

**COUNTY PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, JUNE 10, 1999, 10:00 AM**

Present: Talmage S. Baggett, Commissioner
H. Mac Tyson II, Commissioner
J. Lee Warren, Jr., Commissioner

Others: Breeden, Blackwell, Commissioner
Cliff Strassenburg, County Manager
James Martin, Deputy County Manager
Amy Cannon, Finance Director
Tonya Harris-Council, Public Information Director
Eugene Hines, Health Department
James Lawson, Personnel Services Manager
Tom Miriello, Mental Health Director
Juanita Pilgrim, Assistant County Manager
Thanena S. Wilson, Director, Community Development
Neil Yarborough, County Attorney
Rhonda C. Raynor, Deputy Clerk to the Board
Community Development Staff
Mental Health Staff
Press

Commissioner Baggett called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION: Commissioner Warren offered the Invocation.

1. Approval of Minutes of the March 11, 1999 meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Warren offered a motion to approve the March 11, 1999 minutes with the noted correction to the date.

SECOND: Commissioner Tyson

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

Neil Yarborough asked the Committee Members to delete Item 5 from consideration.

MOTION: Commissioner Warren offered a motion to delete Item 5 from the agenda.

SECOND: Commissioner Tyson

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

Mr. Strassenburg noted the Mental Health staff has a meeting they need to attend and requests that Item 3 be heard next.

3. Consideration of Proposed Special Entry Rate Plan For Certified Clinical Social Workers in Mental Health Department.

BACKGROUND: Effective January 1, 1999, legislation under the Social Work Certification Act (G.S. 90B-3) mandated that all clinical social work services had to be provided by Clinical Social Workers certified by the North Carolina Social Work Certification Board. This certification requires a Master's degree in Social Work (MSW), successful completion of the certification examination (CCSW) and two years of qualifying social work experience. Compliance with this statute made it illegal for non-certified social workers to provide clinical social work services, even if they had provided these services prior to the January 1, 1999 mandate. Since this legislation, the Mental Health Center has experienced significant problems in retaining and recruiting those who are qualified or eligible for certification as Clinical Social Workers. The shortage not only has a negative impact on the quality of clinical services provided, but also the amount of revenue Mental Health receives from third party reimbursements. Mental Health has proposed implementing a special entry rate within the current salary range of the Clinical Social Worker classification to attract and retain qualified individuals to provide quality clinical social work services that would generate increased revenues.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Mental Health receives third party reimbursement for those services that are performed by certified Clinical Social Workers; with the lack of Clinical Social Workers, Mental Health Has indicated the potential loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars.
- The amount of revenues that would be realized from services provided by certified Clinical Social Workers would far greatly outweigh the additional amount of proposed salaries that would be granted to existing employees and to qualified new hires.
- Since the January 1, 1999 mandate, three employees have resigned from Mental Health to accept job offers making a higher salary. Two of the three accepted jobs in which they will perform the same function as they did with Cumberland County, while the other accepted a job with increased responsibility. A fourth employee also chose to resign to take some time off, and is going into private practice.
- Mental Health continues a strong effort to recruit qualified candidates for their Clinical Social Worker positions. Vacancies are advertised at many locations across the state including colleges and universities, medical centers, as well as many other mental health centers and clinics. Advertisement also takes place on the Internet through the local government job net and the National Association of Accredited Social Worker (NASW) web sites. These efforts have produced only minimal responses.

- The Area Director has the authority under State law to hire its employees at a rate within the range for their respective classifications. His decisions must be made within the established budget approved annually by the Board of County Commissioners. Since this proposal includes considerations that would affect the county budget, coordination with county authorities is required. A special entry rate for trainees would also need to be considered to maintain the relationship with fully qualified employees.
- The current salary range for a Clinical Social Worker is \$31,975 - \$46,094; currently we hire at the minimum of \$31,975. A salary survey conducted with several locations across the state indicates that other locations hire Clinical Social Workers above their minimum salary, which in some cases, is higher than our minimum salary. Additionally, the average salaries at several of these locations are above our average.

**Mental Health Clinical Social Worker
Special Entry Rate Plan**

1. Create "Clinical Social Worker" classification in grade 68 in the local pay plan.
2. Establish a special entry rate for Clinical Social Workers at 12.5% above the minimum salary.
3. Bring annual salary for current Clinical Social Workers to special entry rate and adjust above the special entry rate for experience pursuant to the Schedule-E.

**Schedule - E
Longevity in CSW Positions**

Longevity	Schedule-E %
3 Years	1.0%
10 Years	2.0%
5 Years	1.5%
15 Years	2.5%
20+ Years	3.0%

4. Establish special entry rate for supervisors of Clinical Social Workers at 12.5% above the minimum for the respective grade (*see note below*).**
5. Bring annual salary for current supervisors of Clinical Social Workers to special entry rate and adjust above the special entry rate for experience pursuant to Schedule-E.

1. The salary for provisional Clinical Social Workers (trainees) shall be 10% below the special entry rate.
2. The effective date is to be the beginning of the first pay period after approval of plan by the Board of County Commissioners.
3. Funding source to be revenues generated from services rendered by the Clinical Social Workers.

****NOTE:** Supervisors of Clinical Social Workers must possess an MSW and a CCSW.

RECOMMENDATION/PROPOSED ACTION: Consider recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to adopt the Special Entry Rate plan.

Tom Miriello, Mental Health Director advised this situation is both a regulatory and market driven issue. His department is losing its Clinical Social Workers to private and other Mental Health departments in other counties because Cumberland County's salaries aren't competitive. There are only two colleges in North Carolina that offer degrees in Clinical Social Work. His department currently has six vacancies among these positions. It was noted the latest employee quit to take a position at Fort Bragg and one was lost to Cumberland Hospital and one to Wake County Mental Health.

Commissioner Warren asked what the total cost for this change would be.

Mr. Miriello advised the costs should be offset by what Mental Health will be allowed to bill for.

MOTION: Commissioner Warren offered a motion to adopt the Special Entry Rate Plan as proposed to enable the Mental Health Department to provide services and collect the fees for those services.

SECOND: Commissioner Tyson

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Tyson stated he would like the motion to go further. The County has lost some of its Clinical Social Workers to Cumberland Hospital. He asked Mr. Miriello if Cumberland Hospital could be operated with or under Mental Health, would his department have the services of those Social Workers.

Mr. Miriello advised Mental Health would have the services of those lost Clinical Social Workers if Cumberland Hospital was operated with or under Cumberland County Mental Health.

Commissioner Tyson asked Commissioner Warren if he would be willing to add to his motion trying to bring about operating Cumberland Hospital by or in conjunction with Cumberland County Mental Health.

Commissioner Warren stated the consolidation of those two entities would be a long range goal and the item before the Committee for consideration is a short term fix that will provide immediate help to Mental Health.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

MOTION: Commissioner Tyson offered a motion to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to study the feasibility and encourage if at all possible the consolidation of Cumberland Hospital with or to work in conjunction with Cumberland County Mental Health.

SECOND: Commissioner Warren

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Tyson asked Mr. Miriello if he would be willing to work in good faith to accomplish this consolidation if feasible.

Mr. Miriello said he would work in good faith to accomplish it. He noted they have already begun trying to find ways to work together and consolidate services. He cannot speak for his Board, but he feels there is an interest among them to do this as well.

Mr. Strassenburg advised the Cape Fear Valley Health System Board of Trustees Finance Committee has already proposed this and is in the process of working on. The Health Care Study had this issue as a part of its recommendation. Assistant County Manager Juanita Pilgrim is on a sub-committee that is also working on this task. The work is already underway.

Chairman Baggett advised he is not sure this is a Personnel Committee matter as much as it is a Policy Committee matter.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

2. Report on Matters Discussed at the March 11, 1999 Personnel Committee Meeting:

a. Grants Writer Position

BACKGROUND: During the March Personnel Committee meeting, direction was given to consider a more aggressive approach in obtaining grants that might be available for any county agency. In accordance with this request, research has taken place to determine an effective way to implement a grants program.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- The individual(s) responsible for the research of available grants for any particular function must have a strong awareness of the goals and needs of every function; they

should also be apprised of any developments in these areas that occur in the respective industry.

- The county as a whole is very diverse in the many functions that we serve; it would be very difficult for one person to be fully knowledgeable of all considerations that need to be made in researching and maintaining grants for all departments.
- There are currently several county departments who already have personnel with experience in writing grant proposals. Many departments without experience express an interest in applying for grants and are aware of grants that may be available. Most departments routinely receive publications that provide information regarding developments in their industry and, at times, information about grants.

RECOMMENDATION/PROPOSED ACTION: Consider whether to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners a grants program that promotes a joint effort between an administrative representative in each department and a grants coordinator, who would act as the central coordination point in facilitating the grants program. The coordinator would be responsible for obtaining information from the departments regarding their objectives and any available grants that may assist in these objectives. The coordinator would also maintain coordination with the departments to ensure that all applicable grants have been considered. The coordinator would assist in preparing and finalizing the proposals for submission to the foundations. Seminars and workshops are available to provide training to the employees involved in the grants program, and several of our employees who are already proficient in the grants process, could provide technical expertise.

Chairman Baggett noted the Sheriff's Office has its own grants writer who has done a wonderful job over the last several years. That particular position in the Sheriff's Office requires some specific degree of skills. The grants writer position for the school system also requires specific skills. Were these agencies considered when this position was being studied?

James Lawson advised some departments have experienced grants writers and the county grants writer could provide assistance to that person if it was needed. Some departments have little or no experience and the grants writer could initiate the process and assist in writing grants for those departments. He has spoken with Mental Health and their situation is that the grants they apply for are so competitive, they have outsourced the writing of their grants. This needs to be a collective effort. What is involved will determine the approach. No one working for the county who is currently working with grants will lose that designation because of this new position.

Mr. Strassenburg noted that during the Commissioners budget workshop the position of a grants writer was discussed. The Board may want to consider a grants writer that will perform the following duties: 1) Serve as a central clearing house on the availability of

grants to have a cataloging of grant assistance. 2) As information is found it will be shipped to the appropriate department if necessary. All grants require demographic information. This information can be maintained and made available to departments. 3) For departments that have no experience or grants with no particular departmental designation, the grants writer will write those grants. Mr. Strassenburg then noted the County could take a skilled grants writer and have a working grants committee to pool energy and work together to do grants. He does not recommend changing what the county currently has, but pooling energy, staff and resources to do more.

Chairman Baggett stated his understanding is that the grants writer could help departments that currently don't write grants and would lend assistance to those departments that do write their own.

Commissioner Tyson asked Mr. Strassenburg if that was his recommendation.

Mr. Strassenburg stated that was his recommendation. He noted Mr. Lawson would be obtaining additional information on a proposed salary and duties and will provide this information to the Board of Commissioners at the next budget meeting on June 14, 1999.

MOTION: Commissioner Tyson offered a motion to approve the recommendation of the County Manager to develop a grants writer position as outlined.

SECOND: Commissioner Warren

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

Commissioner Warren asked Mr. Strassenburg what department he envisioned the grants writer position would be in.

Mr. Strassenburg advised he would see that position being under Administration.

Commissioner Tyson asked Mr. Strassenburg to look at purchasing Pentium 3 computers in the future as they now have the capability to provide voice recognition software. He feels the use of these types of computers by county staff would decrease the need for secretarial assistance.

b. Contract Physicians In The Health Department

BACKGROUND: The Health Department currently has several physicians with whom it contracts for professional medical services. Through the negotiation process, they have been successful in obtaining their services at a substantially less than fair market value. The fair market value of the services of a contracted physician is in excess of \$100.00 per hour. Specialists, would of course, receive a higher rate. Most of the individuals are paid \$70.00

per hour. The specialists, an Orthopedist and a Neurologist, receive \$80.00 and \$95.00 per hour respectively.

Physicians employed by the Health Department are paid far less than its contracted physicians. This holds true after accounting for fringe benefits on a computed hourly basis.

Commissioner Warren asked if any of the Health Department staff see any action the committee would need to take at this point.

Eugene Hines with the Health Department noted the salaries paid to the Health Department's full time physicians does include the salary increase recently approved by the Board of Commissioners. The rate was much lower before the increases were given.

No action taken by the committee on this item.

4. Consideration of Community Development Specialist Reclassification.

BACKGROUND: Since its inception, Community Development has progressively developed the programs and services they provide to Cumberland County. As a result, the responsibilities and functions of the positions in this department have experienced some changes. While many of these changes were recognized during the classification study conducted by David M. Griffith (DMG) and Associates, some were not. In addition, some functions have grown subsequent to the DMG study, while other changes have occurred with the transition to a new director. One position that has particularly been affected is the Community Development Specialist. A review of the data collected by DMG in comparison to the revised description of duties provided by Community Development revealed the need to perform a classification review of this position. Consequently, a comprehensive position questionnaire has been accomplished, as well as a desk audit in order to compile complete information for consideration in the classification review.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- The following functions were omitted from the questionnaire obtained during the DMG study, and therefore excluded from consideration in their classification evaluation:
 - Oversees the effort to coordinate and implement the Citizen Participation Plan and the Continuum of Care Program; publicizes available programs and resources to meet community needs; identifies target groups to market these programs to; coordinates meetings, compiles and presents information; provides

technical assistance in the qualification and application of funding from available programs.

- Manages the automated functions of the Integrated Disbursement Information System (IDIS) and the Community 2020 system. These systems store information regarding the funding of subgrantees, to include their budget and expenditures; also provides a means to obtain graphs, maps and valuable statistical information that is used for presentations and for reporting and tracking purposes.
- Evaluates and calculates reimbursement requests to ensure eligibility and makes determination prior to payment.
- The following functions are responsibilities that have been added to this position:
 - Assumed the lead role in reviewing applications for funding requests; primarily responsible for prescreening applications to ensure eligibility in accordance with federal requirements; determines which requests should be approved for funding, and has final approval authority to grant funding for requests under certain programs; recommends approval to the director those requests in which the director has final approval authority.
 - No supervisory functions were previously described; however, since the implementation of the DMG pay plan, supervisory duties were assigned and have gradually increased; the CD Specialist now supervises the CD Technician (gr. 63) and will supervise the functions of the Special Populations Coordinator (gr. 70). This includes instructing, assigning and reviewing work and coordinating activities.
 - Primarily responsible for ensuring that all contracts contain the appropriate language to ensure that the sub-grantee agreements are in compliance with federal guidelines with regard to requirements for funding programs. Knowledge of legal terminology and experience in preparing contracts is beneficial.
 - Acts in the absence of the director; has complete authority to make decisions on all issues when acting in this capacity.
- The responsibilities of this position requires sound judgment and strong analytical skills in making proper decisions. The impact of improper decisions could result in the loss of thousands of county dollars. This position makes decisions for which it is held accountable in granting funds from federal programs to sub-recipients.

Improper decisions could ultimately affect the entitlement programs Community Development receives funding for each year.

- The following considerations were made regarding the classification and grade for this position:
 - This position supervises the Special Populations Coordinator, which is at grade 70.
 - In addition to serving as the manager of the Community Services division, this position serves as the acting director in the absence of the CD Director.
 - The other division leaders are the Housing Services Manager, grade 72 and the Finance Officer, grade 71; the levels of responsibility are similar in nature in comparison to the Community Development Specialist.
 - Additional comparisons showed a relative level of responsibility existed in the position descriptions for the Assistant Recreation Director, the Deputy Director of Solid Waste and the Communications Director, all in grade 72.

FINDINGS: The role of this position has transitioned essentially from providing assistance and support to the director to assuming responsibility in many of the decisions made regarding the granting of federal funds to sub-grantees. Additionally, this position oversees and coordinates many of the activities relating to the implementation of the funding programs of Community Development. Involvement in all aspects of the Community Development functions inherently provides this position the awareness needed to perform in the absence of the director. As evidenced from the classification review done by the Personnel Office, the changing role of this position warrants an upgrade to a classification commensurate with its revised role.

RECOMMENDATION/PROPOSED ACTION: Reclassify position number 574, Community Development Specialist, grade 66 to Community Services Manager, grade 72.

Thanena Wilson, Community Development Director stated the Community Services section is now dealing with a larger number of agencies and this person will handle the day to day operations of the department in the absence of the director.

Chairman Baggett asked what the salaries were for the old and new grades.

Mr. Lawson advised a grade 66 is \$29,180 and a grade 72 is \$38,299.

Ms. Wilson advised the increase is approximately \$9,000.

Juanita Pilgrim, Assistant County Manager advised that from August of 1998 until January of 1999, the person serving in this position acted in the absence of a director. The request

should have come before the Committee earlier, but they wanted to give the new director an opportunity to review this person and have input into the recommendation.

Commissioner Tyson stated the Personnel Committee needs to be cognizant of the whole personnel picture for the County. Before he can agree to vote for this reclassification, he would like the Committee to consider upgrading the salary of the County Finance Director. She is currently making \$16,000 below what the Finance Director for the City of Fayetteville is making. He feels this is a much more chronic situation. He feels the County should award equal pay for equal work. He feels Mrs. Cannon has done an outstanding job for the County since her appointment as Finance Director and feels she is most deserving of this consideration.

Commissioner Warren advised he is in total agreement with Commissioner Tyson with regard to adjusting the Finance Director's salary. However, these are two separate actions on two separate positions. He is willing to look at any County employee. The Committee needs to act on the item currently on the table. He would support immediately looking at the Finance Director position.

MOTION: Commissioner Warren offered a motion to reclassify position number 574, Community Development Specialist, grade 66 to Community Services Manager, grade 72 and ask Management to look at the salary of the County Finance Director and bring information to the Board of Commissioners during their budget meeting on Monday, June 14, 1999.

SECOND: Commissioner Tyson

DISCUSSION: Chairman Baggett stated he feels this action needs to be taken with regard to the Finance Director. She has been wonderful to work with. He has been impressed with her work on the Eastover Sanitary Sewer District. He feels this position should be looked at during the Commissioners next budget session.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

6. Other Committee Concerns

Staff had no additional concerns to raise to the Committee.

Chairman Baggett asked if the County has a policy that deals with an employee that may be a member of a volunteer fire department and called to a fire that would affect their being able to get to work. He has been advised if such a situation were to arise and the employee was late getting to work they would have to take leave for that time.

Mr. Strassenburg advised there isn't a policy that covers a matter such as the one Chairman Baggett described. He feels a reasonable department head would allow the person to make up the time or it could be an excused absence so long as there is documentation.

Chairman Baggett stated he feels it should be excused if the time is for a few hours or so and it is documented. If the employee were to be out of work for an entire day the situation would be different.

Mr. Strassenburg advised the County has a policy for jury duty and military reserve duty.

MOTION: Commissioner Tyson offered a motion to ask the County Manager to look into and report on any policy change, if any to the Personnel Committee with regard to the matter mentioned by Chairman Baggett.
SECOND: Commissioner Warren
VOTE: UNANIMOUS

Chairman Baggett asked that the report indicate the current policies for jury duty and military reserve duty and how they are currently being handled.

Commissioner Warren stated he would like to see management look into allowing the employee to take some portion of a day.

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 AM