

June 26, 2012

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT

The Personnel Committee met Thursday, June 21, 2012 at 6:00 p.m., in the Quorum Court Meeting Room, Third Floor, County Administration Building, 215 East Central, Bentonville.

Committee Members Present: Sandlin, Allen, J.Harrison, Blaty, Carr, Moore

Others Present: JP Jones, County Judge Bob Clinard, Prosecuting Attorney Van Stone, Sheriff Keith Ferguson, Juvenile Detention Director Dennis Cottrell, Juvenile Probation Director Petie Cobb, Director of Construction, Facilities, & Maintenance John Sudduth, Administrator of Public Services /Road Department Director Scott Stober, Human Resources Manager Barbara Ludwig, Administrator of General Services Elizabeth Bowen, Administrator of Public Safety Marshal Watson, CenCom Director Josh Billis, Information Systems Director Sidney Reynolds

Media: Tom Sissom – Benton County Daily Record

JP Sandlin called the meeting to order.

Public Comments:

None

The Committee reviewed items and information that were requested at the June 21, 2012 Personnel Committee meeting:

- The Part-time Planning Staff Assistant's actual salary with benefits was \$13,593.57.
- A correction was made in the hire-in range of the PC Support Specialist that was requested, and the change is reflected on the spreadsheet.
- Organizational charts for all of the departments requesting reorganizations, including the Jail, Prosecuting Attorney, Information Systems, County Judge, Road Department, and Information Systems, have been included in the packet. Barbara Ludwig reviewed each chart, noting the changes that are included in the mid-year requests.
JP Allen questioned the organizational structure of the Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Prosecuting Attorney Van Stone was recognized and explained that the duties of the Office Manager – Legal that he is requesting to replace a legal secretary position are very specialized, but the person has to have knowledge and ability to train others in all aspects of the Prosecutor's office.
- Administrator of General Services Elizabeth Bowen presented data showing the number of building permits and the amount of revenue from 2008-2012, noting that the numbers suggest a change in the economy in Benton County.
She also presented a chart showing the number of staff positions from 2005 to 2012 and the amount of the Planning Department's activity from 2008 to 2012, which have increased each year with the exception of 2011. She noted that through 6 months of 2012, the number of applications has exceeded all of 2011, and the number of hours that the part-time staff assistant spends in preparation for Planning Board meetings has also steadily increased over the last six months.

- Elizabeth Bowen addressed the issue of outside funding for the GIS programs. She stated that USGS has partnered on the aerial photography and topography projects in the amount of \$95,000, and contributed \$46,000 toward the GIS website for public use; and listed other contributions from FEMA, the Corps of Engineers, Pea Ridge National Military Park, and several cities totaling over \$986,000.
- A spreadsheet showing all of the changes in salaries in the Road Department reorganization has been included in the packet.

Human Resources Manager Barbara Ludwig stated that for the purposes of organizing the agenda, she grouped all of the proposed changes which will not require budgetary adjustments together, noting that part of the Jail nurse reorganization was a switching out of positions of equal grade, so she has placed it in this group, while the other part of the request to delete a Jail Deputy and add a Registered Nurse supervisor has been placed with the requests to be ranked.

1. Items Not Requiring a Budget Adjustment

a. Proposed Changes to Benton County Salary Ranges

JP Sandlin requested direction from the committee in regards to the proposed changes to the Salary Ranges.

JP Allen asked who had made the recommendation for the changes in the salary ranges. Barbara Ludwig stated that this was part of a salary study done in 2011 which showed the county falling below the market average in the higher grades. She explained that by increasing one group of the higher grades by 5%, and another higher group by an additional 10%, the positions will be closely in line with the market average. JP Allen stated that sometimes they discuss some of these changes without addressing what needs to be looked at, which is adjusting compensation and packages to perhaps reduce the number of employees who receive training at the county's expense, and then leave to take higher-paying jobs in the private sector. He said that just raising salaries may not be accomplishing what they are hoping to, and he would like to take a closer look at that. Barbara Ludwig stated that going into the 2013 budget process she would examine how many employees have left in the last year and their stated reasons for leaving.

JP Moore made motion to forward the proposed changes to the Benton County Salary Ranges (Item 1-a on the agenda) to the July 10, 2012 Committee of Thirteen agenda, seconded by JP J. Harrison.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

b. Approving Changes to Schedule 4

Various Departments:

i. Changing Some "Professional" Positions Into Graded Positions

JP Allen asked Barbara Ludwig to review the reasons for moving the positions from professional to graded positions, and which positions are affected.

Barbara Ludwig explained that by increasing the salary ranges, the salaries of the 28 of the county's 36 professional positions will now fall into grade ranges, where previously they did not, and the remainder of the positions will be reclassified as "non-graded", and stated that the list is page 5 of the June 21

Personnel Committee agenda packet. She noted that two of the positions on the list are mid-year requests which have not been approved, but she placed them on the list to show where they would fall if approved.

JP Allen made motion to approve and forward the moving of professional positions to graded positions (Item b-i) to the July 10, 2012 Committee of Thirteen agenda, seconded by JP J. Harrison.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

Dept. 01 – County Judge

ii. Changing the Grade of the “Grants Administrator” from Grade 13 to Grade 15

Barbara Ludwig explained the JESAP Committee is actually in charge of assigning grades, but the Personnel Committee must request an appropriation ordinance to make any changes on Schedule 4.

JP Allen made motion forward the changing of the grade of the Grants Administrator (Item b-2 on the agenda) to the July 10, 2012 Committee of Thirteen agenda, seconded by JP Blaty.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

iii. Changing the Grade of the “Facilities, Construction, and Maintenance Manager” from Grade 14 to Grade 15

JP Harrison made motion to forward the changing of the grade of the Facilities, Construction, and Maintenance Manager (Item b-3 on the agenda) to the July 10, 2012 Committee of Thirteen agenda, seconded by JP Moore.

Barbara Ludwig stated that when the salary study was done, the salary for this position was 16.5% below market, which indicates a problem with the grade, so when the position is filled, they can be hired at the appropriate rate.

John Suddeth stated that they are looking to fill the position, and have advertised it, but are having trouble competing with the private sector, because he wants someone with plumbing, electrical, and HVAC experience.

JP Jones stated that they may be asking too much of the position, because the salary will not be enough because the position only manages three people. John Suddeth stated that this will be a hands-on, working position that will oversee remodeling projects, handle scheduling, and will be on call 24/7.

JP Jones questioned why this did not go to Finance, because a higher grade will result in a higher salary. JP Allen stated that he feels this is a budgetary item, because it will lock them into a higher pay rate at some point in the future when someone is hired.

JP Harrison restated his motion to forward changing the grade of the Facilities, Construction, and Maintenance Manager (Item b-3 on the agenda) to the July 3, 2012 Finance Committee agenda, seconded by JP Moore.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

Dept. 03 – Circuit Clerk

iv. Changing Title of “Office Manager” to “Office Administrator” (no change in grade)

JP Allen asked why the title is being changed. Barbara Ludwig stated that the Circuit Clerk has an administrative team which reports directly to her, and since this position is supervising all of the operations in the Deeds and Mortgages, she wanted to elevate the title to reflect that.

JP Allen asked if since the position is being elevated, with additional responsibilities, will they come back at some later point and want to increase the pay. Barbara Ludwig stated that she cannot answer for the Elected Officials, but can only say at this point that there is no change in grade or pay.

JP Jones noted that the description does list some additional responsibilities, and they are in this building without the Circuit Clerk or the Administrative Assistant, and whether or not that means they will want an increase in salary remains to be seen. JP Allen stated there would be more money, trust him.

JP Moore made motion to forward changing the title of “Office Manager” to “Office Administrator” (Item b-4 on the agenda) to the July 10, 2012 Committee of Thirteen agenda, seconded by JP J. Harrison.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

Dept. 67 – County Jail

v. Delete (1) Jail Deputy Position

Add (1) Licensed Practical Nurse Position

JP Allen made motion to forward deleting on Jail Deputy position and adding one Licensed Practical Nurse position (Item b-5 on the agenda) to the July 10, 2012 Committee of Thirteen agenda, seconded by JP J. Harrison.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

2. Discussion: Mid-year Requests

JP Allen asked Barbara Ludwig to go over the list of requests. Barbara Ludwig stated that the Elected Officials and Department Heads are also present if there are any questions.

Barbara Ludwig reviewed the list of items to be ranked, which was included in the agenda packet.

- Barbara Ludwig explained that several wage adjustments are being requested, and stated that these are existing employees whose salaries are outside the market for their positions. She said that this may be one reason why it is hard to keep people in these positions. She said that although the Personnel Committee typically only considers need, and not cost, she felt it was important for them to see the dollar amounts. She noted that the market for Fire Marshal position is \$46,000, while Benton County only pays \$40,000. She added that this position was not adjusted for the full amount because the person was only hired in March. JP Allen questioned if there is a market for a Fire Marshal. Barbara Ludwig listed all of the counties in Arkansas which have the position, as well as the municipalities. JP Allen pointed out that a person would have to relocate to get a higher salary. He said he knows for a fact that the duties performed by the Fire Marshal in Benton County are very different from those performed by the Fire Marshal for the City of Rogers.

Administrator of Public Safety Marshal Watson was recognized, and stated that it would be accurate to say that the job descriptions for the two positions are not identical, but they do perform many of the same duties. He said the argument could also be made that the county's Fire Marshal has a much broader scope of duties than a city Fire Marshal. JP Allen said he was not talking about who had the most and who had the least; he was just saying that they are very different job descriptions. Marshal Watson stated that they are different, but on a technical level they are still providing plan review and revisions, site inspections for life/safety, fire detection systems, and in that capacity they are performing the same function.

Barbara Ludwig stated that there are other instances where the maximum of the county's salary range is the minimum for the cities, and as she has stated before, the county cannot compete with the cities. JP Allen stated that the argument could be made that the number of incidences are not the same, and in his experience with one city, the Fire Marshal is out in the field every single day. Marshal Watson stated that most city fire departments are not dealing with structure fires everyday at this time of year, while the county's volunteer fire departments are dealing with fires on a weekly basis. He said if it is one of the rural fire departments, the Fire Marshal attends each fire and does the investigation and report.

- Sheriff's Department: Wage Adjustments for CID Investigators.

Barbara Ludwig said that in looking at the length of service and time of promotions, it seems that these four employees missed some step increases that they would have received had they worked their way up through the ranks, but since they were promoted directly into the CID department, they missed out on those increases.

- County Jail: Delete one Jail Deputy and add one Jail Nurse – Supervisor.
- Juvenile Probation: Delete One Juvenile Probation Officer and Add 1 Juvenile Intake Officer
- Prosecuting Attorney: Add one Legal Secretary
Prosecuting Attorney Van Stone stated that the State has awarded Benton County two more deputy prosecutors, recognizing the growth in population, and noted that his office has not asked for an additional position since 2005. He also noted that every time a new Field Deputy or CID Investigator is added, there is a corresponding increase in the Prosecutor's workload.
- Prosecuting Attorney: Delete one Legal Secretary and add one Office Manager – Legal
- County Judge/ Maintenance: Add one Janitorial Supervisor
- Planning and Environmental: Delete one Part-time Planning Staff Assistant and add one Full-time Planning Assistant
- Planning and Environmental: Delete one Senior Planner and add one Planning Division Manager
Barbara Ludwig stated that in trying to hire a Senior Planner, they cannot get someone for the amount of money allowed in the job description. She said it also does not have the same skill set that the Planning Director feels is needed for that position. Elizabeth Bowen added that they are now requiring certification in Storm Water and Floodplain management, which are duties that this position is responsible for. She added that this is the third time in 18 months that this position has been vacant.
- Juvenile Detention: Delete one Part-time JDC position and add one full-time JDC position.
Barbara Ludwig stated that JDC Director Dennis Cottrell spoke to the committee regarding this position at the previous meeting, and has stated that he erred on the conservative side when estimating the staffing needs for the new JDC, but that he now realizes the difficulty in keeping a part-time position filled. She added that there is an issue with needing supervision on the third shift, and that they need to be able to cover breaks, which are necessary in that environment.
- County Road: Department-wide Reorganization

Barbara Ludwig stated that some of the savings that will result from this reorganization are due to the turnover in some longtime employees which were replaced with new hires. She added that in addition, there are five positions which will be unfunded, but are currently included in the insurance funding, so that will be a savings of approximately \$25,000 going into 2013.

- **Information Systems: Add one GIS Coordinator**
JP Sandlin asked what the urgency is with making this request at this time instead of waiting for the first of the year, since Elizabeth Bowen has been supervising the department along with her duties as Administrator of General Services. Elizabeth Bowen stated that there will be several departments that will not receive the level of service that they have been receiving. She said that the GIS-Specialist position has been filled, but the person does not have the expertise that the previous jobholder had, so it will take longer to get some of the tasks completed than it did before, such as the public website. She said it was recently down for a day and a half when previously; it might have been back online in a couple of hours.
- **Information Systems: Delete one Computer Programmer and add one Assistant Network Programmer**
Barbara Ludwig stated that this actually saves money, because the position being added comes in at a lower salary range than the position being deleted. JP Allen asked if they will be coming back next year to ask for the Programmer position back next year, because the one that is left is overworked.
- **Information Systems: Delete one Computer Operations Assistant and add one PC Support Specialist**
Barbara Ludwig stated that the Operations Assistant was hired quite a while ago for some backup service work during the changeover from the AS-400. She said they no longer need the clerical support as much as they need pc technical support.
- **CenCom: Add one Public Safety Dispatcher II**
Barbara Ludwig stated that the addition of the position will have an annual budgetary impact of \$44,437.57, and a cost of \$17,091.37 for the remainder of the year.

Barbara Ludwig stated that they will rank the items using numbers 1 through 16. JP Allen stated that the rankings will determine the priority of the Personnel Committee, and then this will go to the Finance Committee. JP Moore said the Finance Committee usually decides how many positions they are able to fund. Barbara Ludwig stated that the Finance Committee will receive a list of the requests in the order they were ranked by this committee, with a cumulative total after each item. JP Allen asked if they know what all of the requests will cost. Barbara Ludwig stated that the annual budget impact is \$257,069, and the cost for the remainder of the year will be \$98,871.

3. Ranking of Requests

The items were ranked as follows:

| Fund | Dept | Request | Annual Budget Impact | TOTALS | RANK |
|-------------|-------------|---|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| 020 | 44 | Road Department Reorganization | (113,662.26) | 6 | 1 |
| 010 | 49 | Delete (1) Programmer and Add (1) Assistant Systems Administrator | (998.27) | 19 | 2 |

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|-----|-----|--|-----------|------------|----------|
| 010 | 20 | Delete (1) Juvenile Probation Officer and add (1) Juvenile Intake Officer | 1,363.87 | 25 | 3 |
| 010 | 67 | Delete (1) Jail Deputy and add (a) Supervisor - Jail Nurses | 25,653.46 | 29 | 4 |
| Var | Var | 2011 Salary Study Wage Adjustments | 35,891.62 | 33 | 5 |
| 010 | 5 | Wage Adjustments CID | 7,797.25 | 35 | 6 |
| 010 | 21 | Delete (1) Legal Secretary II and Add (1) Office Manager - Legal | 2,379.52 | 36 | 7 |
| 010 | 35 | Delete (1) part-time JDC Worker and Add (1) full-time JDC Worker | 24,283.61 | 38 | 8 |
| 010 | 31 | Delete (1) Part-time Planning Assistant and add (1) Full-time Planning Assistant | 26,008.23 | 46 | 9 |
| 010 | 5 | Delete (1) Corporal and Add (1) Sergeant | 2,503.87 | 48 | 10 |
| 010 | 49 | Delete (1) Computer Operations Assistant and Add (1) PC Support Specialist | 3,543.47 | 54 | 11 - Tie |
| 010 | 68 | Add (1) Public Safety Dispatcher II | 44,437.57 | 54 | 11 - Tie |
| 010 | 23 | Add (1) Building Janitor Supervisor | 44,546.77 | 55 | 13 |
| 010 | 31 | Delete (1) Senior Planner and Add (1) Planning Division Manager | 5,189.37 | 58 | 14 |
| 010 | 21 | Add (1) Legal Secretary I | 39,753.93 | 63 | 15 |
| 010 | 49 | Add (1) GIS Coordinator | 77,336.49 | 71 | 16 |
| 010 | 23 | Starting Wage Adjustment for Facilities Maintenance and Construction Mgr. | 3,896.43 | Not Ranked | |

JP Allen made motion to forward the rankings as listed to the July 3, 2012 Finance Committee agenda, seconded by JP J. Harrison.

JP Allen stated that he would welcome any comments or conversation that any of the Elected Officials or Department Heads would like to have, and that this had been a very difficult process.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

Other Business

None

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

