

**COUNTY PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2000, 9:30 AM**

Present: Talmage S. Baggett, Chairman
J. Lee Warren, Jr., Commissioner

Absent: Billy R. King, Commissioner

Others: Cliff Strassenburg, County Manager
James Martin, Deputy County Manager
Juanita Pilgrim, Assistant County Manager
Grainger Barrett, County Attorney
Amy Cannon, Finance Director
Marsha Fogle, Clerk to the Board
James Lawson, Personnel Services Manager
Karen Musgrave, Staff Attorney
Ken Young, Personnel
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 February 10, 2000 meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Warren offered a motion to approve the February 10, 2000 committee meeting minutes.

SECOND: Chairman Baggett

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

2. Consideration of Report and Recommendation for Classification Audit.

BACKGROUND: In August of last year, the Internal Auditor classification was upgraded from grade 68 to grade 70 to recognize the level of responsibility assigned to this job class. During this time, it was also noted that the Budget Analyst has historically maintained the same level of responsibility as the Internal Auditor, and should also be studied to ensure equity is maintained.

CONSIDERATIONS: An analysis of the different aspects of these two jobs did in fact reveal that they continue to have similarities. We also surveyed sixteen (16) other locations for salary information and found that the salary ranges for our Budget Analyst ranked 12th. In addition, we found that it was common for other locations to classify their Budget Analyst and Internal Auditor at the same level. Based on the study, it appears that the same should hold true to maintain internal equity.

RECOMMENDATION: Consider upgrading the Budget Analyst from grade 68 to grade 70.

MOTION: Commissioner Warren offered a motion to approve upgrading the Budget Analyst from grade 68 to grade 70.
SECOND: Chairman Baggett
VOTE: UNANIMOUS

3. Consideration of Recommendation for Revised Salary Ranges.

BACKGROUND: As a result of the performance pay increases awarded in January, some employee salaries have increased above the maximum rate currently listed for their job classification. Section 10-50 of the County Code states that all employees "shall be paid at a rate within the salary ranges established for their respective job classification except employees in a trainee status or employees whose present salaries are above the established maximum rate following transition to a new pay plan".

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Seventeen (17) employees currently exceed the maximum rate for their classification, three (3) of which were above the maximum as a result of the transition to the DMG pay plan 1/4/98.
- Our current salary ranges have an approximate spread of 45-50%.
- Other locations in the state use salary ranges that have spreads ranging from 45% up to 70%.
- A revised salary range of 65% for each grade would bring all employee salaries within the revised range for their job classification.
- The proposed pay schedule will not have any affect on the minimum rate currently listed for each grade; in addition, there will be no costs involved in this revision.

RECOMMENDATION: Consider adopting the proposed salary ranges for each grade in our pay plan effective January 2, 2000; the maximum rates shall be established at 65% above the minimum and the midpoint at the halfway point of each range. The proposed salary range information is attached hereto and made a part of these minutes.

Mr. Martin advised the Committee the situation of having some salaries exceeding the maximum rate listed for their job classification makes the County out of compliance with salary information forwarded to the State.

Grainger Barrett arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Martin also advised the County has some Sheriff's Deputies that have been paid above the maximum of their pay grade since the implementation of the DMG Pay Plan. He asked that the committee consider recommending to the full Board of Commissioners that this action be retroactive to January 2, 2000.

MOTION: Commissioner Warren offered a motion to adopt the proposed salary ranges for each grade in the County's pay plan as proposed by Management and that these changes be made effective January 2, 2000.

SECOND: Chairman Baggett

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

3. Other Committee Concerns.

Mr. Martin advised he has a report on the Deputy Clerk to the Board position. James Lawson has just finished the paperwork on this item late yesterday.

Chairman Baggett and Commissioner Warren approved the addition of this item to the agenda.

Mr. Martin advised Marsha Fogle, Clerk to the Board looked at the duties of the position. He noted that this action does not address performance quality; only the duties of the position.

The committee members asked the Deputy Clerk if she felt comfortable recording the actions of this item. She advised she had no problem in taking the minutes for this action if the committee was comfortable with it.

Mr. Barrett advised that since the committee would be addressing the duties of the position and not the performance of the employee in the position, there would be no problem with the Deputy Clerk taking minutes or being present during discussion of this item.

BACKGROUND: A classification study has been completed for the Deputy Clerk to the Board position. This study was conducted in response to a concern that raised a possible equity issue in the assigned duties and responsibilities of Deputy Clerk to the Board classification as compared to those assigned to the Administrative Coordinator. Our study included an analysis of the current job description, along with relevant information gathered from Marsha Fogle, Clerk to the Board. We compared the assigned functions of this position to others in our pay plan, including the clerk's position and the Administrative Coordinator. In addition, we conducted a survey of locations across the state to analyze their pay ranges, along with duties assigned to their Deputy Clerk to the Board position.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- This position is unique in that it has a working relationship with the Board of County Commissioners, and is therefore involved in a wide variety of activities and sensitive issues that require strict confidence. An error in judgement could have a severe negative impact on the County, depending on the issue.

- While some aspects of the Deputy Clerk to the board may be similar in nature to the Administrative Coordinator, we cited the following significant differences:

The Administrative Coordinator acts as an office manager under limited direction of the County Manager; establishes and maintains office procedures and practices; is primarily and solely responsible and accountable for office activities.

The Deputy Clerk frequently acts independently in carrying out tasks and making judgements, although subject to review by the Clerk to the Board, who has the primary responsibility of establishing office procedures and authorizing the Deputy to act independently. The Clerk to the Board is primarily responsible and accountable for all office activities, and the Deputy Clerk acts under the authority of the Clerk to the Board.

- Of the locations surveyed we found only four (4) other deputy positions in use; including our salary range, the average minimum salary is \$24,185. The average actual salary of the incumbents is \$31,561. Our Deputy Clerk is currently paid \$27,644. This data indicates that our pay plan gives the same consideration for the Deputy Clerk from the classification standpoint. However, it appears that locations have implemented some form of compensation to recognize the performance or experience of their Deputy Clerks.
- It is evident that this position may be required to perform at the same level (or higher) in certain aspects of the classifications in our comparisons, but there is no direct comparison that can be made to any one position.
- The closest comparison of the duties described for this position is with the Administrative Support II position, except the Admin Spt II class has some supervisory responsibility, whereas the Deputy Clerk does not. However, the variety of tasks and risk factors associated with the Deputy position probably compensates for the supervisory responsibilities assigned to the Admin Spt II class.

**Note: Classification is used to provide job titles and salary ranges that appropriately compensate the respective jobs. The minimum salary represents the starting point at which the job should be paid – it does not recognize performance or experience factors of the employee performing the job. The entire salary range for a job class provides a way to distinguish the levels of performance, experience and other factors related to the employee. Therefore, reclassification should not be used for the purpose of increasing an employee's salary.*

RECOMMENDATION: Consider an upgrade of the Deputy Clerk to the board from grade 63 to grade 65 (the salary range for grade 65 is \$28,422 - \$41,017).

Mr. Lawson asked for questions from the committee members. He stated that it could be said that this position is unique in that it works with the Board of Commissioners. The position could not be weighed with another position. It is close to the Administrative Support II position. It is the recommendation of management to upgrade the position

from a grade 63 to a grade 65. He noted the locations surveyed were Onslow, Mecklenburg, Orange and Guilford counties.

Chairman Baggett advised New Hanover and Johnston counties have Deputy Clerks, all of which are paid substantially more than Cumberland County's Deputy Clerk.

Mr. Lawson advised the salary range is comparable, but the incumbents have a salary that is higher.

Commissioner Warren asked if a longevity pole was done.

Mr. Lawson advised the Deputy Clerk in Mecklenburg County had been in the position for four years.

Chairman Baggett noted that a lot is asked of this position when the Clerk is away. The Deputy Clerk has to keep up with the boards and committees as well as many other items. It is a demanding position. A lot is asked of the person in the position and he feels they should consider that.

Commissioner Warren stated he was not sure what is proposed is where they need to be. He is not sure they are doing enough. He is sure there are other employees that need the same consideration. If there are other jobs that are not at an equitable state, they need to look at them as well.

Chairman Baggett asked when the last time the positions in the County were looked at.

Mr. Lawson advised the positions were surveyed when the DMG study was done in 1998.

Chairman Baggett asked Mr. Lawson if he has found the study well done and well funded.

Mr. Lawson advised that with all the different departments, he feels it is difficult to have a job description accurately describe a specific position. He has had concerns expressed from other departments.

Mr. Martin noted jobs are always changing. This is a work in progress.

Mr. Strassenburg noted jobs and duties have to be looked at from time to time.

Commissioner Warren stated he realizes they cannot be on target each time and this committee has considered many changes and will continue to do so as needed.

Mr. Strassenburg noted the study of this position looked at the pay range. Reclassifying this position to a grade 65 will correct the classification. An equity adjustment can be done when there is a need to look at a particular incumbent. The Clerk to the Board can

prepare a report on the uniqueness of this position and forward the information to him for consideration.

Chairman Baggett asked if there was a cap for an equity adjustment.

Mr. Strassenburg advised the cap for an equity adjustment is 10%.

Mr. Barrett noted the DMG plan was implemented in 1998. He asked Mr. Lawson when the survey of positions was done.

Mr. Lawson advised the survey was done in 1997-98.

Mr. Barrett noted the survey is already three years old.

Mr. Lawson advised he has spoken with several locations where an entire study of positions is conducted every four to five years. He would recommend a new study be conducted in the near future. He is hearing many concerns from departments and would recommend a new study be done within the next year or so.

Mr. Strassenburg noted the survey would be extensive in that it would look at each position.

Commissioner Warren asked what the costs of the last study were.

Mr. Martin advised the total for the last survey was less than \$60,000. The next survey would be less because the performance classification study would not need to be done.

Mr. Lawson noted a consideration in the next study would be the use of consultants to do interviews or "desk audits". It is difficult to do an accurate study without conversation with the person in the position.

MOTION: Commissioner Warren offered a motion to approve the upgrade of the Deputy Clerk to the Board from grade 63 to grade 65.

SECOND: Chairman Baggett

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM.