

January 22, 2009

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT

The Personnel Committee met Thursday January 22, 2009 at 4:00 p.m., in the QC Meeting Room, Third Floor, County Administration Building, 215 East Central, Bentonville
Committee Members Present: Wolf, Sandlin, Harrison, Winscott, Allen

Others Present: Human Resources Manager Barbara Ludwig, Comptroller Richard McComas, Sheriff Keith Ferguson, Juvenile Probation Director Petie Cobb

Media: Scarlett Simms – Morning News, Tabatha Hunter – Benton County Daily Record

NEW BUSINESS

1. SCHEDULE 4 CHANGES

A. Acceptance of JESAP recommendation for re-grade of Sergeant's position -- Field, Courthouse Security, and CID

JP Wolf called the meeting to order and stated that Barbara Ludwig was available to answer questions with regard to the Courthouse Security and CID Positions. Barbara Ludwig stated that the Sergeants positions for CID, Field, and Courthouse Security need to be increased from Grade 14 to Grade 15 to correct an error made when the CID Investigators were reorganized in 2007. She said that the sergeant positions are supervisory, so they need to be at least one grade higher than those they are supervising, and that currently is not the case.

JP Sandlin made motion to forward to the February 10, 2009 Committee of Thirteen agenda, seconded by JP Winscott.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

B. Acceptance of JESAP recommendation for grading of grant-funded Staff Assistant position for Sheriff's Office

C. Approval of new position to Schedule 4, Staff Assistant (Sheriff's Office Grant.)

JP Wolf stated the Sheriff's Office has a staff assistant funded through the Sex Offender and Violent Crimes Task Force Grant who now works 34 hours per week. She said that they have found out that the grant also will pay for benefits, so the position needs to be added to Schedule 4 and made full time, and has been graded by the JESAP Committee as a Grade 5. She said the position will be removed at the time the grant runs out if it is not renewed. JP Allen questioned the net effect on County General, and how long the grant is available. Barbara Ludwig reported the grant is in effect until September 2009, and at that time they would have to come back and request the position to be funded if the grant is not renewed. Richard McComas stated that the position ends when grant ends and that the staff assistant has been informed of that. JP Wolf stated that she would like that language to be included on the Schedule 4. JP Allen made motion to forward to the February 10, 2009 Committee of Thirteen agenda, seconded by JP Sandlin.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

D. Add one Juvenile Probation Training officer – Grade 12 and Delete one Juvenile Probation Officer – Grade 11

JP Wolf recognized Juvenile Probation Director Petie Cobb to address the committee regarding the change in her department. Petie Cobb reminded the committee that in 2007, they deleted Juvenile Training Officer and added one Juvenile Probation Officer, because the Training Officer position had been vacated, and she did not have anyone in the office at that time who was able to fill it. She said that she is now ready to promote one of the Juvenile Officers into the Juvenile Training Officer position, so Schedule 4 needs to be amended to reflect the change. She added that this will not affect her 2009 budget, because the position has been vacant for a number of weeks. JP Sandlin made motion to forward to the February 5, 2009 Finance Committee, seconded by JP Allen.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

2. WAGE ADJUSTMENTS

A. Approval of retroactive pay increase to cover promotion from CID II to Sergeant CID-Narcotics

Barbara Ludwig stated that the salary increase will be retroactive to the date of the promotion, December 15, 2008, and will amount to approximately \$800.00, plus some overtime that has not been calculated yet. She added that the employee will be going into the position at a lower salary than his predecessor. JP Winscott questioned how overtime is assigned and approved. Barbara Ludwig stated that the Captain and supervisors determine the need, and that since it is an investigative position, overtime is demand driven. JP Sandlin made motion to forward to the February 5, 2009 Finance Committee agenda, seconded by JP Allen.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

B. Request for 2% raise in salary range maximums

Richard McComas explained that over the past several years, the cost of living increases approved by the Quorum Court have kept up with the market. He said that since the court voted last year to only give a 2% cost-of-living increase, with an additional 2% for merit, the salary range maximums only increased 2%.

Barbara Ludwig explained that since the salary ranges only increased 2%, approximately 21 employees will not be able to receive the full 4% increase because they would exceed the maximum of their range. She added that this will not affect the 2009 budget, because the personnel budget was estimated at the total 4% increase.

JP Winscott made motion to forward to the February 5, 2009 Finance Committee agenda. Motion seconded by JP Sandlin.

JP Allen stated that this does not mean that everyone is getting an additional raise. Richard McComas stated that only 21 people are affected. JP Sandlin asked how many departments are involved. Barbara Ludwig stated that there are 4 departments involved.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

3. OTHER BUSINESS:

JP Wolf explained that everyone has received a copy of the Schedule 4, which is included in the budget, and that it lists every position along with their grades as approved by the Quorum Court. She said that the grade levels correspond to the salary ranges that they have been discussing.

JP Winscott asked if there is a county wide organizational chart. Barbara Ludwig replied that she is currently working on that project.

JP Wolf stated that one of the things she would like to do this year is have the Department Heads or Elected Officials present to answer questions regarding requests for new positions or re-grades of positions. She explained to the committee members the process that has been followed for several years in hearing all of the requests for new positions at mid-year and during the budget process, then ranking all of the positions requested by priority, and then forwarding that list to the Finance Committee. She said it is the Finance Committees' responsibility to then determine how many positions can be funded, and then forward a recommendation to the Committee of Thirteen, and finally to the Quorum Court. She said that each member will make their final decision as to how to vote at the Quorum Court meeting. She said there is no reason to hang something up in the personnel committee, because no matter what they decide, funding is ultimately up to the Quorum Court.

The committee discussed possible changes to the process. JP Allen stated that he understands the process, but he too has a problem with not considering the cost of positions while they are being discussed at Personnel.

Richard McComas noted that the committee may wish to decide that they will not rank all of the positions requested, but to add an additional step of deciding which positions will be ranked. JP Wolf agreed.

JP Winscott stated that positions should not be added just because they can be funded, but because they are vital and necessary, and a service is being provided. JP Allen stated that perhaps they should have a subcommittee, because he does not like getting all of the requests at once, and having an all or nothing vote. JP Wolf stated that she would also like to limit the number of requests that are heard at one meeting, because it is not fair to the last people who make their requests if they have already sat through 20 presentations.

JP Allen stated that in addition to providing information that supports the need for the position, he would also like to hear from those making the requests some ideas of how to pay for the position.

After motion and second, the meeting adjourned at 4:49 p.m.