

COUNTY POLICY COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 16, 1999, 11:00AM

PRESENT: Chairman Edward G. Melvin, Jr.
Commissioner Breeden Blackwell
Commissioner Talmage Baggett, Jr.
Cliff Strassenburg, County Manager
James Martin, Deputy County Manager
Grainger Barrett, County Attorney
Marsha Fogle, Clerk to the Board

1. Approval of Minutes: October 21, 1999 and November 4, 1999

MOTION: Commissioner Blackwell moved to approve.

SECOND: Commissioner Baggett

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

2. Discussion/Consideration of Refining the Eligibility Criteria for Retired Employees' participation in the County Health Insurance Plan.

BACKGROUND: A couple of months ago a situation presented itself causing the Policy Committee to take a look at the County's policy on county retirees' participation in the County Health Insurance Plan. As a result, the Policy Committee asked the County Attorney to redraft our policy refining the eligibility criteria set forth, as previously adopted by the Board of Commissioners. He presented the following Resolution to the Committee for their consideration:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of Cumberland County, North Carolina, adopted a Resolution on June 1, 1994, as amended on February 21, 1995, providing for the continued participation in the County's health insurance plan by retired County employees; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners determines that it would be appropriate to amend such Resolution to refund the criteria for eligibility for such participation set forth in such Resolution;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of Cumberland County, North Carolina, that its Resolution of February 21, 1995, providing for participation in the County's health insurance plan by certain retired employees, is amended by deleting numbered paragraph 1 thereof in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

- "1. To be eligible for continued participation in the County's health insurance plan, a retired employee must be:

- (a) Retired from County government with (I) at least ten consecutive years of County employment immediately preceding retirement in which the employee contributed to the NC Local Government Employees Retirement System or the NC Law Enforcement Officers Benefit and Retirement Fund; AND (II) at least three full years participation in the County's health insurance plan immediately prior to regular, early or disability retirement.
- (b) Receiving retirement benefits from the NC Local Government Employees Retirement System or the NC Law Enforcement Officers Benefit and Retirement Fund, and
- (c) Paying one hundred percent of the employee portion of the premium costs of such health insurance."

Except as specifically amended as set forth above, said Resolution shall continue in full force and effect.

MOTION: Commissioner Baggett moved to recommend approval of the amended Resolution to the Board of Commissioners.

SECOND: Commissioner Blackwell

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

3. Discussion of proposed employee suggestion program.

BACKGROUND: Approximately one year ago, Commissioner Blackwell asked the County Manager to look into an Employee Incentive Program which would reward employees for suggestions that would save the county money or otherwise make our delivery of services to the public more efficient. The proposed program submitted to the Committee is based on programs in other counties and the State Incentive Program. This suggested program will be presented to Department Heads on Tuesday, December 21 for their comments.

Commissioner Blackwell noted the program addresses some issues that might be of concern such as it establishes a window of time to evaluate the suggestion, protects the employee from retaliation, and a committee will evaluate the suggestions. Awards may be monetary or non-monetary. In addition, it was noted that if an employee suggestion was implemented the employee would receive compensation (monetary or non-monetary) early on as opposed to waiting a year. Mr. Blackwell noted his support of this proposed program.

Commissioner Baggett questioned whether consideration was given to paying ½ of the award up front based on projected savings and the second half of the money based on actual savings. He also noted that the maximum non-monetary award was three days off, which may not seem fair, based on the fact that the highest monetary award is \$5,000.

It was suggested that the program be reviewed again in a year or so to see how the incentives were working, and make changes then if necessary.

MOTION: Commissioner Blackwell moved to direct Staff to take this proposed program to the Department Heads for comments, and if there are no major changes, then forward it to the Board of Commissioners for consideration.

SECOND: Commissioner Baggett

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

MEETING ADJOURNED.