

CUMBERLAND COUNTY PERSONNEL COMMITTEE  
NOVEMBER 25, 2003, 4:00 PM

PRESENT: Commissioner Billy King  
Commissioner Ed Melvin  
Commissioner John Henley  
James Martin, County Manager  
Juanita Pilgrim, Deputy County Manager  
Cliff Spiller, Assistant County Manager  
Grainger Barrett, County Attorney  
Doug Candors, Assistant County Attorney  
Mitzi Champion, Public Information Officer  
James Lawson, Human Resources Director  
Ann Hymes, Deputy Clerk

Chairman King called the meeting to order.

1. Discussion/Consideration: Amendment to Section 10-48 – Employee Compensation – Cumberland County Code

BACKGROUND: Based on recent discussions regarding the staffing concerns for Child Protection Services Investigative Social Workers. James Martin, County Manager proposes to amend Cumberland County Code Section 10-48 to provide more flexibility to address serious retention/turnover problems:

1. During periods when there is insufficient staff to meet the work demands of CPS, additional SW staff from other work units should be used in CPS, and compensated with some form of supplemental pay for work beyond the normal work schedule. Since the Department of Social Services Director has indicated that SWs who would be targeted for CPS assignments are FLSA-classified as non-exempt, they are entitled to and shall receive overtime pay at time and a half of their current pay rate for any work beyond their normal forty (40) hour work week.

The proposed revision to section 10-48 (attached), includes a new provision in paragraph (3) that gives the County Manager the authority to temporarily shift workers when it becomes necessary to assign staff to work in a critically staffed unit, outside of their normal assignment.

2. In order to increase the quality and efficiency of training of SW, the County Manager proposes that a Child Welfare Trainer position that was eliminated during the RIF be reinstated. Budget revisions to reinstate this position (SW III) were approved on 11/17/03.

3. The County Manager proposes in-range salary increases as an incentive to retain and recruit sufficient Investigations SW staff in CPS, with some emphasis on the quality of service. The DSS Director proposed a 3% increase for new hires and existing staff in Investigations. He also asked for consideration of an average 3% increase for 25% of Investigative staff, whose performance is "exemplary", and a future increase for Child Welfare positions, an average of 3% of 25% of those employees whose performance is "exemplary".

The proposed revision to section 10-48 (attached) provides the County Manager the authority in paragraph 4 to grant either salary increases or supplemental pay in response

to problems associated with turnover or retention (not performance). The County Manager may grant existing employees in critical classifications a pay increase up to the top of the salary range, or temporary pay supplements not to exceed 10% of the midpoint of the applicable salary range.

County Management and Human Resources identified the need for provisions that allow the county to effectively deal with other recruitment and retention concerns, where critical staffing levels severely impact Cumberland County's obligation to meet certain objectives. The revisions proposed for section 10-48 of the Personnel Ordinance provide the flexibility needed to address these concerns.

James Lawson, Human Resources Director, commented on recruitment and retention problems in this area. The recommendation will give the County Manager the authority to consider supplemental pay for Social Workers and other critical classifications that may occur. Mr. Lawson also noted the difficulty in hiring Social Workers for these positions. Following some discussion, the following motion was offered:

MOTION: Commissioner Melvin moved to recommend to the Board of Commissioners that the proposed revisions to section 10-48 of the Personnel Ordinance be approved.  
SECOND: Commissioner Henley  
VOTE: UNANIMOUS

2. Discussion/Consideration: RIF (Reduction in Force) Policy

BACKGROUND: Currently under section 10-119 of the Personnel Ordinance, employees who have been subject to reduction in force (RIF) are automatically referred for interview and evaluation for position vacancies for a period of up to three (3) years after their separation date. Experience suggests to Management and Human Resources that the three (3) year period for priority consideration may be an unrealistic timeframe for attempting to reemploy RIF'D employees. State policy provides priority reemployment consideration for one (1) year for state employees subject to RIF. Since the county has employees in health and human service agencies who are subject to the State Personnel Act, a one (1) year priority consideration period in the Personnel Ordinance would be consistent with the State policy.

James Martin, County Manager, recommended that, following a RIF notification, and to be consistent with the State's RIF reemployment policy regarding priority reemployment consideration for RIFs, Section 10-119 of the Cumberland County Personnel Ordinance be amended. Following a brief discussion, the following motion was offered:

MOTION: Commissioner Henley moved to recommend to the Board of Commissioners that the Cumberland County Personnel Ordinance sections relating to RIFs and priority referral consideration be amended to mirror the State Personnel Act, and that If approved, become effective January 1, 2004.  
SECOND: Commissioner Melvin  
VOTE: UNANIMOUS

The two proposed revisions to the Cumberland County Personnel Ordinance will be presented at the County Commissioners Meeting on December 15, 2003.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 4:30 PM.