

October 1, 2007

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT

The Personnel Committee met Monday, October 1, 2007 at 2:00 p.m., in the QC Meeting Room, Third Floor, County Administration Building, 215 East Central, Bentonville

Committee Members Present: Hill, Hobbs, Hubbard, Schindler, Stephenson, Winscott, Wolf

Others Present: Circuit Clerk Brenda DeShields, County Clerk Mary Lou Slinkard, Elizabeth Bowen, Sidney Reynolds, Captain Hunter Petray, Barbara Ludwig, Richard McComas

Media: Scarlett Simms—Morning News

1. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Reorganizations

1. Assessor's Office Reorganization (*Decrease in overall positions = 8; decrease in payroll budget of more than \$280,000*)

- a. Add 5 Deputy Assessor I (Grade 5)
- b. Add 17 Deputy Assessor II (Grade 6)
- c. Add 15 Deputy Assessor III (Grade 7)
- d. Add 1 GIS Analyst II (Professional) *No change in salary*
- e. Add 1 GIS Analyst I (Professional) (*\$8,364.60*)
- f. Add 1 GIS Technician II (Grade 10) and delete Mapper/Researcher (Grade 10) *No change in salary*
- g. Add 2 GIS Technician I (Grade 6) (*\$3,332.00*)
- h. Delete 16 Deputy Assessors Personal/Business (Grade 5)
- i. Delete 24 Deputy Assessors Real Estate (Grade 6)
- j. Delete 4 Appraiser Assistants (Grade 4)
- k. Delete 4 Appraiser Business/Personal Property (Grade 6)

Human Resources Director Barbara Ludwig stated that the Assessor's Office is undergoing a very complex reorganization, and pointed out that the net result is a decrease of 8 in the overall number of positions, and an approximately \$280,000 reduction in payroll. Valerie Brewer of the Assessor's Office stated that there has been a decrease in real estate transactions, so they are pulling positions from that area to help in personal property and commercial appraisal. She said that the work is becoming more specialized, so people in deeds are being trained to handle homesteads. She said that different departments are busier at different times of the year, so they plan to cross train personnel to be moved among the various departments as they are needed. JP Hill made

motion to forward the Assessor's office reorganization to the Committee of Thirteen, seconded by JP Winscott. JP Stephenson stated that Assessor Bill Moutray and his staff were to be commended. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Information Systems Department

- a. Add one (1) GIS Specialist – Professional Grade and Delete one (1) GIS Technician – Professional Grade (*no change in salary*)

Barbara Ludwig stated that this is changing the title on *Schedule 4*, and there is no change in salary. JP Wolf made motion to forward to the title change to the Committee of Thirteen, seconded by JP Winscott. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

3. Road Department

- a. Add one (1) Heavy Equipment Operator – Grade 6 and Delete one (1) General Laborer – Grade 3 (*salary increase of \$1,206.40*)

Bridge Crew Superintendent James Fulford stated that he needs to delete a General Laborer position and add a Heavy Equipment operator, because there are times when he needs more than one piece of equipment in operation and he does not have enough operators. JP Wolf asked if the only difference in budget impact is \$1,200. Richard McComas stated that this was salary only, so the total impact will be about \$300 to \$400 dollars more, for a total impact of approximately \$1,600. JP Schindler made motion to forward the Road Department reorganization to the Committee of Thirteen, seconded by JP Hill.

B. Wage Adjustments

1. Sheriff's Office

- a. Captain's and Lieutenant's Salary (Market Adjustment - **\$17,519.12**)

Barbara Ludwig stated that she has received information regarding a wage study on these positions, and she has told Sheriff Ferguson that the difference in our salaries and those of the surrounding cities cannot be fixed right now without adjusting our salary ranges because our maximum is below the minimum for some cities. She said that the Sheriff is requesting wage adjustments for now, and they may come back at mid year to look at adjusting the salary schedule, especially for the higher grades. She said that when the grades for Captain and Lieutenant were set, it was not taken into consideration that most people who report to them are paid overtime, and many of them make considerably more than the person they are reporting to. JP Winscott made motion to forward wage adjustments for the Captain - CID, Captain – Administration, Captain – Field, Lieutenant – Field, and Lieutenant - Jail positions to the Finance Committee, seconded by JP Hill. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Assessor's Office

- a. Assistant to Project Manager (Internal Equity) **\$1,892.20**

Barbara Ludwig stated that she was requested by the elected official to look at the salary of this person, and she looked at positions of the same grade and length of service throughout the county, and is recommending this wage adjustment. JP Winscott made motion to forward the wage adjustment for the Assistant to the Project Manager in the Assessor's Office to the Finance Committee, seconded by JP Hill. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

3. Human Resources

- a. Accounting Specialist (Internal Equity) **\$1,851.20**
- b. Human Resources Manager (90% of midpoint) **\$3,361.26**

Barbara Ludwig stated that she was requested by the Accounting Manager to review the salary of the Accounting Specialist, and based on her grade and length of service there was a variance in the salaries around her so she is recommending a wage adjustment of \$1,851.20.

Richard McComas stated that he wants to bring the salary for this position up to the market value, because the HR Manager was hired at the minimum of the range 5 years ago, is experienced, and educated, and 90% of the midpoint is what he would have to pay a new hire. JP Schindler stated that the HR Manager has saved the county a great deal of money with the changes to the employee health plan, so experience pays off to our benefit and should be rewarded. JP Wolf stated that the HR Manager did come in at a low salary, and she agrees with JP Schindler. JP Hill made motion to forward the wage adjustment for the Accounting Specialist and the HR Manager to the Finance Committee, seconded by JP Wolf. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

4. Coroner's Office

- a. Supplemental Pay - Chief Deputy Coroner **\$2,400**

Barbara Ludwig stated that Coroner is requesting that a stipend be paid to the Chief Deputy Coroner, to recognize that in addition to attending calls, he is also responsible for some administrative duties in the office. She said that the Coroner estimated that the Chief Deputy spends approximately 15 hours per month, which is reflective of a pay grade of 6 or 7. JP Schindler noted the excellent job that the Chief Deputy did while filling in for the previous Coroner. JP Hill made motion to forward a stipend of \$200 per month for the Chief Deputy Coroner to the Finance Committee, seconded by JP Winscott. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

5. Road Department

- a. Heavy Equipment Operator (Internal Equity) **\$436.80**
- b. Truck Driver (Internal Equity) **\$915.20**
- c. Truck Driver (Internal Equity) **\$1,123.20**

Barbara Ludwig stated that hiring practices in the Road Department have not always been uniform in the past, but they are working with the Superintendents to correct that. She said that she is recommending wage adjustments for three employees in the Road Department. The committee discussed the possibility of having a central hiring system which would handle hiring for all county departments. JP Wolf made motion to forward

the wage adjustments for the three Road Department employees to the Finance Committee, seconded by JP Schindler. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

6. Elected Officials

Barbara Ludwig stated that if they are going to consider salary increases for Elected Officials, this is the year that they have previously stated that they wanted to look at them, since it is not an election year. The committee had a lengthy discussion concerning when raises could be considered so that a person filing for the office would know what the salary will be, but several expressed concern about voting raises midterm. JP Schindler proposed a 7% raise to all elected officials, effective 2008 through 2010, seconded by JP Hill. County Clerk Mary Lou Slinkard gave the salary ranges set forth for County Officials by the Arkansas Legislature, and noted that Washington County officials are now making the maximum of that range. She said that Benton County has experienced the most growth of any county in Arkansas, and its Elected Officials should be considered for pay increases. She added that the County Clerk in Washington County does not have many of the responsibilities that she has because they use a unit tax ledger system, so they are not responsible for rollback and final settlements.

Valerie Brewer noted that the Assessor in Washington County does not do any appraisals, but contracts them all out. Treasurer Deanna Ratcliffe spoke in favor of the increase. Circuit Clerk Brenda DeShields spoke in favor of the increase, noting that while they are aware of what the salary is when they run for office, the growth in Benton County has been tremendous, and that should be recognized when considering salary increases. The committee discussed whether Justices of the Peace should be included when considering raises.

JP Schindler withdrew his motion. After more discussion, JP Schindler made motion to recommend to the Finance Committee that Elected Officials, excluding the Quorum Court, receive uniform raises of \$7,500 to be implemented in January, 2009, seconded by JP Wolf. Motion passed 5 votes in favor, 2 opposed. (Schindler, Winscott)

C. Prioritizing New Position/Additional Staffing Requests

Barbara Ludwig distributed ranking sheets, dividing fee-based accounts, commissioned accounts, and County General funded accounts. The committee members ranked the positions in each category, and Barbara Ludwig said she would distribute the results.

Meeting adjourned at 4:23 p.m.