

FEDERAL PREVAILING RATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

582nd FPRAC

SHELDON FRIEDMAN, Chairperson, Presiding

Thursday, February 21, 2013

Room 5526
Office of Personnel Management
Washington, D.C. 20415**ATTENDANCE:****Members/Alternates:**Management Members:Mark Allen, OPM
Seth Shulman, DoD
Pamela Sokol, ArmyLabor Members:Bill Fenaughty, MTD
Jacque Simon, AFGE
Sarah Suszczyk, NAGE**Staff Specialists and Visitors:**Jerry Mikowicz, Designated Federal Officer, OPM
Madeline Gonzalez, OPM
Mike Eicher, OPM
Terri Wallace, OPM
Lindsay O'Keefe OPM
Jim Brady, DoD
Hank Rován, DoD
Karl Fendt, DoD
Darlene Freeman, Navy
Bernadette Wiggins, USACE
Michael Kidby, USACE**Recording Secretaries:** Mike Eicher and Terri Wallace

[Transcript prepared from digital audio produced by FPRAC.]

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P R O C E E D I N G

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to this, our 582nd meeting of the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee. My name is Sheldon Friedman, Chair of the Committee, and as usual, why don't we go around the room and introduce ourselves?

Mark, we'll start with you today.

MR. ALLEN: Mark Allen with OPM.

MR. SHULMAN: Seth Shulman, Department of Defense.

MS. SOKOL: Pamela Sokol, Department of the Army.

MS. SUSZCZYK: Sarah Suszczyk, National Association of Government Employees.

MS. SIMON: Jacque Simon, AFGE.

MR. FENAUGHTY: Bill Fenaughty, MTD and NFFE.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Thank you.

And if the folks on the sides could also introduce themselves, please.

MS. GONZALEZ: Madeline Gonzalez with OPM.

MR. MIKOWICZ: Jerry Mikowicz, OPM, Designated Federal Officer for this meeting.

MS. FREEMAN: I am Darlene Freeman, Department of Navy.

MS. WIGGINS: Bernadette Wiggins, Army Corps of Engineers.

MR. KIDBY: Mike Kidby, Army Corps of Engineers.

MR. BRADY: Jim Brady, DoD.

MR. FENDT: Karl Fendt, DoD.

MR. ROVAN: Hank Rován, DoD.

MR. EICHER: Mike Eicher, OPM.

MS. O'KEEFE: Lindsay O'Keefe, OPM.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay, thank you.

Terri, are we waiting for somebody on the phone?

MS. WALLACE: Yes, we are waiting for Ms. Crowe, but she has not yet joined the call to connect to the meeting.

MS. GONZALEZ: Dana Crowe is the representative from the Air Force

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: We'll get started then. If the Air Force can eventually participate by phone, we will connect them into the meeting.

So one quick announcement - as you know, we have a work group meeting scheduled for today, which will take place 10 minutes after the end of this meeting.

Have people had a chance to review the minutes of our December meeting, the 581st meeting?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Are there any further corrections?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Any objection to adopting that transcript?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Hearing no objection, it is adopted. Thank you.

That brings up old business, most of which we have pending in our work group. Item (c), Special Wage Schedule Pay Practice for FWS Lock and Dam Employees, 562-MGT-1, is something we are going to be discussing in the work group today, and as time permits after that, item (g), Proposal for FPRAC Review of the FWS Appropriated Fund and Nonappropriated Fund Operating Manuals, 575-AFGE-1. In regard to item (k), Definition of Vanderburgh County, Indiana, to a Nonappropriated Fund FWS Wage Area, 580-MGT-2, we have a new alternate analysis for this item listed under new business item (a) Alternate Analysis of Vanderburgh County, Indiana, 582-MGT-1. So unless someone wants to bring up other old business, we'll move on to the new business items. Is there any other old business item that people want to bring up

now?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: So that brings up the first item under new business: the Alternative Analysis of Vanderburgh County, Indiana, 582-MGT-1.

Mark, can you give us a summary of that, please?

MR. ALLEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman. After our last meeting in December, the Management members, under 582-MGT-1, took another look at the duty station for the employees in Vanderburgh County, Indiana. There are two non-appropriated fund Federal Wage System employees there working at the Evansville VA Outpatient Clinic. We found out that the Evansville VA Outpatient Clinic is actually a satellite activity of the Marion VA Medical Center in Williamson County, Illinois. Williamson County is an area of application county in the St. Clair, Illinois, NAF wage area.

So what we are recommending through this alternative analysis is that Vanderburgh County become part of the St. Clair wage area, so that the employees at the Evansville VA Outpatient Clinic are in the same wage area as the parent activity, the Marion VA Medical Center.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Thank you. Any questions or

discussion?

MS. SIMON: Could you remind us of what the original analysis suggested?

MR. ALLEN: Under the original analysis, we recommended defining Vanderburgh County based on the standard regulatory criteria analysis - without looking in detail at other activities nearby. Vanderburgh County was recommended to be defined to the Christian, KY-Montgomery, TN, wage area based on distance.

There was some discussion at the last meeting about whether distance should prevail in this case or some other organizational relationship.

MS. SIMON: And so you are changing your recommendation from --

MR. ALLEN: Yes. Vanderburgh County is not to be defined to the Christian-Montgomery, Tennessee, wage area anymore. It is to be defined to the St. Clair, Illinois, wage area.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Would the Labor members like to caucus?

MS. SIMON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. The Small Pendleton Room is

available for caucuses.

[Labor Members went to caucus off the record.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. We are back in session.

The Labor folks have returned from their caucus, and we are looking at 582-MGT-1. Any discussion or --

MS. SIMON: No, we're ready to vote.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay.

MS. SIMON: In favor.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: In favor, okay. Then there is consensus to adopt 582-MGT-1, and so we have done so. Okay, very good. Thank you.

That brings up item (b) under New Business, which is the Draft, FPRAC Annual Summary for 2012, 582-OC-1. Have people had a chance to take a look at that?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Anything that people would like to see changed?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: If people are comfortable adopting it, I would like to ask if there is a motion to do so.

MS. SIMON: I'd like to make a motion to adopt.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Second?

MR. ALLEN: I'll second.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. Any opposition to adopting our report? Did you want to discuss it, Seth? You look like you wanted to say something.

MR. SHULMAN: We have to rule by consensus. We can't vote because we don't have a quorum. That's my only observation.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Oh. Well, is there consensus to adopt this report?

MS. SIMON: A sense of the FPRAC.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: A sense of the FPRAC, if that's not an oxymoron. Never mind. Let's not go there.

[Laughter.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. Well, thank you.

Is there any other new business that you want to bring up?

MS. SIMON: Just an inquiry that has arisen and I'm not sure even where it's addressed. I couldn't find it in the Appropriated Fund Operating Manual. One of our locals inquired about criteria for classification of wage grade jobs, whether somebody has to spend time actually performing a task that their classification requires them to be certified in or is having the

worker possess the certification in a certain skill adequate to keep the grade classification.

It has to do with a particular case. It has to do with someone who is required in his job to have a certain kind of license to drive a very large truck, and now they are trying to downgrade him, saying that he doesn't utilize that skill frequently enough in the course of his duties, even though they may call on him from time to time, if it doesn't rise to a level of 25 percent of his working time, and he no longer should be in a classification that requires that license, even though sometimes they will ask him to do work that requires the license, but it is not 25 percent, and they came to me to ask whether that was legitimate. Do you know the answer?

MR. ALLEN: I don't know the definite answer to that myself. It is an inquiry best directed to our classification folks at OPM.

There may be written guidance on that available currently. So we will take a look into that. I don't know if this is really an FPRAC agenda item or whether I could just get back to you in person on that.

MS. SIMON: Yes. Well, I think some classification issues are going to be arising for FPRAC. The Department of

Veterans Affairs has been working with OPM to downgrade about 15,000 VA employees, several thousand of whom are wage grade, and we are going to want some clarification on those positions as well.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: 15,000?

MS. SIMON: They are not solely 15,000 wage grade employees. Out of the 15,000 employees, some of them are General Schedule, some of them are Wage Grade.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Is there anything in the Operating Manual on the issue that Jacque is raising?

MR. ALLEN: No. This committee deals primarily with pay. We have documented in the Operating Manual the key ranking jobs and survey job descriptions, but that's about as far as we go towards getting involved with how jobs are classified or positions are classified under the Federal Wage System. We have a separate office in OPM that deals with the classification of positions, and another office in OPM deals with job rating appeals, if an employee feels his position is inappropriately graded.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. Well, anything else on this topic for the moment?

MS. SIMON: No.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Any other new business?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Any objection to adjourning?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Hearing no objection, we are adjourned, and we will have our work group meeting in 10 minutes. Thank you very much, everyone.