

HARTSVILLE/TROUSDALE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

*Will Dennis, Chair*  
*Steve Whittaker, Vice Chair*

*Shane Burton*  
*Grant Cothron*  
*Brian Crook*

*Mark Presley*  
*Dawn Dineen*  
*HR Coordinator (NVM)*

NOVEMBER 6, 2023 | 6:00 PM | MAYOR'S OFFICE

**Agenda**

1. Open Meeting
2. Review Minutes from July 20, 2023
3. Elect Officers
4. Discussion Items
  - A. Personnel Policy Section VII.X Work from Home
  - B. Other discussion
5. Public Comments
6. Adjourn

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

JULY 20, 2023 | 6:00PM | MAYOR'S OFFICE

**MINUTES**

Members Present: 4/6

Will Dennis, *Chair*  
Shane Burton

Brian Crook  
Grant Cothron

Guiselle Quiel de Scott, *HR*

*Absent: Alan Carman, Steve Whittaker*

Others Present:

Mayor Jack McCall, Amy Thomas *CCFO*, Hon. Branden Bellar, Rene Pridemore

Chairman Will Dennis called the meeting to order at 6pm and led the committee in prayer. A quorum was determined with four members present.

Minutes from the June 29, 2023 meeting were reviewed.

Motion to accept as presented by Crook; second by Cothron.

**MOTION APPROVED**

**Discussion Items**

**A. Review Personnel Policy Section V, Item N Administrative Leave  
Review Personnel Policy Section V, Item O Inclement Weather Conditions**

Mayor has not had an opportunity to hold a department head meeting since the previous Personnel Committee meeting on June 29.

Crook stated that removing the Administrative Leave would hurt the Sheriff Department if there was an on duty incident. An officer or guard would have to take Vacation or Sick Leave if Administrative Leave was removed. This could also apply to other employees who may experience the same.

Q. de Scott suggested defining or clarifying Administrative Leave to limit the current abuse of the leave. The section is vague in language and left open to interpretation with "exceptional circumstances". Possibly change wording to "critical". Bellar added to include examples of "exceptional circumstances" and also examples of what Administrative Leave is not. Language would include "examples as listed below but not limited to..."

Burton asked about the three part time employees for Courtroom Security Officers. Currently this would not apply to them as the benefit is only for the full time employees.

Days available would need to be amended to read "...not to roll over to the next fiscal year." Language to be drafted by Hon. Bellar and brought back to the Committee.

Cothron makes a motion to change language from "exceptional" to "critical", add part time employees to this benefit, and delete the language "leave must be for a good cause as determined by the employer"; seconded by Crook.

**MOTION APPROVED**

Cothron makes a motion to also exclude "unless exceptional circumstances exist" in Section N, Item 2; seconded by Crook.

**MOTION APPROVED**

**B. Review Ordinance 66-2012-22 Defining the Duties and Responsibilities of Department Heads, Directors, and Supervisors Operating Within the HTCG**

This item came up for repeal in April 2023. Crook has reviewed the ordinance and has only found flaws with the wording, but not the ordinance itself. He asked for Judge Bellar's opinion.

Bellar offered that the mayoral responsibilities are laid out in the Charter. An ordinance cannot change the Charter language on its own. Mayor does not lose his authority when delegating responsibilities and still retains the ability to oversee the departments that fall under the Mayor's office. The Personnel Policy/Employee Handbook also defaults back to the Charter. This sentiment would not apply to the relationship between the Mayor and other elected officials as they have statutory authority. This applies to

those that are departments under the Executive or Mayor. Those departments include Accounting, Public Works, Ambulance, Animal Shelter, Planning among others.

An organizational chart was presented in 2001 that shows the layout of the Administration. However, it needs to be updated to reflect the current operations of HTC.

Crook asked if an ordinance could be passed that would supersede the Personnel Policy.

Mayor has the absolute right to address a department head and set out expectations for that department. There can be internal policies under each elected official that the Mayor or Commission cannot interfere with, but those departments under the Mayor are just that...under the Mayor.

Crook stated that to keep the checks and balances, Mayor should not be involved in the day-to-day activities of the department and not micromanage as the Department Head was hired to do that task. Bellar answered that there are policies that would need to be upheld by the Mayor's office as he is the Elected Official over the department.

Crook compared wording from the ordinance to the language of the Charter. There are differences in how purchase order approvals are handled and should align with the Purchasing Policy. He moved on to the next clause in the ordinance concerning who the department heads should consult for assistance with their department. However, Article 4, Section 2 of the Charter states *that each director or administrator shall conduct all department affairs in accordance with rules regulations procedures [set forth] by the mayor and in accordance with such additional instructions as the mayor may give consistent with all applicable ordinances.*

Crook feels that it is the discretion of the Department Head to conduct all department affairs. The Department Head is in their respective position due to their qualifications and experiences. Other committee members clarified that authority is still ultimately the Elected Official over the department. Crook further stated that his interest is in protecting the employees and hiring good people without any bias or politics in order for our departments to run smoothly.

Going forward, Bellar advised to get an updated flowchart on the organization of the County and layout of administration. He will also work on drafting an ordinance or resolution to clarify this issue. Overall, authority cannot be taken away from the Mayor's office or any elected official to administer the departments under their office.

Mayor McCall addressed the unsaid issue by stating his stance on his decision.

Amy Thomas will work on getting the flowchart updated to present to the Committee at the next meeting.

**Public Comment** – none presented.

**Next meeting date** Committee set the next meeting for Tuesday August 15, 2023 at 6pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15pm with a motion from Crook; second by Burton.

Minutes submitted by  
Amy Thomas, CCFO

## **X. TELECOMMUTING/WORK FROM HOME**

1. **Objective.** Telecommuting allows employees to work at home, on the road, or in a satellite location for all or part of their workweek during Emergency Situations. Employees who participate in a Telecommuting arrangement are considered to be in an official duty status during the employee's designated work schedule. Work from Home employees are prohibited from providing dependent or adult care while working from home. Failure to adhere to applicable state and federal laws and State and agency rules and policies may result in discipline, up to and including dismissal.
2. Hartsville/Trousdale County Government considers telecommuting to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the job are suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting may be appropriate for some employees and jobs but not for others. Telecommuting is not an entitlement, it is not a companywide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with Hartsville/Trousdale County Government.
3. **Procedures.** Telecommuting can be informal, such as working from home for a short-term emergency situation or on the road during business travel, or a formal, set schedule of working away from the office as described below. Either an employee or a supervisor can suggest telecommuting as a possible work arrangement.
4. **Eligibility.** Telecommuting must be approved by the Department Head. Department Heads will evaluate the need for telecommuting for certain employees. If deemed necessary for a period of time the employee will be responsible for recording hours worked and turning in a timesheet to immediate supervisor. Once signed by Department Head/Supervisor, it will be forwarded to Human Resources for payroll purposes.

An employee may not be eligible to participate if:

- a. The employee is subject to official discipline for performance or conduct, including suspension, demotion, or recommendation for termination.
- b. The employee has demonstrated diminished individual or organizational performance;
- c. The employee has violated the terms of the telecommuting policy;
- d. The employee's position involves the direct handling of secure material (daily or on a frequent basis) which the agency determines is inappropriate for telecommuting. This may include materials for which the agency maintains a written policy restricting access or use of the material or for which appropriate mitigating IT security measures do not exist; or
- e. The employee's position requires daily, or on a defined consistent basis, onsite work activities that cannot be handled remotely or at an alternative worksite.

5. **Equipment.**

- a. On a case-by-case basis, Hartsville/Trousdale County Government will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs such as access to software. The employee would need to have internet access and a computer in order to be considered for telecommuting. Equipment may be supplied by the County, and if so, will be maintained by the County. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the organization, will be maintained by the employee. Hartsville/Trousdale County Government accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment.  
Hartsville/Trousdale County Government reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the County is to be used for business purposes only. The telecommuter must sign an inventory of all Hartsville/Trousdale County Government property received and agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment, all company property will be returned to the company, unless other arrangements have been made.
- b. The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within their home for work purposes. Hartsville/Trousdale County Government will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space.

6. **Security.** Consistent with the organization's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary company and customer information accessible from their home office. Steps could include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment.

7. **Time Worked.** Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to accurately record all hours worked using Hartsville/Trousdale County Governments current time keeping practices (timesheets). Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per day and per workweek require the advance approval of the telecommuter's supervisor.

8. Ad Hoc Arrangements.

- a. Temporary telecommuting arrangements may be approved for circumstances such as inclement weather, special projects, business travel or emergencies. These arrangements are approved on an as-needed basis only, with no expectation of ongoing continuance.
- b. Other informal, short-term arrangements may be made for employees on family or medical leave to the extent practical for the employee and the organization and with the consent of the employee's health care provider, if appropriate.
- c. All informal telecommuting arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business needs of the County.