

**COUNTY PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1998, 2:00 PM
RECESSED FROM OCTOBER 14, 1998**

Present: Johnnie Evans, Chairman
Tom Bacote, Commissioner
H. Mac Tyson II, Commissioner

Staff: Cliff Strassenburg, County Manager
James Martin, Deputy County Manager
Doug Canders, Staff Attorney II
Amy Cannon, Finance Director
James Lawson, Interim Personnel Director
Rhonda R. Davis, Deputy Clerk to the Board

Chairman Evans duly called the meeting to order.

Chairman Evans noted this meeting was a continuation of the Personnel Committee meeting recessed on October 14, 1998. This meeting is being held to allow the Personnel Committee to receive a report from Management on the proposed Human Resources Organization.

Mr. Strassenburg stated Management wanted to consolidate the Human Resources organizations or functions into one department. These functions are currently fragmented throughout the County. Some functions are being performed in the Personnel Department, some under the County Manager's Office and some under the Finance Department. Management also wanted to introduce staff development and training into the functions performed by this department and wanted to do all of this with a reduction in operating costs.

Mr. Strassenburg then presented a proposed organizational chart of the Human Resources Department. He noted the Human Resources Director and the Management Training Coordinator would be new positions. The Office Assistant III position would provide clerical services for the department. The Management Training Coordinator position would be the staff development position which achieves one of the goals Management wanted in the organization of this department. The Personnel Services Manager would perform the same functions as a Personnel Director. This position's duties would consist of recruitment, screening of applicants maintenance of personnel files, etc. This position is currently vacant due to the retirement of our former Personnel Director. The Risk Management/Benefits Manager would be responsible for benefits, insurance and workers compensation. This position is currently being held by James Silman. The Classification/Compensation Outsource position was formerly held by Ellen Fadden and would perform the duties she previously performed. With the new pay plan, Management

did not see the need for any new reclassifications. He would like the department to be able to do any reclassifications in-house as he does not see a great deal of these to be done. Thereby allowing Management to eliminate this position. There would be a small amount of money allocated to have these functions out-sourced if there are reclassifications to be done that are beyond the department's capabilities. The Personnel/Benefits Specialist will do orientations and work with benefits. He noted the numbers in the right-hand corner of each box indicates the pay-grade of the particular position.

Mr. Strassenburg then presented another chart of the existing and proposed positions for the organization along with salaries and pay grades. He noted there are currently fourteen positions. They have reduced the number of positions by two for a total of twelve positions. Total salaries have been reduced by \$20,500 plus benefits which will equate to a total savings of approximately \$30,000 or more. He feels this organization is more consolidated and more efficient. He feels Management has achieved all three goals --- to consolidate the functions, introduce staff development and training and cut costs.

Commissioner Tyson asked what the basis was for putting Risk Management in with Human Resources. Why not put it directly under the County Manager or in the Legal Department.

Mr. Strassenburg advised Risk Management is more human resources oriented as it involves workers compensation and benefits. He noted the County currently has a very good person overseeing Workers Compensation. The County has seen a tremendous reduction in costs due to his efforts.

Commissioner Tyson asked how we were able to achieve these savings.

Mr. Strassenburg advised the savings were achieved through a good safety program and getting on top of Workers Compensation cases and getting individuals back to work and claims settled expeditiously.

Doug Canders also stated County employees have more confidence in the Workers Compensation program now and are not fighting it. Employees are ready to get back to work now more so than ever before.

Commissioner Bacote noted the County was spending a great deal of money on Workers Compensation claims before a Risk Management/Safety Director was hired.

Mr. Canders stated the County was spending approximately \$1 million per year on Workers Compensation claims and is now spending 300-400,000 per year.

James Lawson stated combining Workers Compensation into the same department with Personnel allows personnel staff to identify areas where an injured employee can perform light duty and help provide training in areas where there are safety issues that need to be addressed.

Mr. Strassenburg advised James Lawson would be the Personnel Services Manager. No one currently employed will lose their job in the organization of this department. Vacant positions are the ones that have been eliminated.

Commissioner Bacote asked why the Management Training Coordinator had the same pay grade as the Risk Management Specialist.

Mr. Strassenburg stated there were no supervisory responsibilities for the Management Training Coordinator and the scope of responsibilities are not as great as the Personnel Services Manager and the Risk Management/Benefits Manager. He noted Management was asking for a vote from the Personnel Committee to approve the organization and recommend the plan be presented to the full Board of Commissioners for consideration.

MOTION: Commissioner Tyson offered a motion to approve the proposed organization of the Human Resources Department as recommended by Management and forward this recommendation to the full Board of Commissioners for consideration and approval.

SECOND: Commissioner Bacote

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Evans noted he particularly liked the cost savings to the County that will come with this reorganization.

Commissioner Bacote asked if this would be a new department.

Mr. Strassenburg advised Human Resources would be a new department.

Commissioner Bacote asked if the creation of the Human Services Department will affect the efficiency of the services provided.

Mr. Strassenburg stated the organization would improve the efficiency of the delivery of these services.

Commissioner Bacote stated he would like to see this type of reorganization done with other County departments.

Mr. Strassenburg stated he has some other areas he would like to reorganize. He noted the attempt to change the way Animal Control services were delivered, but the Board of Commissioners did not approve of that change. He noted he has some ideas about reorganization of the County's Planning and Development services that would consolidate Planning, Inspections, Engineering and maybe the Fire Marshall's office. He would also like to look at the consolidation of Emergency Services. Also, the County could consolidate the human services agencies with a change in legislation.

Commissioner Bacote asked if the Personnel Committee could instruct Management to work on these consolidations. He would like to look at the restructuring of all of County Government. He would like this to be done as the Human Resources Department has been developed without displacing any employees.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

Mr. Strassenburg noted the fact that the Tax and Mapping departments have already been consolidated. He prefers to do the reorganization of a department or departments when a Director leaves.

Commissioner Evans stated he would like to see the County have a "one-stop" place to obtain all building permits to avoid instances where buildings are built and all the permits are received and then it is discovered the property is not zoned properly.

MOTION: Commissioner Bacote offered a motion to direct Management to explore the possibility of restructuring County Departments in order to save money and make the delivery of services more efficient.

SECOND: Commissioner Tyson

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

Mr. Strassenburg stated Information Services has had another Programmer to resign. This will put Information Services with only 50% of its programming staff. He reminded the Committee the Director, Howard Smith had advised the Board of Commissioners that his office would be in a critical state if his programming staff went down to 50%. Mr. Strassenburg advised Management and Mr. Smith will be speaking with a Company about doing the work the County needs to be done for Y2K. This will allow the remaining programming staff to work with the ongoing duties the County needs at this time.

Commissioner Tyson presented his copy of a letter addressed to Commissioner Evans as Chairman of the County Personnel Committee from four local real estate companies concerning the practices of Cape Fear Valley Hospital System with regard to recruitment of doctors and their referral to a particular real estate company in the area. It appears a member of the hospital staff is related to someone at this particular real estate company and this give the appearance of impropriety. He would like Commissioner Evans as Chairman of the Personnel Committee to ask Management to look into this problem and discuss it with John Carlisle, whichever he feels is best.

Commissioner Evans asked if this was something the County Personnel Committee should be looking into or should this problem be directed to the hospital with a request for a report back to the committee.

Mr. Strassenburg stated since he is the County's Liaison to Cape Fear Valley Health System, he will speak with Mr. Carlisle about this situation and report back to the Personnel Committee.

Commissioner Tyson asked if the letter could be forwarded to all Commissioners and a copy included with the minutes of this meeting.

Commissioner Evans instructed the Deputy Clerk to put a copy of the letter on each Commissioners' desk with a note that the Personnel Committee has instructed the County Manager to look into this matter. Commissioner Evans stated he felt this matter should be looked into.

MOTION: Commissioner Tyson offered a motion to adjourn.
SECOND: Commissioner Bacote
VOTE: UNANIMOUS

Meeting adjourned at 2:52 PM.