

# Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee 653rd FPRAC

Janice R. Lachance, Chair, Presiding

Thursday, July 18, 2024

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams  
Office of Personnel Management  
Washington, D.C. 20415

## Attendance

### Members/Alternates:

#### Management Members:

Mark Allen, OPM  
Zev Goldrich, DoD  
Kimberly Eidson, Air Force  
Catherine Anders, Navy  
Ann Vicks, VA

#### Labor Members:

Paul O'Connor, Metal Trades  
Jacqueline Simon, AFGE  
Travis Reuther, AFGE  
Carisa Carmack, NAGE

### Staff Specialists and Visitors:

Brenda Roberts, Designated Federal Officer, OPM  
Ana Paunoiu, OPM  
Samantha Bono, OPM  
Robbins Byrne, OPM  
Sharon Kwon, OPM  
Christopher Lynch, DoD  
Karl Fendt, DoD  
Erica Abiera, DoD  
Charles Arnold, DoD  
Jerry Dollente, DoD  
Larry Snow, DoD  
Kieu Nguyen, DoD  
Angelica Novegil, DoD  
Christine Wlezien, DoD  
Mandy Laughlin, Army  
Brandon Anderson, Navy

Sheila Willis, VA  
Ralph Reels, VA  
Jeffrey Marsolais, USDA  
Dr. Stephen Fillmore, USDA  
Brian Rhodes, USDA  
Deedra Fogle, USDA  
Linda Delgado, USDA  
Dwayne Brown, USDA  
Michelle Burnett, USDA  
Andrea Delgado, USDA  
Jaelith Hall-Rivera, USDA  
Lisa Swenka, USDA  
Tracy Tophooven, USDA  
Mechelle Muthuveeran, DOI  
Kathleen Navarro, DOI, Office of Wildland Fire  
Erin McDuff, DOI, Office of Wildland Fire  
Ryan Wilkins, DOI, Office of Wildland Fire  
Rachel Granberg, Federal wildland firefighter  
Corena Lashley, Air Force  
Michelle Casalini, Anniston Army Depot  
Abby Quinn, Anniston Army Depot  
Amy Waugh, Anniston Army Depot  
Edward George, Tobyhanna Army Depot  
Wil Serrano, Tobyhanna Army Depot  
Dan Pulliam, Naval Support Activity Monterey  
Chad Bradding, VA  
Bryan Rhodes, VA  
Barbara Schwemle, Congressional Research Service  
Drew Friedman, Federal News Network  
Lucas Mayfield  
Recording Secretary:  
Mike Eicher, OPM  
[Transcript prepared from digital audio produced by FPRAC.]

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## I. Opening Announcements and Introductions

### a. Introductions

### b. Announcements

- Update on the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee December 21, 2023, Recommendation to Amend Section 532.211 of Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations

Chair Lachance: I want to welcome everyone to the 653rd meeting of the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee. It is July 18th, and it is a minute or two past 10 a.m. We are holding this meeting virtually, and we are going to record it, as usual. A verbatim transcript will be provided to every member of the committee for your review at the next meeting. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Janice Lachance, and I have the privilege of chairing this committee.

We want to take attendance. I know that the Department of Defense is really good at sending us who's on, which we appreciate, but I wonder if we could try to go through who is on this call, because I know everyone's screen only has space for so many little squares, so many little heads. And I want to be sure everybody understands who's here, present, and participating in the meeting.

Let's start with the Management members. Then we'll go to our partners in the Labor movement and then recognize staff, then guests from other agencies or other organizations. So OPM.

Mr. Allen: This is Mark Allen with the OPM staff.

Chair Lachance: Okay. Department of Defense, welcome Zev.

Mr. Goldrich: Good morning. Zev Goldrich, temporarily holding down the seat at DoD. Nice to see everyone.

Chair Lachance: It is great to have you. Really appreciate it.

I see Chris is online as well, and if there's anyone else from DoD—I know you all submitted a list of people from the Wage Division that you have attending. But, Chris, do you want to say hello?

Mr. Lynch: Hi, everybody. This is Chris Lynch with DoD. And I think Karl Fendt has his contingent on as well. Karl?

Mr. Fendt: Yeah, that's accurate, and we sent the names to Ana. Thank you.

Chair Lachance: Perfect. Thank you, Karl.

Air Force.

Ms. Eidson: Hello. Hi. This is Kimberly Eidson for Air Force.

Chair Lachance: Great. Thank you. Navy.

Ms. Anders: Hi. This is Catherine Anders with the Department of Navy. Brandon Anderson is also on the line.

Chair Lachance: Great. Hi there. The VA.

Ms. Vicks: Good morning, everyone. This is Ann Vicks for VA. Also have Sheila Willis, Ralph Reels. And, Sheila, correct me if anyone else is on from VA that I'm not aware of.

Ms. Willis: Nope. That's all we have for today. Thank you. Good morning, everyone.

Chair Lachance: Thank you. Shifting over to our partners in the Unions. The Metal Trades.

Mr. O'Connor: Paul O'Connor with your Metal Trades.

Chair Lachance: Thanks, Paul. AFGE.

Ms. Simon: Jacque Simon. I'm here. And Travis?

Mr. Reuther: Yep, Travis Reuther, also with AFGE.

Chair Lachance: Great. Nice to see you both. NAGE?

Ms. Carmack: Carisa. I'm here. I also have as guests, I think, in the audience, Chad Bradding and Lieutenant Commander Dan Pulliam.

Chair Lachance: Oh, thank you. ACT.

[No audible response.]

Chair Lachance: Okay. I know that we have Brenda Roberts. Maybe you all can see her sitting at the table here. She is here as the Designated Federal Official under the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

Could the staff who are attending please introduce themselves?

Ms. Paunoiu: Good morning. This is Ana Paunoiu with OPM.

Ms. Bono: Hi. This is Samantha Bono with OPM.

Mr. Eicher: Mike Eicher, OPM.

Mr. Byrne: Robbins Byrne, OPM.

Chair Lachance: Great. Thank you all so much.

I know we have a number of guests from the Forest Service and possibly the Department of the Interior. Could you say hello and let us know who's here?

Mr. Marsolais: Good morning, Madam Chairwoman. Jeff Marsolais. I'm the Associate Deputy Chief for State, Private, and Tribal Forestry for the Forest Service. I'm joined with a number of our Forest Service SMEs today. Dee Fogle, Stephen Fillmore,

Brian Rhodes, Dwayne Brown, Michelle Burnett, and Jaelith Hall-Rivera from our agency. And I believe there are a few folks from our Office of the Secretary at USDA that I would invite to come online and anybody else that I missed.

Ms. Delgado: Thank you, Jeff. Linda Delgado, Office of the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and the Environment, and I believe we also have folks from the Department Office of Human Resources, which manages pay and wages for the department.

Ms. Swenka: Yes. Lisa Swenka, USDA Pay and Leave Policy.

Chair Lachance: That's great. And if others are on, if you just want to send us a note to be sure that we have everybody on record.

I believe we also have guests from the Department of the Interior. If you're on, could you introduce yourselves?

Ms. Navarro: Yes. My name is Kat Navarro. I'm with the Department of the Interior from the Office of Wildland Fire.

Chair Lachance: Great. Thank you, Kat.

And I know we have other people who are here. I know we have Mr. George, who's president of the AFGE Local at Tobyhanna.

Is there anybody else? Sharon, I see you. Sharon Kwon. Do you want to say hi?

Ms. Kwon: Hi, everyone. I am with OPM as well. I'm on the Congressional Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs team.

Chair Lachance: Great. And, Mr. George, I didn't want to not give you an opportunity to introduce yourself, but because we all know you, still, you should say who you are and your position.

Mr. George: My name is Edward George. I'm the president at Tobyhanna Army Depot, Local 1647. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman and committee, for having me. Thank you.

Chair Lachance: Sure. We're always glad to have you.

Anybody else that we didn't cover under all of those categories?

Ms. Muthuveeran: Good morning. This is Mechelle Muthuveeran, Office of Human Capital, Department of the Interior.

Chair Lachance: Great. And I see—Mandy, thank you for putting that in the chat from the Department of the Army. Thank you so much for being here.

Anyone else?

Mr. Allen: I think we have Drew Friedman from Federal News Network. I think I saw her.

Chair Lachance: Oh, okay.

Ms. Friedman: Good morning. I'm here. Drew Friedman with Federal News Network. Just tuning in.

Chair Lachance: Great. Thank you for joining us.

And I see we have a couple people from the Anniston Army Depot here. Thank you for letting us know that. We'll make sure that's reflected in the attendance and the minutes. If anybody else joins, put it in the chat, send us a note, just so we can have an accurate record.

Thank you all for being here. It is a larger group than we usually have, but we are really excited about today's agenda and appreciate you all taking the time to join us and lend us your expertise and perspectives.



The next thing on the agenda is announcements, and we do have an update regarding the recommendation that this committee made in December that OPM change the regulatory criteria for defining and maintaining FWS wage areas. Mark, can you give us that update?

Mr. Allen: Yes. I have good news. The proposed regulation that would be used to implement the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee's recommendation on how to amend the criteria to make Federal Wage System wage areas more similar to GS locality pay areas has been sent to OMB now, and it's entered the process that's normally followed for issuing proposed regulations. I would also note that OPM put that item in what's called the unified agenda that gives members of the public an idea of what an agency plans to issue in the next few months. That's appeared in the Federal Register with a projected publication date for the proposed regulation of October 2024.

The next activity on that will be that OPM would be responding to any questions that OMB has, and we'll do that as quickly as we can.

Chair Lachance: Any questions or comments, discussion?

Mr. O'Connor: Yeah, this is Paul O'Connor. So right now this is with OMB.

Chair Lachance: Correct.

Mr. O'Connor: And is it in the public comment period now, or will it be in October? I didn't understand that.

Mr. Allen: No, the way that the regulations work is any regulation that a federal agency wants to publish first goes to OMB, and the part of OMB that handles all of the administration's regulatory priorities is the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs - OIRA. So it's headed through that process now.

We have in the unified agenda a projected time frame of publishing the proposed rule for public comment in October.

Mr. O'Connor: Okay.

Mr. Allen: So there may be some flexibility on that date, which would actually be published, but it's still a little ways off from being published in the Federal Register. But I would say it's definitely on the right track for moving forward.

Mr. O'Connor: Great. Thank you.

Chair Lachance: And we will report out when it's published so that people will know if they are interested in making comments.

Mr. O'Connor: Thanks.

Chair Lachance: Anyone else on this?

Ms. Carmack: I just have a question regarding Old Business. I know I mentioned Lieutenant Commander Dan Pulliam is on the line with us today, too, and I know the members out in Monterey are getting a little bit antsy and just trying to figure out our next steps on whether it's something that—you know, that agenda item is something that FPRAC can take up independent of when the regulations are finalized or now since we have, like, an actual update of potentially October. Just I think it would be helpful for our members there to kind of explain, like, how that would work with the Old Business items that we've put on the back burner until the regulations are finalized and published.

Mr. Allen: The way this would work for Monterey County, like other counties, that would be moved from one wage area to another as a result of changing the criteria is that Monterey County would be moved based on the criteria. There would be no need to handle it separately.

Ms. Carmack: Okay.

Mr. Allen: It's part of the bigger package because—

Ms. Carmack: Right.

Mr. Allen: —Monterey County would go into the ongoing San Francisco wage area as the FPRAC working group recommended.

Ms. Carmack: Right.

Mr. Allen: Right. So it's all part of one big package. So everything would be—  
[audio distortion]—right.

Ms. Carmack: So as soon as, like, those are finalized, what we're saying is then that as part of that package, like, essentially would we be going back through and automatically—or are we bringing those up, like, as agenda items again post the regulations?

Mr. Allen: No. The way that we agreed to do this was that we changed the criteria.

Ms. Carmack: Yeah.

Mr. Allen: Area definitions would be changed as a result of the criteria changing.

Ms. Carmack: Gotcha. Okay. Got it. Thank you. That's helpful.

Chair Lachance: Great. Jacque, I see your hand is raised.

Ms. Simon: Yeah. I just had a question about what's going to happen going forward. So OIRA has it now. They may send it back to OPM for questions, clarifications, et cetera, but is that the only agency moving forward that is going to have input, or will other agencies continue to have input?

Mr. Allen: The way the process works is that OIRA will always go out seeking

agency comment if the agency is affected by a proposed regulation. It doesn't matter if it's this one or any other regulation that impacts another agency. That's the way the process has to work.

Ms. Simon: Okay. So this could go around a few times to affected agencies. It's not just OPM that will be able to answer questions or have comments if they arise from OIRA. It will go around to other agencies as well if there are questions or concerns.

Mr. Allen: Yeah, that's correct.

Ms. Simon: Okay. I just wanted to know.

Mr. Allen: It's normal from other regulations that I've worked on for OPM to get more than one round of questions that comes in, mostly technical questions or points of clarification that are needed. So I consider this to be just a normal process that we have to work through.

Ms. Simon: Okay, thanks.

Mr. Allen: You're welcome.

Chair Lachance: Mr. George.

Mr. George: Yes. Thank you, Madam, for recognizing me. I just wanted to point out that, you know, all through this process, as many times this has been brought up specifically with my base here at Tobyhanna, we keep hearing the answer from DoD that we are not having a hiring problem. And I just want to point out that, you know, this is—you know, we are having a hiring problem, and it's that, you know, we do have skill gaps because of what's going on with the way our wages are calculated. And this has been long coming. I appreciate you taking this up once again, but it's very frustrating for our employees that just at our base going alone, this has been raised up for 15 years.

And, you know, we've had FPRAC recommendations in the past, positive recommendations, and it just seems like it's always an ending process to stop, and we would really like to see this, you know, fairly and equitably adjusted across the country as soon as possible. And thank you for recognizing us.

Mr. Allen: Thanks, Ned. What I would suggest is that—I know you're going to do this anyway, but there will be an opportunity for public comment, and you can make as many comments on the proposed regulation when it comes out as you think are the right thing to do.

Mr. George: More than they've ever seen.

[Laughter.]

Mr. Allen: I've seen a lot of them.

Chair Lachance: That's great.

Mr. George: I was told my agency helped with Fort Monmouth got their thing, and we were actually asked to stop sending comments. So—[audio distortion]—how many comments will come? Thank you, sir.

Chair Lachance: Okay. We'll brace ourselves. Thank you.

Any other comments or thoughts on this?

[No audible response.]

## II. Review of the Minutes of the 650th Meeting

Chair Lachance: Okay. Our next piece of business is to actually review the transcript of the last public meeting, which was held on May 16th of this year. Does anyone have any changes that they want to bring to our attention?

[No audible response.]

Chair Lachance: If not, are there any objections to adopting the transcript?

Ms. Simon: No objection.

Chair Lachance: Thank you, Jacque. Hearing none, we'll go ahead and adopt it.

### III. Old Business

- a. Letter from the American Federation of Government Employees, Dated March 22, 2022, Requesting FPRAC Review a Proposal to Limit all Non-Rest of U.S. General Schedule Locality Pay Areas to no more than one Federal Wage System Wage Area and a Proposal to Redefine Monroe County, PA, from the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA, Wage Area to the New York, NY, Wage Area, 637-AFGE-1
- b. 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

Chair Lachance: As Carisa pointed out, we still have some items under Old Business. Because they are designated Old Business doesn't mean they are not a priority. It's just that we have an alternative way of hopefully dealing with them through these proposed regulations.

So rather than going through all of the Old Business, can we instead go right to the new business items? Is there any objection to that?

[No audible response.]

Chair Lachance: I'm not seeing or hearing anything.

## IV. New Business

- a. Definition of Saratoga County, NY to a Nonappropriated Fund Federal Wage System Wage Area 653-MGT-1

Chair Lachance: Under new Business, we have, if I can refer the committee members, to 653-MGT-1, a Management document entitled the "Addition of Prescribed Wildland Fire Activities to the Firefighting Environmental Differential Payment Category."

Mark, can you introduce this item and give us the background we need to discuss?

Mr. Allen: Yep. There's a reason we have a lot of people on from USDA and DOI and the wildland firefighting community in general. This is a subject I know is of intense interest to that community, so I appreciate everybody joining.

I understand there's going to be some testimony presented after I get done saying what I'm going to say. Just to introduce the proposal, the people online are the real experts, and there are good reasons why they presented this recommendation to us. So I'll just run through what the recommendation is.

In the document 653-MGT-1, the Management members of the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee have agreed with a joint proposal from the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior to add a new category of environmental differential pay, or EDP, for employees who are assigned to work on prescribed wildland fire activities.

Currently, there is an EDP category in 5 CFR Part 532 that provides for a 25 percent EDP amount for Federal Wage System employees who are fighting forest and range fires on a fire line, but that work does not include work on prescribed wildland fire

activities.

The proposal before us, before the committee now, is to add the following language to the EDP regulation, and this would be "participating as a member of a firefighting crew, engaged in activities on the fire line related to the preparation, implementation, and control on prescribed wildland fire."

This new category of payment would potentially affect around 280 Federal Wage System employees with USDA and 50 with the Department of the Interior. We'll note that USDA and DOI also requested the same type of coverage for General Schedule employees under the hazardous duty pay statute and regulations. Although HDP is not a subject that FPRAC is chartered to cover, a new category for hazardous duty pay would potentially cover more than 10,000 General Schedule employees, and OPM's intent would be to implement the changes to the EDP and HDP categories in the same proposed regulation. This is assuming we have an FPRAC recommendation to do that and the OPM Director approves the recommendation. I don't have any reason to think the OPM Director would not want to move forward quickly on this.

As I said earlier, we have experts here at the meeting with us today from the wildland firefighting community, so I'll defer to their expertise to provide more information on the request. But I will say that, at least from my perspective, that the information that USDA and DOI have presented to OPM is convincing information that covering wildland firefighters with EDP for their work on prescribed wildland fire activities is now merited, based on new evidence recognized in recent years concerning the hazards of the duty performed and the health risks associated with the work.

To implement the change in policy, OPM would need to issue proposed



regulations for public comment, followed by final regulations, and typically that process takes up to a year to be completed. I don't want to leave people with the sort of understanding that this is something that would happen really quickly. It's something that does take time to work through the process, just like the changes in the regulatory criteria for wage area definitions. It takes time to work through the regulatory processes that we have to follow.

That's all I have to say on that. We could go to the testimony now or—it's probably best to go to the testimony, I would think, rather than opening up to questions or discussion.

Chair Lachance: I know we have gotten a request from USDA, Mr.—

Mr. Marsolais: Marsolais.

Chair Lachance: —Marsolais. Excuse me.

Do you want to address this topic?

Mr. Marsolais: Yes, Madam Chairwoman, and really thank you for the opportunity to be here. So good morning to all, Madam Chairwoman, distinguished members of the committee, staff, and guests. Like ourselves, we really deeply appreciate the opportunity to be here. My name is Jeff Marsolais. I'm the Associate Deputy Chief for State, Private, and Tribal Forestry, and I oversee Fire and Aviation for the Forest Service. And I'm here really on behalf of both USDA Forest Service and also Department of Interior and all of the bureaus within the DOI that have wildland firefighters. And at the end of this, I will invite Kat Navarro to come in and provide some DOI comments if there are adjustments.

So thank you for the chance to be here to talk about environmental differential for

prescribed fire for our wage grade employees, and as noted, we're also moving forward on hazard pay, which is the name of the differential for GS schedule employees engaged in prescribed fire.

So prescribed fire, as a management activity, it's backed in our land management agencies by over a hundred years' worth of science and is literally the most practical and effective tool available to confront the nation's wildfire crisis.

You'll hear us refer to the wildfire crisis because it is just that. We have more than 115 million Americans in this country who live in high-risk fire areas, and I can name a number of other impacts that catastrophic wildfire has on the nation, everything from infrastructure, like power lines, communities, water systems, to natural environment, obviously.

And as noted at the beginning of the call, our weather is changing. Someone even mentioned a comment about tornadoes, and what we're seeing in the wildfire space is that wildfires are getting longer. We used to refer to it as the "fire season," and now it's a fire year. And there are no parts of our nation that are immune.

No one believed we could burn a million acres in 36 hours, but that's exactly what happened this March and April in Texas. We've seen fires in Denver, Colorado, in December and January. So wildfire is a year-round issue, and prescribed fire is the number one tool for combating wildfires on the ground.

On average, the Forest Service completes about 4,500 prescribed fires on national forest and grasslands every year, burning more than 1.3 million acres on an annual basis, and confronting this wildfire crisis that I mentioned means increasing that prescribed fire effort so we can reduce the risk to communities and restore healthy

forests.

Unlike wildfire crisis—or unlike wildfire suppression and response, our prescribed fire activities are not included in the hazardous pay differential or, in this case, the environmental pay differentials, despite their risks being comparable to those of fighting fires. The job duties performed during the implementation of planned prescribed fires and the hazards that exist in that environment are essentially the same. Advances in research have increased our awareness about health hazards associated with both wildfire and prescribed fire.

And as mentioned previously, that new knowledge was codified now in the 2023 James Inhofe National Defense Act, which provided for presumptive illness coverage for certain cancers, heart and lung disease, and a number of other proximate caused impacts to our wildland firefighters from exposure to smoke and from exposure to addressing the hazards associated with wildfires.

So while prescribed fire plans contain feasible mitigations, there remain unavoidable hazards, things such as working in remote and rough terrain, the actual close proximity to the fire itself, smoke exposure, the danger from snags or hazard trees, and other conditions remain. And that's regardless of our best efforts to mitigate those things. And these hazards are not accounted for in the classification of wildland firefighter positions, nor can employees use their knowledge, skills, and abilities to reduce the hazards to less than a significant risk.

So the lack of hazardous duty compensation has consistently been raised as an impediment to us completing prescribed fire implementation by our firefighters within the fire community, and so we'll be brief here this morning. We have brought a number of

subject-matter experts, everyone from our human resources folks to the actual practitioners themselves who are experts in the field of prescribed fire, and so, Madam Chairwoman and other distinguished members, I just appreciate your thoughtful deliberation and consideration of this important topic for us.

And I would invite our partners at the Department of Interior if they'd like to provide any friendly amendments, corrections, or additions to my testimony here this morning. Thank you.

Ms. Navarro: I have nothing to add. Jeff did a great job summarizing the work environment, the similarities of that to wildland fire, as well as the hazards that exist in both workplaces. Thank you.

Chair Lachance: That's great. Thank you all very much.

Are there questions from the committee members or any discussion about this? I'm looking for hands popping up, and I don't see any.

Mr. Allen: I believe that may be because we already answered all the questions.

Chair Lachance: I know. I know. You all did a great job with your testimony, and certainly, the background information we all received was significant and thorough.

I could keep filibustering to give you all time to think about things, but I'm not seeing any hands go up. I'm not hearing anybody with any comment. Is it appropriate for me to take this as consensus agreement to this proposal? Does anybody object to us moving this forward on a consensus basis?

Paul, thanks for the thumbs up.

Ms. Simon: No objection. No objection from AFGE.

Chair Lachance: Thank you, Jacque.

Ms. Vicks: No objection from VA.

Chair Lachance: Great. Thank you. And, Zev, I saw your thumbs up, too, so thank you for that.

Congratulations Interior and USDA. This has gone through, and we will let you know about next steps. Congrats.

Mr. Marsolais: Thank you, Madam Chairwoman and all the members of the committee. Thank you.

Mr. Allen: I really appreciate all the background work that went into this over the course of a few months. It's really appreciated. I think a very solid case was made for changing the policy to something that's going to have a positive effect.

Mr. Marsolais: Well, and we are deeply grateful for our continued partnership with OPM as well. You guys have been nothing but stellar in our work behind the scenes, so a deep appreciation for all in this space.

Chair Lachance: Well, I—and thank you. I see there are some nice comments in the chat, I think, that reflect people's feelings about this, and so I hope it does do its job and is as effective as we think this will be.

Given that, that is the entirety of our New Business agenda. we've We have gotten a very significant thing done today, that will benefit both the federal government and its climate and fire goals and also benefit individual firefighters who are on the front lines.

It was an important meeting, although a short one. Is it appropriate for us to adjourn at this point?

Mr. Allen: Motion to adjourn.

Chair Lachance: I'm not hearing—okay. I got a motion from Mark. Is there any objection?

Ms. Simon: I second.

Chair Lachance: Great. Thank you, Jacque.

Ms. Vicks: You have a hand raised.

Chair Lachance: I'm sorry. Who's the hand? I don't see a hand. Who is it?

Ms. Vicks: Amy Waugh.

Chair Lachance: Amy?

Ms. Waugh: Yes, ma'am. Good morning, ma'am.

Chair Lachance: I'm sorry. You're not on my screen, so I apologize. Now I see you. Okay.

Ms. Waugh: I'm trying to get my camera. I see my camera's on, but it is not working.

So our wage grade employees are on a different locality area than our GS employees, and our wage grade employees are wanting to advocate to change that. Is there anything the committee can do to help, or will the OPM regulatory change you're trying to make—will that affect that?

Chair Lachance: Do you mind telling us what facility you're with?

Ms. Waugh: I'm with Anniston Army Depot.

Ms. Simon: Yes. Anniston does benefit from the change that's currently at OMB—

Ms. Waugh: Okay.

Ms. Simon: —and CFP's been working on for a long time, yes.

Ms. Waugh: Okay, great. I thought that we would. I just wanted to make sure, and we will have the opportunity for public comment on that?

Mr. Allen: Yes.

Chair Lachance: Yes, you will.

Ms. Waugh: Okay. Will that notice be sent out via email, or how will we be notified about the public comment availability?

Mr. Allen: Once the proposed regulation would be published, the OPM staff will send it out to the members of the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee for distribution to those who are interested. We can also send you an email, and we'll add you to the list, Amy.

Ms. Waugh: Okay. That would be great.

Mr. Allen: Yep.

Chair Lachance: Well, thank you for joining us—oh, go ahead.

Ms. Waugh: I'm sorry, one more question.

So this is a monthly meeting? Is this something that we can join each month, or it is—

Chair Lachance: Yes.

Ms. Waugh: Okay, okay.

Chair Lachance: It's a public meeting. It's always the third Thursday of the month at 10 a.m. Eastern time.

Ms. Waugh: Okay.

Chair Lachance: Sometimes it gets canceled if we have no business or no agenda items to consider, but the vast majority of the time, you can mark your calendar

for the third Thursday at 10 a.m.

Ms. Waugh: Okay. Thank you so much.

Chair Lachance: You're welcome.

Mr. Allen: Let's see. Paul has a question.

Chair Lachance: Oh, Paul. Hi.

Mr. O'Connor: Hi. I just didn't hear who Amy's representing.

Chair Lachance: She is with the Anniston Army Depot.

Mr. O'Connor: Anniston, okay. Thank you.

Chair Lachance: Any other final thoughts or questions or comments?

[No audible response.]

Chair Lachance: If not, I want to thank you. There wasn't a lot of controversy, but this is a very significant meeting. And so I want to thank all of you for participating, for reading the materials ahead of time, and being ready for today's meeting. And we'll see you next month. Thank you.

[End of recorded session.]