

**COUNTY PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1999, 4:00 PM**

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

Others: Cliff Strassenburg, County Manager
James Martin, Deputy County Manager
Howard Abner, Finance Department
Garrett Alexander, Tax Administrator
Grainger Barrett, County Attorney
John Bittle, Solid Waste Management Director
Amy H. Cannon, Finance Director
James Lawson, Personnel Services Manager
Howard Smith, Information Services Director
Rhonda C. Raynor, Deputy Clerk to the Board
Press

Chairman Baggett called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION: Commissioner Warren offered the Invocation.

1. Approval of Minutes of the August 12, 1999 meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Warren offered a motion to approve the August 12, 1999 minutes.

SECOND: Chairman Tyson

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

2. Consideration of Proposed Classification Changes.

James Lawson reviewed the Proposed Classification Changes for the committee. The information is attached to these minutes.

The following positions were presented for consideration:

1. Department: Administration
Position: # 52, Personnel Assistant
2. Department: Administration
Position: #45, Personnel Coordinator
3. Department: Administration
Position: #51, Recruitment & Selection Coordinator

4. Department: Administration
Position: #54, Proposed New Position
5. Department: Tax Collector
Position: #345, Assistant Tax Collector
6. Department: Tax Administration
Position: #218, Business/Personal Property Coordinator
7. Department: Tax Administration
Position: Proposed New Position of Tax Analyst
8. Department: Tax Administration
Position: # 124, Personal Property Manager

Mr. Lawson reviewed each of the classification changes. He presented a Proposed Organizational Chart for the Personnel Staff. He noted that even though the County has gone through the DMG study, the County constantly has classification changes that require adjustments. He then reviewed the proposed new position in the Personnel Office. There is currently a part-time person in the position that has been doing the functions of the position for some time. The person is doing permanent functions in the office that no one else is doing.

Commissioner Warren asked if it was a standard policy for departments to allow employees to take breaks during the day.

Mr. Strassenburg advised breaks are allowed in county departments. Employees usually receive one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Some departments have a formal policy and some don't. He advised he believed this policy was in the Personnel Ordinance.

Commissioner Warren advised he was interested in whether or not this policy was fluid throughout the County.

Commissioner Tyson asked questions about the different positions in the Personnel Office and the grade for each position.

Chairman Baggett asked that the annualized costs for these reclassifications be submitted with future requests so the Committee can have a total picture.

Commissioner Tyson asked if Management approved the reclassifications.

Personnel Committee

October 14, 1999

Page 3

Mr. Strassenburg advised Management recommends the reclassifications be approved.

Commissioner Tyson asked if a whole department shuts down when breaks are taken.

Mr. Strassenburg advised departments do not shut down completely to take breaks.

Commissioner Warren noted one way to relate breaks to actual time is to note a six-person office equates to 15 hours per week.

Commissioner Tyson stated time is money and he would like to make sure breaks are staggered in departments.

Mr. Strassenburg stated he feels sure all departments that allow breaks have them staggered.

Chairman Baggett advised he would be bringing up an item for the Policy Committee to consider at the next meeting that concerns the County's policies with regard to how benefits accrue for permanent part-time employees. He asked how part-time is defined.

Mr. Strassenburg advised a person working sixteen hours per week does not receive benefits. A person working twenty hours per week receives benefits.

James Lawson then reviewed the Tax Administration positions to be considered. He noted all the positions are being funded in the current budget of Tax Administration. No increases will be required to fund these reclassifications.

Garrett Alexander submitted background information that is attached to these minutes.

Commissioner Warren noted the Board of Commissioners added funds to the Tax Administrator's budget to allow GIS training in the mapping department. He asked how that training was coming along.

Mr. Alexander advised the funds are in the GIS item of the budget and the training will be given as soon as the GIS system comes on line later this year or early next year.

Commissioner Warren asked when the Mappers would receive the training.

Mr. Alexander advised the training would begin after the first of the year.

MOTION: Commissioner Warren offered a motion to approve the proposed classification changes in Administration, Tax Collector and Tax Administration departments as recommended by management.
SECOND: Commissioner Tyson
VOTE: UNANIMOUS

3. Discussion of Costs to Open the Wilkes Road Landfill for Additional Hours Each Week.

BACKGROUND: The Wilkes Road Operating Hours are currently open to the public 5 days a week (27 hours) and requires an Assistant Weighmaster for a total of 39 hours.

PROPOSAL I – Open to the public 6 days a week (34 hours) and would require an Assistant Weighmaster for a total of 47.5 hours.

Hire 1 new Assistant Weighmaster at a cost of \$31,122.

PROPOSAL II – Open to the public 6 days a week (48 hours) and would require personnel of 1 – Assistant Weighmaster, 1-Equipment Operator I and 1 – Solid Waste Inspector.

Hire 3 new employees at a cost of \$87,950.

PROPOSAL III – Open to the public 6 days a week (34 hours) and would require an Assistant Weighmaster to work the needed extra hours at overtime pay rate.

Cost to pay overtime at time and a half ($\$18.50 \times 8.5 \text{ hours} \times 52 \text{ weeks} = \$8,177$).

RECOMMENDATION: Although Proposal III looks good on the surface, it will be the hardest to manage. Assistant Weighmasters currently have every third weekend off. To require these individuals to work overtime would further cut into their family time, which is important to every one of them.

The Assistant Weighmaster position is a skilled position requiring data entry, attention to detail, accounting and dealing with the public skills. This position must be able to run both Ann Street and Wilkes Road facilities, which includes answering phones and dispatching vehicles to container sites and county facilities.

The Solid Waste Management Director recommends Proposal I and that an Assistant Weighmaster be hired for the additional hours at Wilkes Road. This individual will greatly increase efficiency, appearance of the scale houses and the ability to serve the public.

Mr. Martin reviewed the item for the Committee members. He noted Proposal III would do what the Committee asked to be done. However, Mr. Bittle is recommending Proposal I.

Mr. Bittle advised they would basically change the hours. The Weighmaster has to come in first thing in the morning and cannot leave the station until the last person is out of the gate at the site. He then reviewed the current hours of operation for the Wilkes Road Site. They are: Monday – Closed, Wednesday & Thursday – Open 12:00 to 3:00 and Friday and Saturday – Open 8:00 AM until 3:00 PM. He noted there has been a lot of overtime accrual since Hurricane Floyd.

Commissioner Warren asked what would allow the Wilkes Road site to be open from 8:00 AM until 3:00 PM on Wednesday and Thursday.

Mr. Bittle advised Proposal II would allow for that kind of operation at the Wilkes Road Site.

MOTION: Commissioner Warren offered a motion to approve Proposal II.

SECOND: Commissioner Tyson

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Tyson asked if there was a real need to have the Wilkes Road Site open for this many hours.

Commissioner Warren advised that in a County the size of Cumberland, it is necessary. He receives a lot of calls and complaints from construction companies and the building industry about trying to keep up with when they can and cannot take items to the Wilkes Road Site. If the time is cut, he feels it should be cut to 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM everyday. He feels having regular, consistent hours of operation would work much better.

Commissioner Tyson asked if Saturday was a busy day for the Wilkes Road Site.

Mr. Bittle advised approximately 250 vehicles go to the site.

Commissioner Tyson asked if there was a real demand to have the site open on Monday.

Mr. Bittle advised the facility would be used on Monday.

Commissioner Tyson asked Mr. Bittle if he concurs with Commissioner Warren's motion.

Mr. Bittle advised he does concur with Commissioner Warren's motion.

Chairman Baggett noted he feels the irregular hours have contributed to some illegal dumpings. He feels the consistent hours will be a big improvement in operations.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

4. Discussion of Computer Down-Time and Backup Computer System.

Howard Smith advised the Main Frame system has a supervisor at the very top of the system. Each section of the system is essentially a machine within a machine. There are two tax systems in the machine. They are identical. One is a primary system and the second one is for dial-in service and will be used for Internet access in the future. There are times when the first system is shut down and no updates can be made. If the supervisor is down, all the other systems are down. If the first tax system is down, the public has access to the second system. However, word needs to go out that this second system can be accessed. The last time there was a problem with the first system; the information about using the second system did not get out to the public. More specifically, it did not get to the Register of Deeds Office where the public does a lot of searches on the tax system.

Chairman Baggett advised he received a complaint from someone who was not able to get information on whether or not taxes had been paid.

Mr. Smith noted that situation resulted from the Collector's Office not being able to balance. They did not want to give information out that may be incorrect. They could have gone to the backup system in that situation also.

Mr. Alexander advised that sometimes both of the systems are down for a long period of time (2 days) that is when the levy is being calculated. They try to anticipate when this will be and when it would be best to take the system down. He noted he tried to contact the person that made the complaint, but was unable to reach them. The Register of Deeds may not have known the public could access a second tax system. He noted his Customer Service people now know there is a second system. He noted a detailed calendar is sent to Information Services by his office so that adequate planning can be done. As much as possible, he will try to advertise when the tax systems will be down.

Commissioner Warren asked if the required down-time for the system could be done over a weekend since Mr. Alexander indicated it was usually down for a few days.

Mr. Smith stated they do try to do most of the work requiring down-time on the weekends, but sometimes the work rolls into the first of the week.

Mr. Alexander also noted that sometimes a considerable number of staff members are needed to correct problems.

Chairman Baggett stated a lot of attorneys and real estate people close loans at the end of the month. If staff could stay away from having the computers down at that time of the month he feels it would lessen complaints.

Mr. Alexander advised the last two days and the first two days of each month are when all the end of the month balancing is done.

Chairman Baggett noted this item was for informational purposes only and no action by the Committee was needed.

Mr. Strassenburg advised staff is looking at a system that would allow citizens to access information from the County's computer files in all sorts of locations.

5. Consideration of FY 99-00 Performance Pay Implementation Plan.

BACKGROUND: In the 1999-2000 budget, the Board appropriated #847,734 for the implementation of a Performance Pay Plan to be effective in January, 2000.

Last year the Board of Commissioners delayed implementation of the Plan and instead approved a two percent salary increase for all employees who had worked for the county for one year as of October 24, 1998; required departments to complete performance appraisals on all employees, with no increase given as a result of those appraisals, as preparation for implementing the Personnel Committee's recommended rating scale for the 99-00 fiscal year.

Over the last three months a committee of the Deputy and Assistant County Managers, Information Services Director, Finance Director and Personnel Services Manager has studied the complexities of the performance pay process and recommends approval of the 99-00 Performance Pay Implementation Plan. (The FY99-00 Performance Pay Implementation Plan is attached to these minutes as Attachment "B".)

Mr. Martin then reviewed the "Calculation of Performance Pay Percentage" (attached). He noted this pay percentage is being recommended to the Committee for consideration.

Chairman Baggett asked if there was a time limitation for a decision on this matter. He does have a time limitation for this meeting and wants to give this matter the attention it deserves.

Mr. Martin advised some of this process has already begun at the supervisor level in each department. He then reviewed the schedule for the implementation of the plan. He advised he feels supervisors should not know the percentages until all of the ratings are received. He feels allowing supervisors to know what the percentages are will drive the ratings.

**Personnel Committee
October 14, 1999
Page 8**

Chairman Baggett asked if that would not happen anyway. He then asked if this matter could be continued until the next meeting in order to give it the full consideration it needed.

Mr. Martin advised that if something other than what is being recommended is done, he is not sure how long it will take to put the change into place.

**MOTION: Board Member Warren offered a motion to recess this meeting until
Tuesday, October 19, 1999 at 4:00 PM.**
SECOND: Commissioner Baggett
VOTE: UNANIMOUS

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 PM.