

COUNTY PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 13, 1994, 3:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Tom Bacote
 Johnnie Evans
 Cliff Strassenburg, County Manager
 Juanita Pilgrim, Assistant County Manager
 Major James Bowser, Sheriff's Department
 Danny Higgins, Deputy County Attorney
 Pat Jones, Personnel Director
 Dr. Jesse Williams, Health Director
 Rhonda R. Davis, Deputy Clerk
 Press

ABSENT: Juanita Gonzalez

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Election of Chairman

Commissioner Bacote was duly elected Chairman of the committee.

2. Selection of Regular Meeting Date

The regular meeting date was set for the second Wednesday of each month at 2:00 PM.

3. Discussion of Comprehensive Jail Health Plan

Appearing: Major James Bowser
 Dr. Jesse Williams

Mr. Strassenburg advised Major Bowser and Dr. Williams have been working on a Jail Health Plan for some time now. The county jail is AMA certified. However, there is a lot of work involved in keeping the jail AMA certified and there are some staffing issues that need to be discussed.

Dr. Williams advised the Jail Health Plan is something that has been discussed for more than two years. Developing this plan would require the Sheriff's Department to transfer their regular health care budget into the package for the jail health care program. They want to set up a separate organization for jail health care and set this organization up under the Health Department. The staff from the health department has been doing this work at the jail. They would combine all monies for the jail health care line item. He reviewed the information packet presented (Exhibit A). He reviewed the funding analysis. They have tried to break down each position to show the actual costs. A regular nurse working a night shift would be paid more money than a regular nurse working a normal day shift. This is called shift differential. The objective is to try to provide the most service for the number of inmates in the jail. Currently, there is more work than there is staff to cover at the jail. The jail has spent more money for

treating inmates outside the jail than treating those inside. A staff overlap on the shifts is necessary in order to relay information from one shift to the next. The information presented shows what is now being spent and the current staff.

Major Bowser advised approximately 20 to 28 inmates come into the jail each day. A lot of medical services should be provided to inmates before they enter the jail. A physician extender could determine whether or not an inmate needs medical attention before they are put under lock and key. There are many instances where a physician extender could save the county a large amount of money in situations such as this.

Dr. Williams advised they must make sure each inmate must be in the best possible condition before being placed in the county jail. We need to make sure all staff is being used efficiently.

Commissioner Evans asked for the difference in dollars from the current expenses for jail health care and the proposed expenses with the new positions.

Major Bowser advised the current jail budget for FY94 is \$335,000. The budget from the Health Department is \$476,341 (this amount includes both staff and the contracted line item).

Ms. Pilgrim advised the figures were as follows:

Projected FY95: Jail	\$335,000
Health Dept.	<u>\$661,428</u>
	\$996,428 + 185,087
May - June '94	\$30,000

The new figures include the new positions.

Commissioner Bacote asked how many Health Department employees are working in the jail.

Dr. Williams advised there are currently four (4) full time employees working in the jail. The rest of the nurses and backup weekend on-call people are on contract. Full time employees will be hired to take the place of the contract employees. This new plan will alleviate taking people to the emergency room by having a physician on call.

Mr. Strassenburg stated the \$185,000 figure will offset the other costs. Due to the fact that some inmates will be turned away. We will have doctors who will come to see these patients. This will free up deputies or staff who would normally have to take the inmate to the hospital and wait with them while they receive treatment.

MOTION: Commissioner Evans offered a motion to recommend this plan be presented to the full board for approval during the April 26, 1994 meeting.

SECOND: Commissioner Bacote

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Bacote asked if this action will present any accounting problems.

Mr. Strassenburg explained that Sheriff Bedsole has agreed to put his money for jail health care into this budget line item.

Dr. Williams advised if they receive the go-ahead there will be a transitional period that must go on. They will have to hire staff and it will be some time before the whole program can be organized. Pat Jones asked how they are to deal with nurses who pro-rate time to the jail.

Dr. Williams advised they will do away with all contract employees. New employees will be hired to take their place. He advised that the nurse who has been coordinating the working of nurses at the jail will be head of this department. They will keep key people and make sure the jail stays in full AMA compliance. He feels this will save the county money over the long run.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

The committee directed Mr. Strassenburg to proceed as needed to get this program underway.

Mr. Strassenburg also advised he and Pat Jones are working on a salary plan for employees. Currently, the county has 60% of it's employees in the first step of their salary grade. This is creating a lot of problems. They will have information at a future meeting and will present several different alternatives at that time.

Commissioner Evans stated there is some concern among private sector employers that the county is now in the position because of benefits to hire people away from small businesses. It is happening and is causing concern with some citizens of the county. The type of positions he is referring to are maintenance.

Mr. Strassenburg stated this situation changes with different positions. A lot of employees filling professional positions are taken away from the county by the private sector.

Commissioner Evans stated the county needs to be competitive with professional positions. He feels our current hiring procedures are efficient, but we may need to look into this particular situation. He asked if the personnel office checks with a potential employees current employer for references.

Mr. Strassenburg advised there is a question on the county job application that asks if the person's current employer may be contacted and if the person advises they may not, they respect their wishes.

Pat Jones advised that Department Heads interviewing applicants usually check with the current employer and any references.

Dr. Williams advised that Commissioner Bacote sits on the Board of Health and they have submitted a proposed career pay plan with modifications of benefits. Some salaries would need to be adjusted.

Commissioner Bacote stated the vacancies in the human services areas concern him. People should be moved along after a certain period of time by the department head after some consultation with the county manager.

Mr. Strassenburg stated the county has taken away from it's employees the incentive to be better than average.

Commissioner Bacote stated the county needs efficient, competent people just as the private sector does.

Mr. Strassenburg again stated he and Pat Jones are looking into these concerns.

Pat Jones advised she has been in contact with several governmental agencies and they seem to be in the same dilemma as the county. We will have to be creative in it's solutions. There is no concrete solution to this problem.

Meeting adjourned at 4:01 PM.