FEDERAL PREVAILING RATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

OPEN COMMITTEE MEETING

Summary of the 632nd Meeting, held by teleconference on Thursday, March 19, 2020, beginning at 10:00 am and adjourning at 10:28 am. There is no verbatim transcript of the 632nd Meeting because of the national emergency caused by the spread of the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2.

ATTENDANCE

Chairman — Douglas Fehrer

Recording Secretaries — Mike Eicher Ana Paunoiu

Members/Alternates in attendance —

Management Members:

Mr. Mark Allen, OPM Mr. Christopher Lynch, DOD Mr. Gary Buck, ARMY Ms. Kendra Atiz, NAVY Ms. Sheila Willis, VA

Labor Members:

Ms. Jacqueline Simon, AFGE Mr. Travis Kielty, ACT

Staff Specialists and Visitors:

Ms. Jeanne Jacobson, Designated Federal Officer, OPM Ms. Madeline Gonzalez, OPM Mr. Michael Cougar, OPM Mr. Gary Kistner, DOD Ms. Erica Abiera, DOD Ms. Mandy Laughlin, ARMY Ms. Jacqueline LeDoux, AIR FORCE Ms. Alethea Smalls, VA

OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee Annual Summary, 2019, 632-OC-1

The 2019 Annual Summary was approved by the members at the 631st meeting. This final document was provided to the members for their records.

Announcement Made by the OPM Representative (Update Regarding DOD Wage Surveys)

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, DOD staff responsible for local wage survey activities is currently barred from official travel and thus unable to make in-person visits to private industrial establishments for full-scale wage surveys. This is a complex issue because inperson visits for full-scale wage surveys are required by regulation. OPM and DOD staff is looking into this issue and will keep the Committee informed on the progress of their discussions. DOD staff will attempt to continue wage change survey data collection in coordination with local wage survey committees. It was noted that the floor increase provisions enacted in appropriations law will continue to apply to wage schedules.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

The review of the minutes of the 631st meeting was deferred until the next meeting.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated September 6, 2018, Requesting FPRAC Review a Proposal to Not Allow Federal Wage System Wage Area Boundaries to Split General Schedule Locality Pay Areas and a Proposal to Redefine Monroe County, PA, from the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA, Wage Area to the New York, NY, Wage Area, 620-AFGE-1

This matter was deferred until the next meeting.

Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated September 3, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Recommend Redefining San Joaquin County, CA, from the Stockton, CA, Wage Area to the San Francisco, CA, Wage Area, 627-AFGE-1

This matter was deferred until the next meeting.

Letter from the National Association of Government Employees, Dated September 25, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Reexamine the Placement of Wage Grade Employees Working in the Salinas-Monterey, CA, Wage Area, 628-NAGE-1

This matter, including the presentation by the NAGE guest speakers scheduled for today's meeting, was deferred until the next meeting.

Letter from the Association of Civilian Technicians, Dated November 9, 2019, Requesting FPRAC Consider Moving the Puerto Rico Wage Area into the Special Appropriated Fund Schedule for U.S. Insular Areas, 629-ACT-1

The OPM representative informed the Committee that OPM staff had looked at retention data for Puerto Rico. The data showed that population in Puerto Rico has been declining during the past couple of years, but OPM did not have any information to share with the Committee at the moment.

This matter was deferred until the next meeting.

Question from the AFGE Representative regarding Environmental Differential Pay (EDP) for Prevailing Rate Employees Exposed to the SARS-CoV2

The AFGE representative raised the issue of EDP eligibility for FWS employees working at VA and DOD hospitals and at the Bureau of Prisons due to exposure to the novel coronavirus.

The OPM representative stated that OPM regulates EDP, but since the beginning of the FWS each agency is responsible for evaluating local situations to determine if it should pay EDP. This responsibility was given to the agencies because each local agency and installation can best determine the nature of the work performed by its employees.

The ACT representative said he wasn't aware of EDP being requested at the local level, but he would follow up locally.

The FPRAC Chair asked the Management members if they had heard of any requests for EDP from agencies.

The Army and Air Force representatives said that they were not aware of any requests. The VA representative said VA had an EDP eligibility question regarding work at VA cemeteries. The VA representative further said VA was waiting for more information from the cemeteries (are the employees coming into contact with caskets or bodies?) and once they received the information would seek guidance from OPM on how to proceed.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

The Chair stated that future meeting dates are posted at <u>www.opm.gov/FPRAC</u>. Because of the current situation, OPM staff will keep the Committee informed regarding future meeting dates.

Approved and adopted by the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee at the 633rd meeting, held on July 16, 2020.

Douglas Fehrer, Chairman