

COUNTY PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 12, 1995, 2:00 PM

PRESENT: Lee Warren, Chairman
Tom Bacote, Commissioner

ABSENT: John Keefe, Commissioner (due to illness)

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

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Progress Report on Proposed Pay Plan Option I.

Pat Jones presented a Modified Pay Plan Option I with a recommended implementation date of July 7, 1996 along with the updated costs to implement the program for the first year (1996) and the second year (1997). This handout is attached as "Exhibit A". Ms. Jones noted there was a lot of work to do in her department as well as the Information Services Department, therefore she needed a definitive go-ahead for the plan.

Commissioner Warren asked how this plan would affect the Sheriff's Department.

Cliff Strassenburg stated the Sheriff's Department pay plan is an issue that has not yet been resolved. If the Sheriff's Department plan is kept as it is and the new pay plan is implemented, the Sheriff's Department will have two longevity plans for its employees. The current Career Development Step Plan currently used by the Sheriff's Department was begun when Otis Jones was Sheriff. Sheriff Jones never gave merit raises to his employees and the Career Development Step Plan was a program he came up with instead of using the merit pay plan. However, there came a time when Sheriff's Department employees received county longevity pay, career development steps and merit raises. He feels the plans should be merged.

Ms. Jones stated they have only met with the Sheriff's management team to discuss the proposed Pay Plan Option I. She feels the plan has not been properly explained to the employees of the Sheriff's Department. She stated a new plan will clean things up.

Commissioner Warren also questioned the salaries of the employees at the Sheriff's Department, and how they compared to the City of Fayetteville Police Department. He has been made aware of some Sheriff's Department employees going to work for the City Police Department and is concerned that the County is training these officers and they are then leaving the Sheriff's Department for better pay.

Ms. Jones advised the last study of the positions in the Sheriff's Department was done in the 1980's.

Commissioner Bacote noted the request for the development of a new pay plan was to put employees on an equitable pay level.

Mr. Strassenburg then discussed the COPS MORE Grant recently received by the Sheriff's Department. The objective of this grant is to get more police officers in the field.

Certain positions in the Sheriff's Department that are occupied by sworn law enforcement officers that do not require a sworn officer and can be filled by civilian personnel were identified. Sheriff Butler identified seven such positions in his grant request. The certified officer filling this position will be placed in the field and a new civilian position will be created. The sworn officer filling the position will be given a choice of either taking the civilian position at a civilian pay grade which may be lower than their current salary, or going into the field. Any sworn, certified officer taking the civilian position will lose their law enforcement officers benefits such as enrollment in the LEO Retirement system and the 401K match. He noted the grant funds will also be used to purchase eighty-eight computers.

There was discussion concerning the City pulling its police officers out of the DARE program and what the costs would be to replace them with Deputy Sheriffs.

Commissioner Bacote stated he would be supportive of picking up those DARE positions because the school system is merged now and all schools should be afforded the same programs.

Commissioner Warren also stated he had a problem with offering a program to students in the county and not offering the same program to students going to schools within the city limits of Fayetteville.

Mr. Strassenburg then discussed the Pre-Trial Release program. He stated this program is currently run by the Sheriff's Department. The program includes two sworn deputies and three civilian workers. Sheriff Butler, the District Attorney and the Chief District and Superior Court Judges feel the Pre-Trial Release program should be run by the County and not the Sheriff's Department. This program determines who should be released while they await trial. This program works in an effort to relieve overcrowding in the jail. A Judge makes the final decision concerning whether or not the accused person awaits trial in jail, but a majority of the time bases their decision on information received from the Pre-Trial Release program, as they do all the research and make a recommendation to the Judge. The reason for the request to move it from the Sheriff's Department was the feeling that the department making the arrests should not be making these determinations. To move this program under the County, a Coordinator position would have to be created. The Sheriff has stated he will turn over the clerical or civilian positions to the County. Mr. Strassenburg noted the Board may want to consider taking the Pre-Trial Release Program, the Pre-Sentencing Diagnostic Team and the Day Reporting Center and making them one unit and let them report to Juanita Pilgrim. Mr. Strassenburg stated he will be providing more information and a recommendation on the Pre-Trial Release program along with additional information on the COPS MORE grant to the Board for a decision at an upcoming meeting. With the change in the Pre-Trial Release program, the two sworn officers currently in the program will be handled two ways. One officer will go in to the field and the second one will go to the jail to evaluate prisoners. This will coincide with a program involving Judge Keever. Mr. Strassenburg noted that the County will be picking up the tab next year on the seven civilian positions created as a result of the COPS MORE grant. Mr. Strassenburg noted he will bring all of this information to the Board at one time during an upcoming Commissioners meeting.

Commissioner Warren again asked how the new pay plan would affect the Sheriff's Department.

Mr. Strassenburg stated the Board will need to decide whether or not to keep both the new pay plan and the Career Development Step plan.

Commissioner Warren recommended the Personnel Committee invite the Sheriff to the next meeting in order to receive some input from him on the affects the new plan will have on his department.

Commissioner Warren stated he could not attend the next regular meeting scheduled for August 9, 1995 and suggested the Personnel Committee meet again on Wednesday, August 16, 1995 at 2:00 PM in Room 564 of the New Courthouse. Everyone was in agreement with the new date.

Commissioner Warren then instructed the Deputy Clerk to invite Sheriff Butler to the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 PM.