Willingness to try
- Completing a study to make it better
- Are a source of information
- Information sharing
- Informational – (2)
- Well informed
- Experience - most staff in current positions have many years of experience and expertise in their areas
- Institutional Knowledge
- Knowledgeable – (6)
- Knowledgeable and mostly friendly staff
- knows where to direct you to information
- Law Knowledge
- Most of the staff are well-trained in what they do
- Policy Knowledge
- Resourcefulness
- Seem to be knowledgeable in my experience
- Somewhat knowledgeable
- Tenure (in some positions)
- The bargaining agreement with the FOP
- Wealth of information
- Some long-term staff know many employees
- Strong support of Law Dep't (Jackie H.) to provide everyday guidance to HR leadership
- There is an opportunity for new leadership that can get us back to the pre-Moberg days
- Current personnel
- Employees
- Good working relationship with Debbie
- Personnel
- Staff
- Strong benefits specialist
- The people
- Implementation of policies
- Well explained policies
- Proactive
- Proactive in follow ups (when needed)

- Promoting employee involvement
- Professional – (6)
- Everyone is responsive to requests
- Good follow through
- Most are long-time employees which gives them the ability to respond quickly
- Quick response – (2)
- Reasonably fast responses to questions
- Responsive – (4)
- Several senior employees keep the ball rolling.
- Timely – (3)
- Will return your call
- Benefits administration – (5)
- Benefits and work comp staff very knowledgeable
- Employee Comp and Benefit Service
- Great benefits.
- Health/Fitness Reimbursement Annually (\$100)
- Insurance information
- Process benefits transactions
- Fair
- FLSA Requirements
- FMLA
- FMLA liaison is great to work with
- Job postings
- Pre-employment
- Recruitment
- Rarely, if ever, had payroll issues with employees
- Safety
- Safety and Risk Management administration
- Safety and wellness programs (safety fair)
- Safety Committee work
- Safety Training – (2)
- The Safety Fair.
- The safety training every year is well-organized
- They put on a great safety fair
- Training
- Work comp area seems well managed
- Thorough
- Provide good safety training
- Some trust City employees
- And everything I hear is negative
- Can't identify any strengths.
- Don't know any because I don't interact enough with them
- They generally don't meddle

What three opportunities for improvement do you recommend for the Human Resources Department?

- Be open to new ways of approaching a problem
- Be open to, as opposed to obstructing progress with processes, process improvement, applications, and proper implementation of procedures because "that's not the way we've always done it"
- Flexibility – (2)
- More staff – (2)
- New Work Comp (2)
- Obtain more resources
- Staffing - no help available around lunch
- They are understaffed for the amount of work HR should perform for an organization of this size.
- FTE's
- Hire qualified and proficient staff to replacement some of the current staff.
- Activities - Would love to see more to bring us together
- Allow sick/vacation hour gifting
- Be more on board with preventative health.
- Benefits study
- Expansion service levels/increased ability to solve problems
- Focus less on tchotchkes that only end up in the landfill and waste city's precious dollars
- Provide comprehensive HR services as outlined in Question #3.
- They need to be advocates for employees, this includes bringing policy issues to the city manager for change
- Applying benefits to the benefit of the employee
- Needs a better wellness program.
- Promote healthier work force
- Promote the health programs Parks and Recreation already provide for health to city employees.
- Capacity
- HR could perform better if there was more support from the organization. I feel that even with the best staff, the best director, that HR would fail given the culture. The departments have too much influence into HR processes and procedures. Department have become accustomed to working around HR.
- Keep your level of involvement with other dept. status quo
- Need to work together as a team
- Announcements - Easy to forget about them
- Better communication to all city employees
- Better communication. Improve communication of policy changes, processes, forms and events through email and web. More emails and web postings with details.
- Better understanding of health care benefits
- Communicate better. Need more than a few communications a month. The weekly bulletins aren't cutting it.
- Communicate more
- Communicate new hires/departures better
- COMMUNICATION
- Communication Methods
- Conduct more employee satisfaction surveys

- Create one email address for all info
- Inform employees of changes in HR personnel so they know who to contact.
- Internal communications
- Marketing their services
- More connections with employees who do not have frequent contact with HR
- More frequent communication with employees through weekly or monthly news letters
- They do not provide information on resources provided to humans
- Safety information
- Confidentiality
- Be more consistent
- Become consistent in dealing with issues
- Being more consistent with the City policies
- Consistency
- Need clear direction on completing forms and consistency
- Assign a generalist to public safety that understands the unique characteristics of the job when it comes to recruitment, safety, training, FSLA , schedules, and benefits.
- Availability of resources (HR specific, not benefit)
- A big concern is that due to existing staffing levels, and lack of cross training, and siloed job assignments, there are 'single points' of failure if HR staff transitioned.
- Build depth through cross training
- Cross training among staff to provide backups for positions
- Cross training so that we have depth if someone is gone.
- Manage the culture of the organization
- Organizational Alignment/Culture
- Should not comment on staff's attire.
- Should not partake in whispering or gossip-like conversations. This can make them look untrustworthy.
- Be friendly. They seem to be not on our team
- Be polite and collaborative
- Become employee centric
- Better customer service skills when dealing with employees
- CUSTOMER SERVICE
- Engage all departments equally.
- Focused more on benefiting the employee
- Goals oriented customer service focus/approach
- Improve support for personnel injured at work
- Interaction with HR, particularly dealing with employee issues, is constantly adversarial.
- Internal and external customer service focus
- Not to be defensive when an employee is injured otj
- Return HR to an employee first department
- They seem to have an adversarial relationship with employees.
- Treat other departments as 'customers', and use customer service in your response to those other departments
- Treat union employees and general employees equally
- Update intranet

- Better HR web site. I have had to spend a lot of time trying to find information on the site, and the "search" function is not that helpful.
- Easier to locate items on intranet
- Easier to navigate hr page
- Employee file information shouldn't be hand written
- More on line options
- Seek guidance from ITS in using technology to increase efficiency
- Should ensure that all documents that are on the Internet and Intranet are current; including applications
- Stop using Fax for ANYTHING
- The process to get an employee a network account is burdensome; department seems to be lacking communication with ITS department
- Use HR system to potential training and educational tracking
- Assist more with disciplinary issues
- Better support for holding employees responsible for their actions
- Fire people when necessary- I.E. employees that lie
- Efficiency
- Empathy
- More fulfilling engagement with employees
- Most non managerial employees could not identify an HR representative.
- User friendly forms
- Application and negotiation process could be better.
- Assistance in hiring
- Hiring process is SLOW!
- Hiring process, Marketing job openings
- Hiring screening
- Job descriptions submitted not what is on file
- Make sure we screen for felons before hiring
- More timely entry of new hires (versus once a week) for ee#
- Need clear direction for posting for vacancy
- Need clear direction on hiring and roles in the hiring process
- Onboarding
- Quicker process from job offer to start date
- Recruiting options seem limited
- Recruiting/hiring of new employees
- Recruitment
- Recruitment / hiring support
- Recruitment advertising needs updated drastically
- Response time is slow on hiring issues
- Research for comparisons in job descriptions, salary and benefits
- Take a larger role in recruitment
- Timeliness of activating new employees
- Clarifying function or role
- Could use strategic plan for what the department wants to be, philosophies (hiring, etc.), how they operate, etc.
- Develop an HR Strategic Plan and work it!

- Establish defined roles and responsibilities.
- HR in LS does not view it's role as there to help the employee. They view themselves as an arm of management.
- Improved visibility and awareness of role amongst staff
- Never sure who is responsible for what functions
- The organization needs HR help in protecting the corporate interests. Some HR decisions are made in the interest of the employee which are not necessarily in the interests of the public/organization.
- They need to set some unified direction for all City Employees. Where do we want to be as a city; Top tier, middle of the road or bottom tier? Do we really want a top tier FD but a bottom tier core? This seems to be the direction. Set a target for all City Employees and stick with it. One group should not be donating to support the other.
- Stop using 'practice' or 'that's the way I always do it,' as an argument for properly following policy
- Streamline the process
- Modernization – (2)
- Increase depth of knowledge
- Increase knowledge of human resource management. Stay up to date on regulations and best practices. Incorporate them in our written policies.
- Knowledge – (2)
- More aware of reporting requirements
- More knowledgeable of insurance & pension requirements
- Organized labor issues
- Develop HR leadership with the employee being #1
- HR Director with knowledge to provide direction for issues, be proactive with issues
- Hire a leader as the HR Director to evaluate and update old procedures
- Hire a true HR professional to lead
- Increased Leadership
- Leadership – (3)
- Leadership by someone experienced and qualified to direct the department.
- Need strong leadership from an experienced HR expert
- No one in Human Resources has ability to incite change for improvement. Appears everyone's "hands are tied"
- Support the HR Staff (There's NO Leadership)
- The department seems to be lacking leadership
- They have had, and continue to have, lack of competent leadership.
- Abide with the federal govt rules on leaves
- Change the evaluation system/forms
- Create new evaluations procedure
- Make redoing/revamping employee evaluations a priority, followed by training for all supervisors on effectively evaluating employee performance with the new system
- New Evaluation System
- Simplify the performance evaluations
- The city's performance evaluation process needs a revamp
- Attempt to make policies and management more uniform across the organization
- HR policy interpretation

- Improve process for change submission and update written policies to reflect advice that is given as "verbal policy" or just the way HR wants it done.
- New Policies & Procedures
- Policy, Evaluation, and form updates
- Redefine outdated policies/procedures
- Seems like some policy (training requirements for PT employees) is unnecessary
- Separate Procedures from Policy
- Update policies, processes and procedures
- Updated personnel policies
- Be proactive on upcoming issues in the workplace
- Become proactive rather than reactive
- Proactive - continual improvement mindset
- Proactive approach to compensation
- Proactive communication
- Proactivity in response to impacts of trends in municipal human resources
- Clear process employee personnel actions
- Reorganization
- Reorganization and cross training
- Follow through on promises.
- Have timelines for completing tasks
- Responsiveness
- Timeliness
- Faster completion of personnel matters
- Faster process from job posting to interview
- Faster process from vacancy to job posting
- Quicker
- Quicker call back times
- The training program could be broadened.
- Better education to employees and supervisors
- Better FMLA training on when a person qualifies, how and who conducts tracking, and any forms that go along with that
- Better safety training
- Better supervisory and HR-specific law training, including when a work injury is Work Comp. and when it is not.
- Develop more training programs
- Educate people on FMLA
- Education of staff on policies and procedures
- Interview training
- Investigative training
- More realistic training expectations for PT staff
- More Training
- Need to provide training beyond just safety training; perhaps hire a training director and focus on training for current employees including supervisor training, leadership, labor relations, evaluating employee performance, effective coaching strategies, etc.
- Offer in house supervisor training
- Offer the safety fair on different days if we have to have it

- PROVIDE BENEFITS TRAINING
- Provide more clarity and training on policies and procedures
- PROVIDE SUPERVISION TRAINING
- Provide supervisors with adequate (or maybe even better than just adequate) tools, information and support to manage our staff.
- Provide supervisors with bi-annual training
- Provide training to trainers to facilitate employee development
- Put all of the trainings online and easily accessible
- Replace Safety Fair with computer based training
- Someone that can lead me through the HR processes that I only do about once a year.
- Standardized program for safety training
- Supervisor support / education / training
- Supervisory and leadership training / communication
- Support for Supervisors needs to improve. I have seen core general employees fired for cause. I have seen IMA represented employees get away with too much because we are afraid the Union will file suit. If the cause is there, let them sue us. The inconsistencies between core general and represented employees must stop.
- Take responsibility for city-wide training other than safety
- Train Supervisors to lead, mentor, and control
- Training – (2)
- Training access on the intranet
- Training needs to improve. We have new supervisors all of the time who are thrown into the role with no training. While we have some good subject experts, a 30 minute PowerPoint on diversity, workers comp, etc. is not the solution. Get a qualified training consultant on board to help prepare new supervisors, as well as keeping experienced supervisors up to speed. What about some quality leadership training. How can supervisors better themselves to better their work unit to better the City? We need bigger thinkers, not people to train us how to complete a transaction report.
- Training resources specific to our jobs.
- Update, streamline and train on accident reporting
- Believe that the employees aren't trying to get one over on the City
- Develop a cultural change based on employee trust
- Don't assume everyone is lying about their injury
- Employees don't trust HR because HR doesn't trust City employees
- ASK NOT ASSUME HOW MY EMPLOYEES WORK
- Learn about the fire department
- Learn to understand the disciplinary process of certain department
- Listen
- Listen to departments and legal advice, when they say a processes is broken or a decision is inaccurate, and provides constructive feedback
- Take time to Learn about other department positions/ responsibilities
- They don't understand how individual departments operate
- Understand the challenges/intricacies of shift work
- Understanding
- Understanding of shift work. Not everyone works 8-5.
- Work Comp division needs overhaul

- Work comp provider improvement
- Work compensation handling
- Benchmarking industry best practices in delivery of HR
- More organization
- Most HR duties are delegated.

What human resource services does your department need that it is not currently receiving from the Human Resource Department?

- Analytics related to work force.
- Research on competitive compensation
- Care for employees when they get injured and not treating the employee like an enemy when dealing with Work Comp issues.
- Open line of communication.
- Represent ALL employees, not just a chosen few.
- Share information about changes in hr personnel so we know who to contact when there's a change.
- Someone that understands the value of our employees and the compensation required to acquire qualified employees.
- Consistency
- Consistently follow how we hire new employees
- Building organizational culture
- Discipline support
- Clear direction when filling a vacancy
- Education on FMLA, review applications before forwarding
- Faster entry of seasonal employees into system
- Filling open positions
- Hiring
- More personnel
- Recruitment
- Recruitment for professional positions is severely lacking
- Timely vetting of new employees
- We need proactive recruitment support for hard to fill positions. Structured training for employee selection would be good. A mechanism to track and manage employee training, certification tracking, and employee development would be really helpful.
- We need to get a temp agency involved to recruit staff quicker
- A friendly liasion
- A go to person in HR that is proactive and is knowledgeable to discuss employee issues
- Someone available for evening and midnight officers
- Performance Management including better process for annual reviews and addressing poor performers. Recruitment mechanism beyond the standard postings in paper and city website. Supervisor training.
- Access to electronic or webinar training that meets all requirements
- Core policy, supervisory, hiring practices training
- Employee Development and Training
- HR Training

- I realize they are lacking staff, but additional training in the area of employee relations and discipline would help.
- PROVIDING SUPERVISOR AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING TO THE DEPARTMENTS
- Recruiting, leadership training, benefit and policy training
- Standardized safety training program -computer based
- SUPERVISOR TRAINING
- Supervisor training.
- Supervisor training; better onboarding program for new employees
- Supervisor/Leadership training
- Supervisory training
- Training – (4)
- Training beyond safety
- Training on benefits and how they apply
- Training on HR policy
- Training on personnel management; labor laws
- Training on what benefits are available to the employee in regards to worker's compensation
- Training Opportunities - Bringing in consultants to facilitate discussions. Providing webinar opportunities. More instruction on supervising/disciplining staff. We were given a handbook to look through, but I think some of those policies need to be taught.
- Training, direction, disciplinary support as it pertains to IAM employees, consistency.
- To plan, direct and coordinate administrative, training and recruiting functions.
- For them to understand what our department does
- Be the owners of City, policy, AND follow them. They need to own the time and attendance application.
- Clear Policies
- Current HR Policies & Procedures
- Defined procedures
- Information/ Stance on transgender employee rights
- It would be nice if HR acted as the central repository for all organizational policies and procedures. Currently, we lack one central spot for this information. To make the issue more difficult, departments have 'adopted' 'departmental' policies and procedures that sometimes are in conflict with HR policy. As an example, pay allowances are granted inconsistently. Also, many of these departmental policies have been put in place without a discussion with MT, City Manager, etc. Additionally, I feel that our supervisors are woefully unprepared and equipped to fulfill their duties. The lowest level supervisor has not been received the necessary training to effective.
- Retiree insurancewe have no policy in place now.
- Better Wellness Program
- A work comp person that understands the role of public safety personnel

Name one change the Human Resources Department could make that would improve service to the City organization.

- A generalist/work comp staff member assigned to public safety.
- Additional staff
- Additional support help for Debbie
- Streamline Lawson HR Reporting
- Centralize ownership of processes and procedures to ensure consistency and efficiency

- Overhauling the pay structure
- Simplify the pay structure.
- Communicate their role
- Communicate with all employees better.
- Improved communication
- MAKE IT INVITING TO APPROACH THEM
- More communication
- Organizational communication - processes - timelines
- So many, but let's start with better communication. Each staff members communicates in a silo rather than as an HR department.
- We put our jobs on the line and when we are injured, they are rude, difficult to deal with and ineffective. There are many employees who never turn in injuries because they don't want to deal with the current people in charge of Workman's Comp.
- One email address or phone number instead of trying to figure out who handles what
- Improve employee assistance program
- As an organization, we need to get away from Corporate Care, very dissatisfied with the service they provide.
- Adopt a consistent approach to placing adds, screening applicants and preparing for interviews
- Faster entry of seasonal employees into system
- Fix the hiring process
- Getting new hires vetted and through so they can start in a timely manner
- Modernize recruitment process
- More timely entry of new hires into Lawson so that ee # can be obtained for timeclocks (reduce manual entry of time for payroll processing)
- Onboarding
- Quicker hiring process
- Recruitment
- Redesign the onboarding process to be more efficient by combining other internal service needs (ITS, Fleet, CBS) into the process and making it easier to follow for supervisors.
- Start using a temp agency first rather than direct hire. Try before you buy it.
- Taking new hire paperwork everyday.
- Timeliness of activating new employees
- Each individual needs to understand their role and work closely with each other.
- Educate on a frequent basis on what HR does and how it can help
- Having greater understanding of organizational and department needs.
- HR is designed to assist the employee and protect the employer from abusing employees and incurring liability. That is the opposite role that HR in LS takes.
- Interaction
- More employee supportive as compared to risk management
- Treat all employees as an asset
- Willingness to help departments find solutions
- WORK WITH DEPARTMENTS
- Collaboration
- Need a labor relations team
- Attitude. Lead by example.
- A direction from leadership

- Again, proven leadership from a person with HR experience
- Get a true HR professional to provide leadership and direction to the HR Department and let this person do their job.
- Hire a competent director
- Hire a leader
- Hire a true HR professional to lead and support
- Hire an HR Manager that actually knows the job
- Improve processes using six sigma
- Leadership and reorganization
- More power to make improvements
- Overhaul the leadership and direction of the Department
- Trustworthy leadership..
- Bring the job performance evaluations up to date
- XXXX demonstrates a negative attitude towards the employees, assuming the worst of them and impacting personnel morale...
- Improve process for change submission and update written policies.
- Interpretation of policy- not just referred to where policy can be found or told department may have their own policy
- Update personnel policies
- Employee Perception of Helpfulness
- Quicker Response
- Scale back on safety training and focus more on employee retention
- All forms available online through intranet
- Better online resources specific to HR
- Create an online application portal; this would highlight and eliminate applicants.
- Develop more information on the intranet
- Enhance the website tab so it is easier to navigate, contains frequently sought information on benefits, work comp., FMLA, pay, benefits, etc.
- I'd like to see it modernize in terms of their processes and forms.
- Modernization
- Modify self-service portal to be more accurate and thorough
- Broaden their ability to provide training
- Improved access to training information
- More online training opportunities
- Offering training
- Training
- Training for management and supervisors
- Training of supervisors at all levels
- Training opportunities to increase merit and expertise
- Better Wellness Program
- Better worker's comp relations
- Mandatory drug testing after accidents
- Medical / Workers Comp
- New Work Comp liaison. Current employee is very obstructive and personnel have trust issues.
- New Work Comp Representative
- Work comp provider change.

- It's small and essentially just processes paperwork.

In three to five years, what do you want the City's Human Resources Department to be known for internally? What should their "reputation" be?

- "We will make the process easy for you"
- An internal service focused on the needs of the organization.
- Be knowledgeable of the functions of each job position within the City Departments
- Partnering with departments they serve; willingness to change as needed to meet the demands of the organization; proactively providing HR services; communicating timely and effectively to all employees
- The confident, organized, go-to department that spends time focusing on strategy more than reacting
- A department dedicated to acquiring, training, enhancing and retaining the most highly qualified employees, and treating them with the upmost respect and professionalism.
- I would like them to get more involved in the recruitment process. screening and fileting applicants before they get to management interviews.
- They should be able to manage the HR Management system with the data for all employees
- To help recruit and retain a professional, well respected staff City wide.
- Efficiently serving the customer
- A department that advocates for the employee as an asset of the organization and develops and administers policies intended to that promote a safe and efficient work environment. Be nice!
- Advocate for employees; has progressive hiring/promotion philosophies and training programs
- Advocates for employee
- An advocate not only for the City but for the employee as well
- An advocate for the employee
- Being employee focused
- Champion for the employee who can help with clear concise information. Supervisors can find employee training; absentee; and educational records online. Consistent processes in place for firing and disciplinary actions.
- Efficient, supportive, professional, and not always trying to damage employees.
- Employee friendly
- Employee-friendly, knowing they represent the City but with the attitude they are there to help the employees
- Employees first
- Genuine concern for the welfare of city employees
- Supporting and representing the employees.
- Supportive of the workforce and become a voice for fair employment and pay
- Take care of the employee workforce
- That they are for the employee, and not for political reasons
- That they help the employees
- They support employees, train supervisors, and mentor managers to build a company culture that is consistent across departments.
- To help employees and not have others think they are only there to discipline or refuse benefits
- We work for the employee
- Enrichment of all City employees' value to COLS
- Approachable

- Efficiencies, availability
- Excellent Customer Service
- Exemplary customer service and professionalism; seen as a location where solid advice can be found regarding all aspects of employment
- Fabulous customer service to all employees and departments
- FRIENDLY AND INVITING
- Service to the other departments.
- To be helpful instead of adversarial
- Took care of the employee
- A lot of moving parts
- High Performing. My hope is that HR serves as an organizational example for continuous improvement through strategic planning and a 'plan, do, act, check' mentality or similar management method.
- Better Wellness Program
- Innovative and open to change.
- UNDERSTANDING THE LAW
- Competence
- Consistent resource for information
- Employee Resource
- Familiar, knowledgeable, efficient
- Helpful – (3)
- Helpful and quick
- Helpful, fair, professional, problem solvers
- Helpful, informative and fair to all employees.
- Helpful, knowledgeable.
- Helpful, knowledgeable and resourceful
- It's always there when you need help.
- Knowledgeable, but able to communicate facts in a friendly way.
- Knowledgeable, Competent, Problem Solvers, Analytical, Supportive and Transparent
- Proficient and competent
- Provider of accurate knowledge in a proactive manner
- Supporting, educating and training their employees.
- Supportive; find ways to work through issues instead of being obstructive
- Leaders.
- Organizational leader in developing positive culture
- As an outstanding branch at lees summit
- Great Service to city employees
- Outstanding service
- Providing the utmost assistance to City employees
- 'Happy' to go to HR for getting something done, as opposed to 'required' to go to HR for getting something done.
- Having a positive relationship with staff
- Positive reflection of the culture of the City of Lee's Summit
- Proactive
- Proactive and responsive
- Proactive resource for all

- Proactive, solution based department
- A respected department
- A smart and flexible/dynamic department that is responsive to the organization's changing environment
- Responsive, helpful, reactive to new ideas
- They are helpful and cross trained on all duties
- Timely
- Same as now
- Same as they are now, accommodating, a source of helpful information.
- Transparent, firm but fair
- A trusted and knowledgeable service from which city employees and supervisors can seek guidance.
- A trusted source of human resources information and services.
- Doing the right thing
- Friendly, trustworthy and involved.
- Someone we can go to that we can trust
- Trust & that they CARE about our employees
- Trustworthy with the focus on employee wellbeing
- Progressive pay with aggressive raises for everyone, not just union employees.

Is there anything else you would like the consultants to know about the Human Resources Department?

- Completely out of touch with hiring practices outside of this organization. Employee salary compression is a huge issue. We cannot continue making it worse every time we hire. Bad decisions of the past should not perpetuate bad practices of the present.
- There is no back up person for many of the position, if someone leaves, either cross training is needed or additional staff who can perform duties in someone's absence
- Non-HR departments don't deal with HR forms on a daily basis, and often have received little training on what forms or how to complete them. Sometimes when the forms arrive incomplete or improperly completed HR freaks. Relax! Unless someone is dead or a building collapsed everything can be fixed in due time.
- They are not readily available to anyone but day shift employees.
- They are not thought highly of at this time
- While I have personally had a generally positive experience working with HR, I know many others who have not and have been very frustrated; our dept. leaders often seem frustrated, stuck and not supported - try to implement career ladders and get little to no support; challenged when wanting to make staff changes such as promotions and during hiring process
- While most of the HR department is very helpful in answering questions, the department seems to be more about protecting City interests that providing resources to the employees. In cases involving workers compensation, it has become common place for employees to retain a lawyer for each claim because of the handling of these cases in such a negative manner.
- Work comp consistency and quality of care is lacking
- HR has been delegated to individual departments
- It seems that there has been a dependence on legal and administrative department staff to fulfill HR functions.

- Many Departments have had to perform HR services internally due to the current state of the HR department. To be successful, improvements will need to be observed early and consistently made over the next 3 to 5 years.
- They shouldn't let individual departments dictate what HR will and will not do
- Good group of people, they do the best they can given the fact they have had little direction for several years (even with a HR Director in place)
- Great division just needs to be streamlined/modernized
- Great people!
- There are good staff there, that work their tails off. Others that are not helpful in moving things forward. Previous managers did not manage, lead, or address issues in the department, and they have been left to grow and get more ingrained.
- They strive to be helpful.
- Doesn't seem to have a clear mission & vision for the dept; no clearly defined role within the organization
- It could have a stronger presence in the organization.
- Overall, the HR department needs more direction. This lack of direction may stem from a bigger problem within the City, involving both the Elected Officials and the Administration Department. I have never heard where we want to be as a city. This was never even brought up as part of the ongoing compensation study. How can we possibly get somewhere if we don't know where we are headed? Why is there so much disparity between core general, IAFF, IAM and FOP? We need a strong leader in the HR Department who can ask these questions, set a direction and stay the course until they have answers. Continuing with the weak leaders we have had in the past will ensure the HR Department continues to be the do-nothing department they have become.
- Past thoughts by some employees is that HR was only there to discipline and argue benefits. In the past, some have not wanted to contact or use HR to assist in employee issues. Not my thoughts but some I have heard from others. Believe they are moving in right direction.
- There is not a clear message or direction. Department is understaffed.
- Unrepresented employees (core general) do not have a support system or advocate typically provided by HR. Core general employees are not supported, do not have adequate resources, etc. HR does not appear to have any leadership or understanding of their role, no redundancy, no succession planning; it's not a developed HR Dept.
- when XXXX was here he said he wanted to get human resources to change their reputation and actually help the employees. At least the change was voiced, but he wasn't here long enough to have an impact.
- While intentions seem to be good it seems as though the employee doesn't come first. More widespread transparency of city expectations and positive interaction with the employee to achieve the desires of the city.
- HR is a bumbling extension of management.
- HR need an HR director that is for the employee's
- Just need stronger direction
- Needs a "leader" to organize and establish organizational culture
- Past HR Directors were more worried about serving themselves and management instead of the entire work force.
- The organization needs a strong HR leader who is willing to take the department to the next level, including addressing the needed staffing changes to get there.
- Unfortunately, they have been without a rudder for a long time and need a more experienced person at the helm who can lead them in a positive direction.

- We have not had a true professional HR manager on over 20 years. Get a real professional please.
- I would like to reiterate the concern with Management Team. While everyone may be saying, HR needs to be fixed. My concern is that once a conflict appears, the Directors will act as an adversary. I don't think they know what it truly means to them to have a strong HR Department.
- It would be great to have an HR department that was up-to-date on current HR trends. It may be due to lack of staff, but they seem to be out of touch with current trends.
- They are very ingrained in, 'we've always done it this way', new leadership needs to be embraced and they need to get on board with a new direction (hopefully)
- They need to stop using old forms/emails/processes that don't make sense any more. For example, upon hiring a new employee, HR emails the hiring managers a Word document/form called "new employee setup request". This form asks many of the same questions that the newer electronic transaction form already asked them.
- When hiring a person between HR, ITS and Finance it can take 2-4 weeks before a person is fully operational. NovaTime, viewing paycheck stubs, getting network logins so the sooner HR can get them added to Lawson the faster the process will work.
- For whatever reason HR seems to have a negative attitude toward the PD.
- I don't understand policies because HR develops convoluted verbal policies and interpretations that often contradict what is written in the policy manual. Interpretations and practices seem to be made up on the spot. HR rarely refers to written policies; typically, the reference is to what someone heard 3rd hand from former employees no longer working with the City. HR leadership has no understanding of the HR community as whole; completely out of touch with recent trends in compensation, benefits, flex-work schedules, etc. Rigidly locked into the 1980s (or earlier) in regards to employee relations, except that HR has no backbone to support supervisors in disciplinary matters. Supervisors have learned that the first step in a disciplinary issue is to meet with the Law Department to get any sort of support instead of caving to the employees because HR is afraid of getting sued. It has been nearly impossible to get HR support to discipline or terminate employees even when they have committed a serious violation. However, when going to Law Department first, we have been able to appropriately discipline employees. Conversely, HR refuses to allow Department Directors and Deputies the latitude to reward employees. Employees cannot be promoted or have salaries administratively adjusted when they earn new credentials, obtain licensed or other meritorious achievements that warrant promotion or reward. We can give employees 2 movies tickets or a gift card, but we cannot promote unless we go through an arduous budget process that takes 6 to 9 months to complete if the employee so happen to qualify for promotion in the fall. If the window is missed, then promotion is delayed at least a year. HR does not provide any type of training, outside of annual safety training and a brief new employee orientation. The department has for many years taken on our own training for equipment, jobsite safety, work zone safety, new supervisors, leadership, etc. HR training support is generally very rigid and does not cooperate when trying to provide outside certifications employees earn as required. Often, those certifications require more extensive training than what is provided at the annual safety fair, but HR won't accept them. So at times very rigid and inflexible. HR leadership does not understand fair compensation. Different jobs have different skills and qualifications, but we have been told that an engineer must be paid the same as an Animal control manager, Parks Superintendent, etc. because they are in the same pay grade. Distinctly different jobs, skills and qualifications. HR states that we cannot compare engineers in our organization to the engineering market in our region. As a result, our technical staff is paid 15% to 28% below market. HR does not value experience outside the organization, so we have been told we cannot offer a person with 30 years of experience more money than some in the

organization with 12 years of experience. I would argue this could be construed as age discrimination when HR states "you don't have to hire someone with that much experience" after the individual was selected based on the standard application and interview process. HR leadership does not listen to supervisors or Directors. I cannot remember the last time the HR leadership agreed with an action by a Director, or said "Not sure how to do that, but let us figure out what we can do." HR's decision making is based solely on fear of not wanting to get sued, instead of focusing on what can we do for the employees/what can we do to help. The individual clerks/staff in the HR are generally very knowledgeable and helpful when processing items. However, there is no overlap. If an individual is sick, on vacation, or retires, HR cannot perform those functions. For example, to run payroll, the City has to hire a retiree to come in on temp basis when the payroll clerk goes on vacation. When the benefits person is gone, someone in HR answers the phone and tells they will have to wait until that person gets back from vacation to answer the question. The internal communications within HR is dysfunctional at best. To me, that is another indication that HR has no qualified or viable leadership.

- There has been a long history of HR for the City being focused on the protection of the city at the expense of the employee. This is seen in the policies that have been established, the issues surrounding pay structures and subsequent disparity, and the application of discipline. Currently I do not feel that the employees will trust anyone in the leadership position in HR, or really any of the departments with our current city manager in his position. There is a significant amount of distrust in him, and it seems others appointed to department director positions in the city serve to fulfill his agenda, and if they are in disagreement, or show true genuine leadership abilities, they are quickly ousted from the organization. It is safe to say that i have no confidence in XXXX to make decisions in the best interest of the employees, including the direction of the HR department.
- Under staffed
- I have been critical of the Work Comp issues but it is an absolute critical issue with our City. The work comp representative acts as if the employee can't be trusted.
- It's ridiculous the City thinks we should just feel lucky to have a job.
- No real complaints. I've always been received and helped the few times we've interacted.

Appendix B: Sample Personnel Policy Manual Table of Contents

- Organizational Chart
- City Directory (Contact and Location Information)
- The City of Great Falls
- How the City Government Works
- Welcome to the City of Great Falls
- Section 1 Organizational Philosophy
 - Leadership Philosophy
 - Vision Statement
 - Mission Statement
- Section 2 Introduction and General Information
 - 2.1 The Employment Relationship
 - 2.2 Purpose of the Personnel Policy Manual
 - 2.3 Applicability of the Personnel Policy Manual
 - 2.4 Format and Maintenance of the Personnel Policy Manual
 - 2.5 Bulletin Boards
- Section 3 Administration
 - 3.1 Employee Orientation
 - 3.2 Personnel File
 - 3.3 Equal Employment Opportunity
 - 3.4 Recruitment Guidelines
 - 3.5 Job Descriptions
 - 3.6 Management Rights
 - 3.7 Department Head Responsibilities
 - 3.8 Supervisor Responsibilities
- Section 4 Ethics in the Workplace
 - 4.1 Ethics Policy
 - 4.2 Ethical Standards
 - 4.3 Nepotism
 - 4.4 Conflict of Interest
 - 4.5 Confidential Information
 - 4.6 Political Activity
 - 4.7 Public Statements
- Section 5 Employment Policies
 - 5.1 Employee Classification
 - 5.2 Probationary Period
 - 5.3 Driver's License and Driving Record Requirements
 - 5.4 Scheduling of Work
 - 5.5 Break Policy
 - 5.6 Smoking Policy
 - 5.7 Meal Period
 - 5.8 Employee Parking
 - 5.9 Performance Reviews
 - 5.10 Layoff of Employees
 - 5.11 Recall of Employees
 - 5.12 Exit Interviews

- 5.13 Loss or Damage of Personal Property
- Section 6 Harassment in the Workplace
 - 6.1 Harassment
- Section 7 Violence in the Workplace
 - 7.1 Purpose
 - 7.2 Reporting Violations
 - 7.3 Threats
 - 7.4 Property Crimes
 - 7.5 Physical Attacks
 - 7.6 General Policy
- Section 8 Substance Abuse in the Workplace
 - 8.1 Purpose
 - 8.2 Drug-Free Workplace
 - 8.3 Substance Abuse Standards
- Section 9 Employee Conduct
 - 9.1 Standards of Conduct
 - 9.2 Outside Employment
 - 9.3 Personal Conduct Outside the Workplace
 - 9.4 Dress Code Standards
 - 9.5 Personal Phone Calls and Electronic Device Use
 - 9.6 Cellular Phone Use
 - 9.7 Mail
 - 9.8 Theft
 - 9.9 Restricted Areas
 - 9.10 Social Media
- Section 10 Compensation
 - 10.1 Pay Period and Hours
 - 10.2 Deductions from Paycheck
 - 10.3 Error in Pay
 - 10.4 Time Records
 - 10.5 Overtime
 - 10.6 Salary Plan
 - 10.7 Voluntary Termination of Employment
- Section 11 Benefits
 - 11.1 Retirement
 - 11.2 Paid Leave of Absence
 - 11.3 Unpaid Leave of Absence
 - 11.4 Group Insurance Coverage
 - 11.5 Flexible Spending Plan
 - 11.6 Deferred Compensation
 - 11.7 Education Assistance
 - 11.8 Wellness
- Section 12 Risk Management
 - 12.1 Safety and Loss Control Program
 - 12.2 Workers' Compensation
 - 12.3 Seat Belt Use and Compliance with Traffic Laws
- Section 13 Technology Policies

- 13.1 Departmental Oversight
- 13.2 Hardware
- 13.3 Computer Software
- 13.4 File Backups
- 13.5 Training
- 13.6 Internet Access
- 13.7 E-mail Use
- 13.8 E-mail Etiquette
- 13.9 Internet and E-mail Monitoring
- 13.10 Remote Access to City's Network
- Section 14 Problem Resolution and Grievance Procedure
 - 14.1 Problem Resolution Policy and Counseling
 - 14.2 Employee Problem Resolution Procedure
- Section 15 Disciplinary Policy
 - 15.1 Discipline Defined
 - 15.2 Good Cause for Discipline
 - 15.3 Disciplinary Responsibilities
 - 15.4 Discipline Steps
- Section 16 Travel and Expense Policies
 - 16.1 Expense Reimbursement
 - 16.2 Meal Reimbursement
 - 16.3 Transportation Reimbursement
 - 16.4 Other Business Expense Reimbursement
 - 16.5 Travel Advance
 - 16.6 Travel Requisition Form
 - 16.7 Coordinated Personal Travel
- Appendices
- Harassment Complaint and Authorization to Investigate
- Unpaid Leave of Absence Request Form
- Tuition Reimbursement Authorization and Contract
- Receipt and Acknowledgment of City of Great Falls Personnel Policy Manual

Appendix C: Sample Employee Handbook Table of Contents

- WELCOME
- VISION, VALUES, AND MISSION
- UNITED WAY
- INTRODUCTION
- EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM
- SECTION 1: POLICY ADMINISTRATION
 - RESERVATION OF MANAGEMENT RIGHTS
 - PERSONNEL RECORDS
 - POLICY UPDATE AND REVISIONS
- SECTION 2: CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT
 - 2-1. NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT
 - 2-2. EMPLOYEE RELATIONS
 - 2-3. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY
 - 2-4. HIRING OF RELATIVES
 - 2-5. RELATIONSHIPS IN THE WORKPLACE
 - 2-6. EMPLOYEE MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS
 - 2-7. IMMIGRATION LAW COMPLIANCE
 - 2-8. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
 - 2-9. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT
 - 2-10. EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES
 - 2-11. INTRODUCTORY PERIOD
 - 2-12. EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS
 - 2-13. EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION
 - 2-14. WORK SCHEDULES
 - 2-15. SMOKING AND TOBACCO USE AT WORK
 - 2-16. CODE OF CONDUCT
 - 2-17. ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE
 - 2-18. CODE OF ETHICS/HOTLINE
 - 2-19. UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT
 - 2-20. WORKPLACE VIOLENCE
 - 2-21. ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY
 - 2-22. GRATUITIES
 - 2-23. USE OF CITY FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, AND MATERIALS
 - 2-24. RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS
 - 2-25. SUPPLEMENTAL DEPARTMENT RULES
 - 2-26. ENFORCEMENT
 - 2-27. REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS AND BENEFITS
 - 2-28. EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION
- SECTION 3: PAY AND PERSONNEL ACTIONS
 - 3-1. PURPOSE
 - 3-2. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND STRUCTURE
 - 3-3. ESTABLISHING PAY RATES
 - 3-4. CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM
 - 3-5. FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT (FLSA) STATUS
 - 3-6. OVERTIME, COMPENSATORY (COMP) TIME, AND ALTERNATIVE SCHEDULES

- 3-7. WORKWEEK/WORKDAY
- 3-8. TIME RECORDS
- 3-9. PAY ADMINISTRATION
- 3-10. INCLEMENT WEATHER
- SECTION 4: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT
 - 4-1. GENERAL GUIDELINES
 - 4-2. OBJECTIVES
 - 4-3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS
 - 4-4. PERFORMANCE RECOGNITION
- SECTION 5: DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS
 - 5-1. OBJECTIVES
 - 5-2. REASONS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION
 - 5-3. DISCIPLINARY ACTION
 - 5-4. APPEALS AND INVESTIGATIONS
- SECTION 6: APPEALS, DISPUTE RESOLUTION, AND INVESTIGATIONS
 - 6-1. PURPOSE
 - 6-2. GENERAL PROVISIONS
 - 6-3. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE
 - 6-4. REBUTTALS TO WRITTEN WARNINGS
 - 6-5. APPEALS OF OTHER DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS
 - 6-6. APPEALS OF ALLEGED CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
- SECTION 7: HOLIDAYS, VACATION, AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE
 - 7-1. HOLIDAYS
 - 7-2. VACATION
 - 7-3. LEAVES OF ABSENCE
- SECTION 8: INSURANCE, RETIREMENT, AND OTHER BENEFITS
 - 8-1. RESPONSIBILITY
 - 8-2. ELIGIBILITY
 - 8-3. HEALTH AND DENTAL INSURANCE
 - 8-4. CONTINUATION OF COVERAGE
 - 8-5. LIFE INSURANCE AND DEATH BENEFITS
 - 8-6. FLEXIBLE BENEFIT SPENDING PLAN (SECTION 125)
 - 8-7. RETIREMENT
 - 8-8. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE
 - 8-9. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)
 - 8-10. WELLNESS PROGRAM
 - 8-11. DIRECT PAYROLL DEPOSIT
 - 8-12. LIFE THREATENING ILLNESSES
 - 8-13. WORKERS' COMPENSATION
 - 8-15. SAFETY PROGRAM
 - 8-16. RISK MANAGEMENT MANUAL
 - 8-17. ELECTION WORKERS
 - 8-18. MOVING EXPENSES
 - 8-19. CONTRACT WORKER STATUS
 - 8-20. CLOTHING ALLOWANCES AND PURCHASES
 - 8-21. TELECOMMUTING
- APPENDIX A: ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY FOR CDL

- APPENDIX C: MILITARY LEAVE
- APPENDIX D: RESOLUTION NO. 98-1068 (CODE OF ETHICS)
- APPENDIX E: DISCIPLINARY APPEAL HEARING PROCEDURES
- APPENDIX F: EMPLOYEE SAFETY PROGRAM
- APPENDIX G: CITY OF OLATHE CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS
- APPENDIX H: SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR THE CITY OF OLATHE