

## FEDERAL PREVAILING RATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

611th FPRAC

**SHELDON FRIEDMAN**, Chairperson, Presiding

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Room 5526  
Office of Personnel Management  
Washington, D.C. 20415**ATTENDANCE:****Members/Alternates:**Management Members:Mark Allen, OPM  
Jim Davey, DoD  
Dave Curley, Air Force  
Gary Buck, Army  
Arleen Romba, VA (via phone)Labor Members:Dennis Phelps, MTD  
Candace Archer, AFGE  
Jacque Simon, AFGE  
Robert Shore, NAGE  
Steven Landis, ACT**Staff Specialists and Visitors:**Brenda Roberts, Designated Federal Officer, OPM  
Madeline Gonzalez, OPM  
Jim Brady, DoD  
Jeff Nelsen, DoD  
David Pedersen, Navy  
Rosemary Meriwether, Navy  
Lamar Elliott, ACT**Recording Secretaries:**Mike Eicher, OPM  
Ana Paunoiu, OPM

[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 611th meeting of the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee. Happy St. Patrick's Day to those of you who are celebrating it.

And as we usually do, why don't we go around the room and introduce ourselves. I'm Sheldon Friedman, Chair of the Committee. Mark, why don't we start with you today, please?

MR. ALLEN: Mark Allen with OPM.

MR. DAVEY: Jim Davey with DoD.

MR. CURLEY: Dave Curley with Air Force.

MR. BUCK: Gary Buck, Army.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Arlene, why don't you introduce yourself please?

MS. ROMBA: [via telephone] Arleen Romba, VA.

MR. PHELPS: Dennis Phelps, Metal Trades Department.

MS. ARCHER: Candace Archer, AFGE.

MS. SIMON: Jacque Simon, AFGE.

MR. SHORE: Rob Shore, NAGE.

MR. LANDIS: Steve Landis, ACT.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Thank you. And if everyone else in the room could please also introduce themselves. Brenda?

MS. ROBERTS: Brenda Roberts, Designated Federal Officer, OPM.

MR. BRADY: Jim Brady, DoD.

MR. NELSEN: Jeff Nelsen, DoD.

MR. PEDERSEN: David Pedersen, Navy.

MS. MERIWETHER: Rosemary Meriwether, Navy.

MS. PAUNOIU: Ana Paunoiu, OPM.

MS. GONZALEZ: Madeline Gonzalez with OPM.

MR. EICHER: Mike Eicher, OPM.

MR. ELLIOTT: Lamar Elliott, ACT.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. Thank you.

Just a couple of quick announcements. You have in your packets the annual summary of our Committee's work for 2015. This is what we approved last month, and what we have in the packet is the final. And it should go up on our website before too long, I would hope.

Also, the new charter for the Committee, this is an every-2-year requirement under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, I believe. Just for your information, here is our latest charter.

Any questions about either of those things?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: If not, we could go on to reviewing and hopefully approving the transcript of our last meeting. Is there any change beyond those we've heard from you about that anybody wants to see made in the transcript of the last meeting?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Hearing no changes, is there any disagreement with approving the transcript of the last meeting?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. It appears we have agreement to adopt the

transcript. Thank you.

We do have some Old Business items kicking around, but what I would suggest is we skip first down to the New Business items of which we have two that I'm aware of, and that are on the agenda. If that's okay, why don't we move to those, first one being 611-MGT-1, Definitions of Metropolitan Statistical Areas. About four of them have been packaged together.

Mark, would you please summarize those for us?

MR. ALLEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Happy St. Patrick's Day, everyone.

Under 611-MGT-1, this is part of an ongoing effort that OPM has under way so that Federal Wage System wage areas don't subdivide metropolitan statistical areas, unless there's a good reason to do so.

Under this proposal, we recommend really minor changes in four wage areas. We recommend that Union County, Indiana, be redefined from the Dayton, Ohio, area of application to the Cincinnati, Ohio, area of application; San Benito County, California, be redefined from the Salinas-Monterrey, California, area of application to the San Francisco, California, area of application; Windham County, Connecticut, be redefined from the New London, Connecticut, area of application to the Central and Western Massachusetts area of application; and Columbia County, Washington, be redefined from the Spokane, Washington, area of application to the Southeastern Washington/Eastern Oregon area of application. And as the Chairman said, these are basically four packages rolled into one, just for the sake of convenience.

What we've provided here is an analysis of each county and the number of employees who would be affected by the change. At least in two of them, there are no employees affected.

There are maps of the wage areas, Dayton and Cincinnati for the first one. There

are wage schedules.

The package itself is pretty self-explanatory and follows the same patterns we've used before for regulatory criteria analysis indicating which is the most appropriate wage area definition for the entire metropolitan statistical area, so that we're no longer splitting wage areas with metropolitan areas.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: So I think you indicated these were all triggered by OMB changes in the definition of MSAs around the country, which were in turn triggered by the results of the 2010 Census; is that right?

MR. ALLEN: That's right, yes.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Any questions or discussion?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Is there a consensus to adopt 611-MGT-1? Do you folks need a caucus?

All right. I believe we do have the Small Pendleton Room available for that.

[Labor members go in caucus off the record.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: We are back in session. Labor has returned from its caucus. Is there anything to report?

MS. SIMON: We're ready to vote.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. Well, is there consensus to adopt 611-MGT-1?

MS. SIMON: Yes.

MR. PHELPS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. We've adopted it. Very good.

That brings up the next New Business item, a letter from National Association of

Government Employees, 611-NAGE-1. Rob, would you like to fill us in on this one?

MR. SHORE: Yeah. So, probably, 2 months ago, 3 months ago, we were contacted by some employees at the Topeka, Kansas, AMC, and they raised some concerns regarding the placement of Shawnee County in the Topeka wage area versus in the Kansas City wage area. The concerns that I think are laid out in the letter talk about wage grade employees in the Topeka wage area working interchangeably with wage grade employees in the Kansas City wage area. So, at this point, we were asking for a study of the Shawnee County and, I guess, Topeka wage area and the possible abolishment of the wage area, depending on the outcome of the study.

MR. ALLEN: Okay. OPM staff would be happy to take a look at this one, as we have with others, to see what things are going on in those two wage areas—distance, commuting patterns, etc. , and get some input from VA. I don't know if we'd have the report ready for the next meeting, but hopefully for the following one.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Any other discussion of this issue at this time?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. Then we will await the OPM staff report.

We do have three Old Business items. Are there any that we're prepared to deal with this morning?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: I don't think any of them are urgent, but they have been there quite a while.

MR. ALLEN: At least two, Mr. Chairman, we haven't had consensus on, and I would make a suggestion that if we're not going to deal with those by voting, we probably should

just table those and get them off the agenda.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Which two are those, Mark?

MR. ALLEN: One would be the review of Lee County, Virginia, 557-MGT-2, which was introduced back in 2010; and then the other one is 562-MGT-2, which is the review of the South Bend-Mishawaka, Indiana-Michigan MSA. That was introduced in 2011.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: And if those are tabled, they could be brought back at any time?

MR. ALLEN: That's correct, yeah.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Is there a consensus to table those?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. We'll do that, then.

Any interest in taking up the other one this morning? That is (b), 607-OPM-3.

MR. ALLEN: I am perfectly fine with this one remaining on the agenda. We really haven't had an in-depth discussion on it. This is an OPM document, so there is no Management proposal to do anything with Green County. However, having said that, I don't really see a reason under the regulatory criteria for changing the definition of Green County to a different wage area.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Is there any other discussion of that one right now?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: No? All right.

Are there any other new business items that we haven't already dealt with?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: If not, it would certainly be in order to adjourn. Is



there any objection to adjourning?

MS. SIMON: None.

MR. ALLEN: No.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. Wow! That's enthusiasm.

[Laughter.]

MR. PHELPS: Wish they were all like that, huh, Sheldon?

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: All right. Well, I'll see everybody next month, and we are adjourned. Thank you.