

# **Human Resources Transformation: A Look Back and a Look Forward**

April 7, 2026



## Agenda

- Background Information and Introductions
- A Look Back - The HR Function
- Current State - The First 8 Months in HR
- The Plan Forward - A Roadmap of Priorities
- Discussion with the County Board

# Background Information



## About me:

- Background information
- Why I joined Ramsey County

## Initial Impressions:

- What excited me
- What surprised me
- What concerned me



# **A Look Back: The HR Function**

# HR Leadership Stability

	<b>HR Leadership Turnover</b>	<b>Countywide Leadership Turnover</b>
<b>2022</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>2023</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>11.5%</b>
<b>2024</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>2025</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>8%</b>

Leadership Positions: CHRO, Deputy Directors, Managers, Supervisors

# Look Back: Impact

HR leadership turnover has been elevated for several years, indicating a period of structural instability.

## Potential impact

- Inconsistency – service delivery
- Reactive, issue-driven work
- Fragmented HR practices
- High effort, uneven impact
- Gaps in strategic partnerships with departments and labor leaders
- Eroded trust and credibility



**Current State:  
The First 8 Months in HR**

# The First 8 Months: An Intentional Plan and Approach

## Listen, Learn, and Lead with Intention

- Got to know the HR and Ramsey organization, was deliberate; focused on understanding.
- Established guiding principles for HR: Operational Excellence, People First, Partnership, Accountability, Learning & Growth, One HR, and Agility.
- Developed and communicated HR Leadership Team (HRLT) purpose statement and operating norms.

## Stabilize Leadership within the HR Function

- Majority of HR leadership team in their roles less than one year, several also new to County Government roles.
- Still filling open roles for Talent Management & Workforce Development and Benefits.

## Complex Business Needs

- Significant number of unplanned events outside our control for which the HR function played an important role in dealing with them (e.g. Detox closure, Paid Family Medical Leave, Operation Metro Surge, etc.)

## Organizational Assessment

- Engaged an external consultant to assess key elements of the HR function by gathering feedback from members of the HR function and Ramsey County leaders.

# Michael Fischer, MSOD

Fischer Consulting LLC



Michael is a results-driven leader, executive coach, and consultant with more than three decades of experience. He has held executive leadership roles in Human Resources, Organization Development, and Talent Management across diverse industries including consumer/packaged goods, chemicals manufacturing, power generation, foodservice distribution, higher education, non-profits.

**As a consultant to organizations**, Michael brings deep expertise in creation of organization vision and purpose, strategy development, large-scale organization design, innovative leadership-development program development and facilitation, and succession-planning process development. He frequently supports comprehensive transformations of senior teams seeking to improve their alignment and effectiveness.

**In his coaching practice**, Michael works with executive leaders to guide and support them in shifting their performance, increasing their impact, and preparing them for bigger, broader executive roles. Michael's rigorous and holistic 360-degree assessment process gives leaders rich data from which to create a clear and specific development plan, followed by caring and accountability-focused coaching..

Michael holds a Master's of Science degree in Organization Development from Pepperdine University Graziadio Business School (California).



## Gathered Input From More Than 80 Leaders

- DCM Leadership Teams
- Countywide leaders
- Human Resources



# Leadership Stability and Capacity

## Finding

- Significant leadership turnover contributed to inconsistent priorities and decision-making.

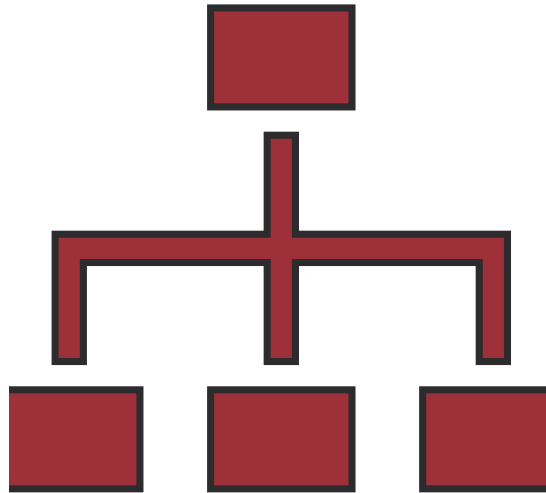
## Systemic Context

- This was less a performance issue—more a structural one.

## Actions Being Taken

- HRLT to establish clear direction.
- Currently filling HR Deputy Director for Talent Management & Workforce Development and other open positions.

# Organization Structure and Role Clarity



## Finding

- The HR structure did not evolve with the county, lacks clear scope or decision rights.

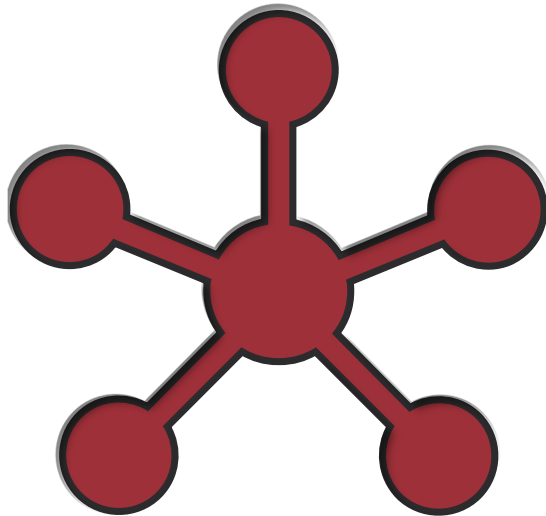
## Systemic Context

- Organizational structures and operating models require regular reviews.

## Actions Being Taken

- Review current HR structure and operating model.
- Identify and document Talent Management operating model.
- Reestablish HR Business Partner as initial point of contact.

# Service Delivery and Departmental Relationships



## Finding

- HR service delivery is inconsistent; departments want proactive engagement and clearer points of contact.

## Systemic Context

- Inconsistency was driven primarily by structural factors not individual effort.

## Actions Being Taken

- Reinforcing HR Business Partners as the primary point of contact.
- Review and simplify the Talent Acquisition process.
- Establish service standards to improve operational excellence and consistency.



# Communication and Trust

## Finding

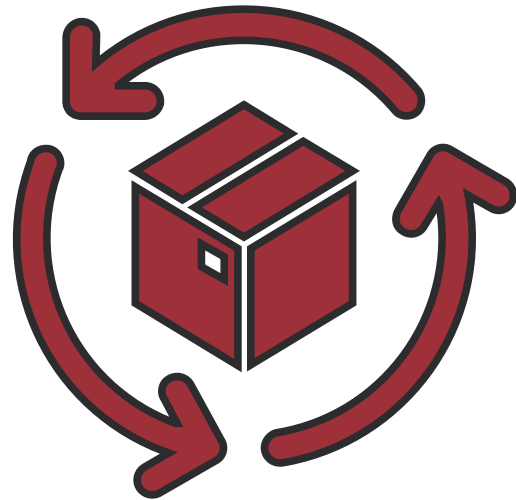
- Communication has been eroding, leading to inconsistency and decreased trust.

## Systemic Context

- Rebuilding trust requires predictable, sustained communication.

## Actions Being Taken

- HR function is building a bridge of trust – HRLT developed a clear purpose, operating norms, and plan forward.
- HR function providing regular updates – creating transparency as they transform.



# Talent Processes and Systems

## Finding

- Core HR processes have gaps - talent acquisition, onboarding, learning and development.
- Processes are inconsistently applied.

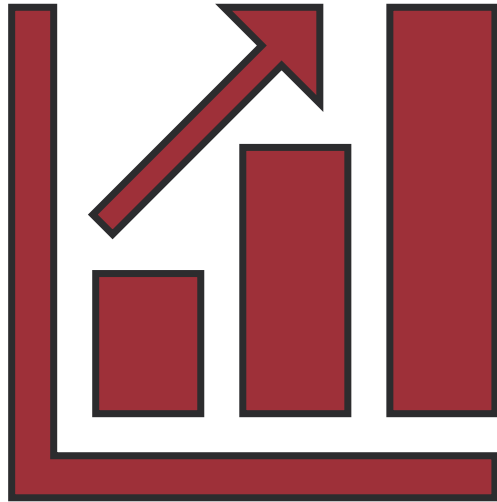
## Systemic Context

- Lack of documented processes led to unclear actions and expectations for leaders.

## Actions Being Taken

- HR beginning the work to review and modernize core processes.
- Workday implementation underway.
- Talent Acquisition and performance management processes are 2026 priorities.

# Strengths and Foundation to Build On



## Finding

- Meaningful strengths provide a solid foundation for transformation.

## HR Team and Culture

- HR team members are dedicated, mission-driven, caring.
- Strong institutional knowledge and enthusiasm for the new HR direction.

## Capability and Expertise

- Capable contributors across HRBPs, Total Rewards, Talent Acquisition, Labor Relations.
- Learning & Development team has specialized expertise to be utilized.



# **The Plan Forward: A Roadmap of Priorities**



## Future State: What the organization needs

- Proactive, workforce-focused strategy
- Strong, stable leadership team
- Aligned systems and practices
- Data informed-decision making
- Consistent, reliable service delivery model  
**(One HR)**
- A shift from reactive, transactional HR to proactive, strategic HR partnerships
- Rebuilding trust and credibility with departments, labor partners, and employees

# 2026 Strategic Planning

## Mission

We attract diverse and high-performing talent, retain people through a culture of belonging and development, and promote growth that empowers every employee to reach their full potential and drive operational excellence. We build a high performing, aligned and future ready one Human Resources.

## Drivers

Operational excellence

Future ready

Data informed decision making

Alignment and intentionality

Fiscal stewardship

Risk mitigation

## Core Priority - Operational Excellence

Human Resources strategy will align with the strategic priority, Operational Excellence, with a focus on being good stewards of public dollars while supporting the people who deliver services every day. In the face of ongoing state and federal fiscal pressures, Human Resources is committed to operating as efficiently and effectively as possible – focusing resources on core services, reducing unnecessary costs and making thoughtful, data-informed decisions.

# 2026 Strategic Priority Areas

## Service Delivery

- Establish clear expectations for staff responsiveness, quality & accuracy, professionalism & courtesy, follow through & accountability, collaboration and continuous improvement
- Develop strategic onsite HR presence

## Process Improvement & Documentation

- Workday readiness – ensure accurate personnel data transfer from Summit
- PFML claim process coordination with MetLife and data analysis

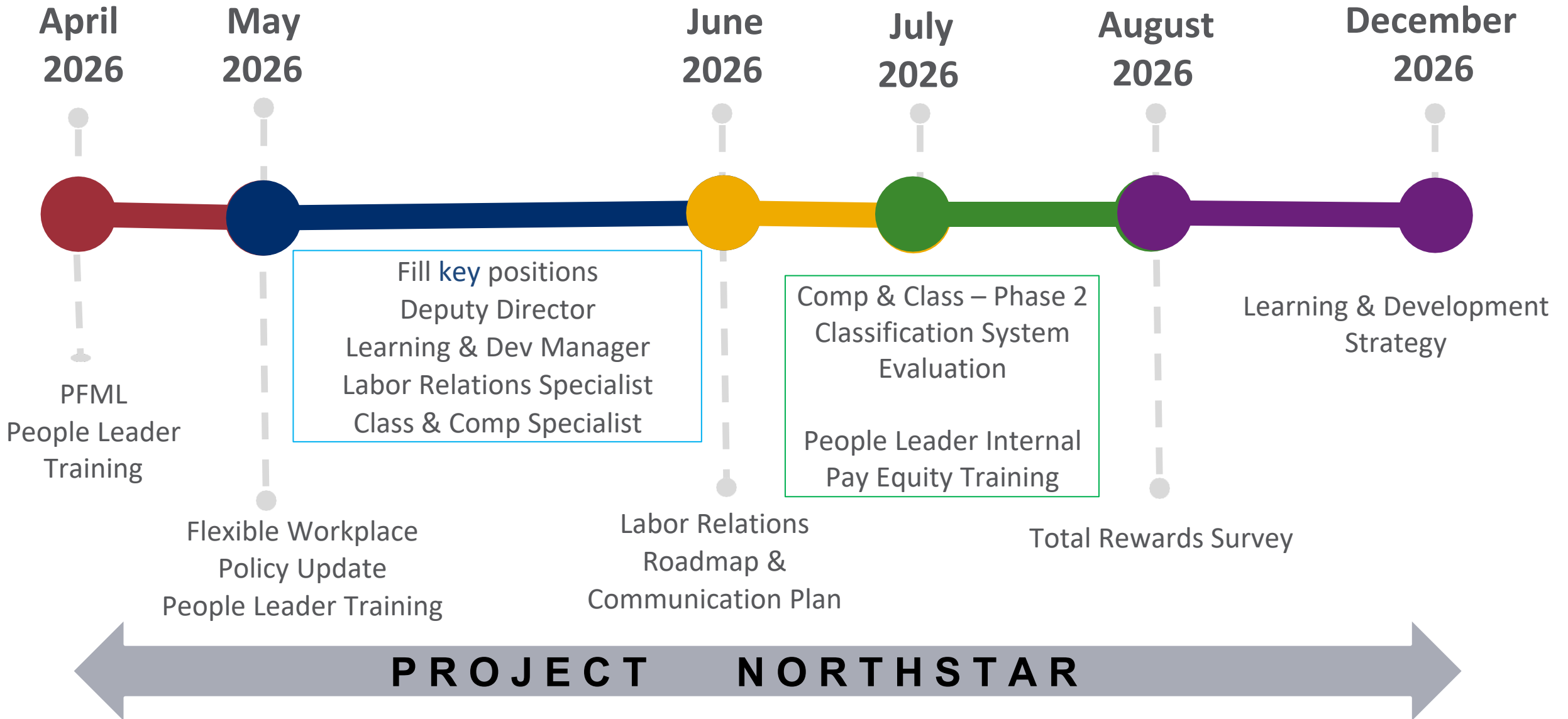
## Strengthen Relationships with Key Partners

- Demonstrate being a strategic business partner, build trust, visibility, and cross-enterprise collaboration
- County Attorney, Sheriff, Compliance and Ethics, Communications
- Proactive relationship management with labor partners

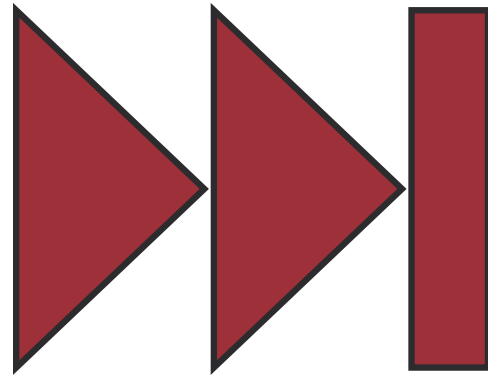
## Training & Knowledge Management

- Learning & Development strategy
- People leader focus to strengthen management practices and reduce risk

# 2026 Roadmap



# What's Next

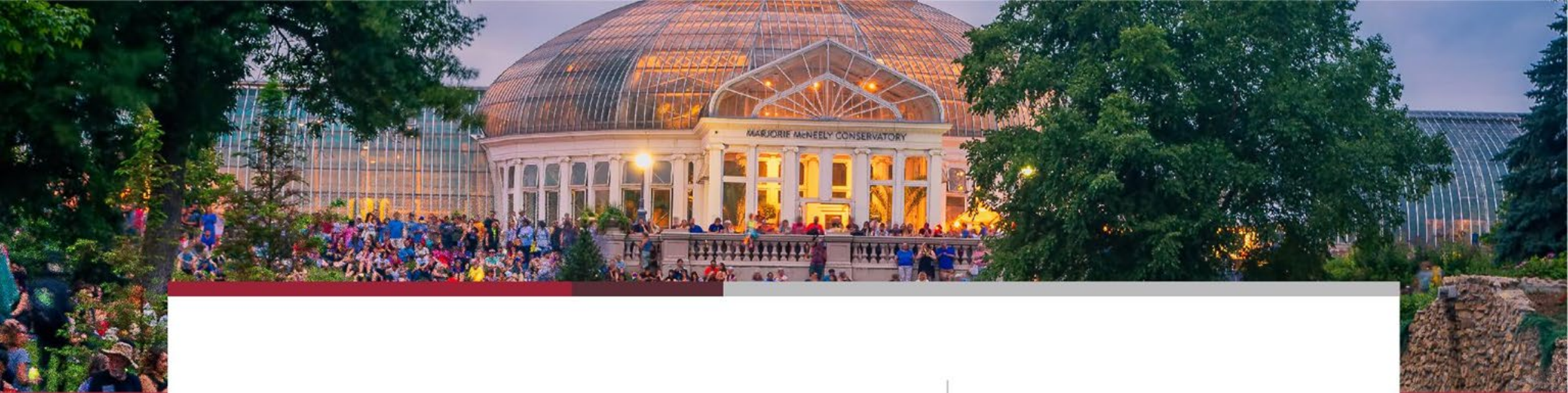


- Upcoming Board Workshops
  - Workforce analytics – June 9
  - TARP strategy – June 9
  - Total Rewards update (Benefits briefing & Total Rewards Survey results) - Fall
  - Labor Relations – TBD
- People Leader Essentials Learning Series
- Employee achievement awards redesign
- Strengthen Employee Resource Groups infrastructure
  - Establish guidelines, executive sponsor briefings, revise standards
- Budget pressure collaboration

# Discussion

*Based on what you've heard, what reactions, questions or guidance do you have?*





**Thank you!**

