

COUNTY PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING  
JANUARY 11, 1995, 2:00 PM

PRESENT: Tom Bacote, Commissioner  
John Keefe, Commissioner  
Lee Warren, Commissioner

STAFF: Cliff Strassenburg, County Manager  
Brenda Foreman, Sr. Staff Attorney  
Pat Jones, Personnel Director  
Rhonda Davis, Deputy Clerk

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Election of Chairman

Commissioner Lee Warren was elected Chairman.

2. Selection of Regular Meeting Date and Time.

It was the consensus of the committee to continue meeting on the second Tuesday of each month at 2:00 PM.

3. Other Committee Concerns.

Commissioner Keefe expressed his concerns about the county's sick leave policy. He feels there should be a cap on the amount of time an employee can accrue and that accrued sick leave should not be transferred into years of service at retirement time.

Mr. Strassenburg stated the State Retirement System allows the use of accrued sick leave toward retirement. That is not a county policy. County employees are part of the Local Governmental Retirement System which follows the State Retirement System rules. He explained that at the beginning of the fiscal year, any annual leave time over 30 days is transferred into sick leave. Any accrued sick leave accrued an employee may have at retirement date can be applied toward their years of service. There is also a cap on the amount of sick leave that can be applied.

Ms. Jones stated she would like to do a survey to see what our counterparts do in this particular situation. However, some of those programs offer a disability program, that the county doesn't.

Commissioner Bacote stated he is concerned about the retention of employees. He mentioned the restructuring of the County's pay scale and wants to continue with this project.

Mr. Strassenburg stated many department heads encounter difficulty in the recruitment of personnel especially at the senior levels. When these people are hired, they start at the bottom of the scale as far as accrual of sick and annual is concerned, as well as their pay scale.

Commissioner Bacote stated the county trains so many people and then they go elsewhere because of the current pay plan.

Mr. Strassenburg stated the county has a merit system on the books, but it is not currently being funded and when it was funded, it wasn't distributed fairly. This plan has not been funded for a number of years. Currently, the county has 60% of it's employees at the entry level of the pay plan. The Board of Commissioners voted to have the Personnel Department study and work on a plan that moves and employee through the scale according to their years of service. Pay raises would be built into the computer system and implemented on an employees anniversary date. If we continue with this system for a long period of time, it will take away the incentive to work harder over a period of time. It will also begin to cost alot of money. He sees the proposed plan as a transition plan to be used for four or five years. The County needs to come up with a good performance based system. They may need to hire someone to develop this program for them.

Ms. Jones explained the proposed pay plan. She explained the current longevity system. In the new system, once the maximum of the base salary has been reached, the employee will receive a bonus check on their anniversary date.

Mr. Strassenburg noted this new plan will eliminate the longevity pay in December and the annual cost of living increases.

Ms. Jones also noted the Board of Commissioners can adjust the salary ranges.

Mr. Strassenburg advised this plan will save the county money for some years, but we will need to transfer to the performance based system.

Pat Jones advised there will be a minimum and maximum salary range for each position. Hiring rates will be established. Employees can be hired at a level that is lower than the minimum salary during the probationary period. This can also save the county money in lapsed salaries. This money can help pay for the new pay plan. The Commissioner gave authorization to complete implementation of this plan. The projected date for implementation is July 1, 1995. The plan has been presented to all Department Heads and have asked for feedback. A presentation to county employees in order to obtain feedback from them will be scheduled. Once the feedback is received, it will be compiled to see if these needs can be addressed. A meeting with the ~~Date~~ *Date* Processing Department has been scheduled for January 18, 1995 so that they can look into the system and see if all of the necessary forms can be computer generated. All personnel ordinances will need to be reviewed to see what changes need to be made.

Mr. Strassenburg also stated they will have to look into the Career Development Plan the Sheriff's Department has. There may be some complaints about the elimination of the longevity.

Commissioner Bacote noted his concern with the county's high turnover rate. This high turnover means we are constantly training people.

Commissioner Keefe stated the County needs to pay it's employees what they are worth, but the County also has a good benefits package. They must address the fact that cutbacks may be needed in the future.

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Mr. Strassenburg stated that the possibility of future cutbacks need to be addressed during a board planning session. They must sit down and carefully think about what services we feel can be cut or reduced and go from there.

Commissioner Bacote stated that government is not a private business. A private business owner can control what he or she will or will not do. Government is not always like that. We don't always call our own shots.

Mr. Strassenburg noted they will continue to refine the proposed pay plan.

Commissioner Bacote stated he wants the Board to look at this pay plan seriously. He wants to see it completed.

Meeting adjourned at 2:55 PM.