

**COUNTY PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2002, 8:30 AM
ROOM 564, COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

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

Others: James Martin, County Manager
Juanita Pilgrim, Deputy County Manager
Cliff Spiller, Assistant County Manager
Amy H. Cannon, Assistant County Manager
Grainger Barrett, County Attorney
Tonya Harris-Council, Public Information Director
James Lawson, Human Resources Manager
Vicki Ramsey, Finance Director, Coliseum Complex
Barry Warren, Planning/Inspections Director
Rhonda R. Britt, Deputy Clerk to the Board
Press

1. Call to Order

Chairman King called the meeting to order.

2. Invocation.

Chairman King offered the invocation.

3. Approval of Minutes of the December 13, 2001 Meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Warren offered a motion to approve the December 13, 2001 meeting minutes.

SECOND: Commissioner Baggett

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

4. Consideration of a Proposed Career Progression Plan for Inspectors.

BACKGROUND: Until recently, County inspectors have been assigned responsibilities in one area of specialty (building, electrical, mechanical or plumbing), including those who possessed certifications for multiple specialty areas. Additionally, there has been no incentive for inspectors to receive additional training or obtain additional certifications. Consequently, the inspection process requires the involvement of an inspector for each area in order to complete inspections, resulting in 12 trips for each inspection site.

The proposed plan "Attachment A" (attached to and made a part of these minutes) provides an incentive for inspectors to become cross-trained or certified in all specialty areas. Attachment B, (attached to and made a part of these minutes) details the amounts required for each inspector at each level of the certification process. Having inspectors trained or certified to perform inspections in all areas would reduce the number of required trips to each site from twelve (12) to four (4). In the long term, the plan should eliminate at least half of the budgeted travel expenses (currently \$96,374) and some inspector positions.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Requirements for each step in the proposed career progression plan:
 - Completion of training
 - Successful completion of the exam for certification by North Carolina's Code Officials Qualification Board at each level in each specialty area.
- Upon completion of each certification, a salary increase shall be granted as outlined in the proposed plan.
- Summary of certifications for current inspector staffing:
 - All inspectors except one are Level II in their specified area. One inspector is a Level II. Four inspectors have been certified in one or two other areas, but will have to be re-certified because their certifications are currently inactive due to the previous departmental policy.
- All inspectors are eligible for additional certification, and six are currently signed up for training to pursue certification in the additional specialty areas.
- Sufficient funding is available to fund career progression increases as a result of the elimination of a Minimum Housing Inspector position during the merger of the Inspections and Planning Departments, creating transfer of \$29,222 into the Planning Department's salary lines from the Inspection Department's budget. That amount would cover costs to implement the plan this fiscal year. If this amount is retrained in the budget for future years, it will cover the costs of future career progression increases until the process is complete.

RECOMMENDATION: Consider whether to approve the proposed career progression plan for full Board of Commissioner consideration.

James Lawson noted information on this plan had been obtained from other areas.

Barry Warren noted this progression plan was a part of the original package when the Planning and Inspections Departments were combined. He noted this progression plan will benefit the County because it will cut down on the number of trips to be made to inspect a particular site. The department is already seeing a reduction in costs because there has been a reactivation of some Inspector's certifications. Training is being done by having inspectors meet each other at sites and reviewing certain areas.

James Martin noted that there is a progressive system currently in place for Inspectors that gives monetary awards for obtaining certain levels of certification. Inspectors are not certified when they are hired, but are required to obtain certification within two years. The purpose of this plan is to encourage the Inspectors to go outside their current level of certification.

Mr. Warren noted there are funds in his budget to cover some of this plan. He is currently sending his people to take the necessary courses to become certified.

Commissioner Baggett asked if the proposed funding would be sufficient to motivate the Inspectors to seek additional certification.

Mr. Warren noted he had raised the amount he initially set, but has stayed in the grade levels established for these positions. He feels the proposed funding is sufficient.

Mr. Lawson noted they had contacted other locations and could not find any consistency in the amounts awarded for additional certification. It is his feeling that the amounts proposed are a good place to start.

Mr. Warren noted the funding is between 2% and 5%.

MOTION: Commissioner Baggett offered a motion to approve the proposed career progression plan for consideration by the full Board of Commissioners.
SECOND: Commissioner Warren
VOTE: UNANIMOUS

5. Consideration of the Creation of Sales Manager and Janitorial Positions for the Coliseum Complex.

Vicki Ramsey advised that due to the current budget situation, the initial request to come before the Committee has changed. It is their request to fill a vacant Director of Marketing position and have that person do the sales work that is needed.

She then advised that the Coliseum Complex would like to create four (4) Janitorial/Housekeeping positions at a starting salary of \$14,245 each. Currently the Coliseum is using contract services for these positions. It is estimated that there would be no additional costs; however, these employees could make an additional \$2,000 per year. If these individuals were employees of the Coliseum Complex, they would have a sense of ownership with the County and it is felt that moneys are better spent on the employee rather than a contract service. It is requested that the Coliseum Complex be allowed to retain the current contracted services janitorial staff in the proposed positions in lieu of a recruitment process.

Ms. Ramsey noted that all the costs associated with making these positions part of the Coliseum Complex staff have been considered. With the additional sports teams, this staff can be kept busy full time.

Commissioner Warren noted that he is concerned with the current economic slow-down and a facility that is in the same situation. Having contracted employees keeps the County out of the benefits situation. The appearance that adding four full-time staff will have needs to be considered at this particular time.

Mr. Martin noted that action on this item could be delayed and considered at a future meeting.

Commissioner Warren noted he felt the appropriate time to consider these positions would be during the budget process.

Commissioner Baggett asked if the Civic Center Commission had discussed these positions.

Ms. Ramsey noted the Civic Center Commission had not discussed these positions.

MOTION: Commissioner Baggett offered a motion to ask the Civic Center Commission to consider these four janitorial/housekeeping positions and to bring this matter back to the Personnel Committee at a later date.

SECOND: Commissioner Warren

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

6. Other Committee Concerns.

No other committee concerns were raised.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 AM.