

June 21, 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: JPs Hawkins and Jones, County Judge Bob Clinard, Prosecuting Attorney Van Stone, Sheriff Keith Ferguson, Juvenile Detention Director Dennis Cottrell, Juvenile Probation Director Petie Cobb, Administrator of Public Services John Sudduth, Director of Road Department Scott Stober, Human Resources Manager Barbara Ludwig, Administrator of General Service 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

1. 2011 Salary Study

a. Proposed Changes to Salary Ranges

Human Resources Manager Barbara Ludwig stated that they will be discussing the 2011 Salary Study that was previously part of the 2012 Budget discussion. She stated that the county's salary ranges at the bottom are very close to or above the regression line, but the high end of the salary range is dropping below market. She said she is recommending a 5% increase over and above what was previously recommended between Grades 14 and 15, which is generally the point that management roles begin, and another 10% between Grades 17 and 18. She stated that moving forward, the grade changes and wage adjustments that will be discussed are based on this chart, so if the change in the salary range is not approved, it will be necessary to change the numbers associated with the other proposed changes. Barbara Ludwig explained that one of the benefits of adjusting the salary ranges would be to allow several "Professional" positions to be moved into the grading system. She said the county has so many professional positions because their pay rates did not fit into the current salary ranges, and several were regraded at the last JESAP Committee meeting. She added that in most cases the salary ranges are very close to what the employees are currently earning, and several may receive a slight increase. She said that those with salaries that still do not fit into the grading system will be reclassified as "Non-graded", such as the Deputy Public Defenders, Deputy Prosecutors, the Financial Administrators in the Circuit Clerk's and Collector's offices, the Jail Physician, Comptroller, and Director of Information Systems. She explained that the net result in the adjustments to the overall salary range would be a 5% increase for Grades 15 through 17, and a 15% increase for Grades 18 through 24. She added that these changes will require an appropriation ordinance to amend the Schedule 4 portion of the budget ordinance, and the Salary Range Pay Scale which is attached to it. Barbara Ludwig noted that none of these changes will result in raises to any of the affected employees, but will eventually allow the county to hire people for those positions at salaries which are closer to the market range. She said it would only result in a raise for someone who is at or below the minimum of the range, and at this time, no one is at that point.

JP Sandlin stated that they could either vote on this tonight, or wait until the next Personnel Committee meeting on June 26, and noted that a lot of what is to follow on the agenda is based on approval of this proposal.

Barbara Ludwig stated that if the new salary range is not approved, then the positions being moved into the grading system will have to go back to the “Professional” designation, as the positions would then fall outside the current salary ranges.

JP Moore made motion to table the 2011 Salary Study items until the June 26, 2012 Personnel Committee meeting, seconded by JP Blaty.

Motion to table passed by show of hands vote – 5 in favor, 1 opposed (Allen).

b. Regrades Associated With Salary Study

i. Changing “Professional” Positions to Graded Positions

Tabled to June 26, 2012 Personnel Meeting along with adjustment to Salary Ranges.

Dept. 01- County Judge

ii. Changing “Grants Administrator” From Grade 13 to Grade 15

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

Barbara Ludwig stated that these two positions were severely below the market in the salary study, not only financially, but also organizationally. She stated that the JESAP Committee voted in favor of the changes, but it will require an appropriation ordinance to make the change in the Schedule 4.

c. Salary Study Wage Adjustments: Various Departments

Barbara Ludwig stated the adjustments were based on examining which positions were furthest away from their market average. She said that based on the fact that the county will never be able to match market, and that the county offers good health and benefit plans, they decided to take half of the salary study variance difference, and recommend a salary adjustment in that amount for those positions. She listed the new salary rates for the positions which were included on the spreadsheet, and stated that the total estimated cost to accomplish all of the adjustments would be \$39,000, including benefits.

2. Circuit Clerk/Recorder – Dept. 03

a. Title Change – “Officer Manager” (Grade 12) to “Office Administrator” (Grade 12)

Barbara Ludwig stated that this is a change in title only on Schedule 4, with no change in grade or salary.

3. Sheriff’s Office – Dept. 05

a. Wage adjustments – CID

Sheriff Keith Ferguson stated that there are four Investigators in the Sheriff's Department - CID whose salaries are out of line with the other positions. Barbara Ludwig explained that when the deputies were promoted from either Field Deputy or Jail Deputy directly to CID, they missed the step pay increases that they would have otherwise earned by working up through the ranks.

- b. Delete (1) Corporal position (Grade 13)**
Add (1) Sergeant Position (Grade 15)

Sheriff Keith Ferguson stated that this would take away a Field Corporal position and add a Sergeant position, with a budget impact of \$963.03 for the remainder of the year.

- c. Delete (2) Jail Deputy Positions**
Add (1) Supervisor – Jail Nurse – Registered
Add (1) Licensed Practical Nurse

Staff Sergeant Michael McCranie was recognized, and stated that they would like to delete two Jail Deputy positions, and add a Registered Nurse Supervisor and a Licensed Practical Nurse, so they will have someone in a supervisory position with a medical background, to be in line with the guidelines put forth by the American Correctional Association and the Arkansas Board of Nursing. He said that the management of the department and the chain of communication between the jail physician and the medical staff need to be clearer.

4. Juvenile Probation

- a. Delete (1) Juvenile Probation Officer**
Add (1) Juvenile Intake Officer

Juvenile Probation Director Petie Cobb stated that she needs to replace a Juvenile Probation Officer with an Intake Officer and explained that the Probation Officers supervise the juveniles after they are adjudicate, while the Intake Officers are on call 24/7 and must be available when a juvenile is taken into custody. She said that currently there are 8 Probation Officers and 2 Intake Officers, and there will be no impact on the budget for the remainder of the year.

5. Prosecuting Attorney

- a. Add (1) Legal Secretary**
Delete (1) Legal Secretary II
Add (1) Office Manager – Legal

Prosecuting Attorney Van Stone stated that this change is needed to reflect the reality of the function of the office. He said there are 8 legal secretaries in the office, and one has become his main assistant and also acts as the liaison with other agencies. He said in addition, she has developed specialized skills and knowledge that allows the Deputy Prosecutors to concentrate on other duties.

Van Stone stated that he is also asking for an additional Legal Secretary I Position, to assist the Juvenile and Misdemeanor Prosecutors, because over the last one and a half years, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that analysts who perform tests on blood have to be present in court to testify, so the increase in the number of subpoenas and court appearances has frequently pulled the current assistant out of the office.

6. Building Maintenance

a. Add (1) Building Janitorial Supervisor

Director of Facilities and Construction John Sudduth stated that this request is for a Janitorial Supervisor, and stated that in 2008, the department had 6.5 Janitors and 1 Supervisor, for a total of 7.5 positions, then two positions were cut, including the supervisor position. He said in the meantime, the county has added 26,200 square feet of the Center for Nonprofits, 7,000 square feet of the Public Services Building, 13,000 square feet of the Juvenile Justice Center building, as well as 12,000 square feet of office space in the former Juvenile Detention Center area. He said the new facilities juvenile court facilities require a lot of detailing, and are high use areas that take a lot of abuse from the public. He said there has been no increase in staff, and there are 5.5 positions taking care of 13 buildings, with a total of 210,948 square feet, 7 buildings between Garfield and Siloam Springs that require janitorial supplies, and there is no supervisor. He noted that there are over 100 restrooms that are cleaned daily, and some of those require restocking with supplies twice daily.

He said that the biohazard cleanup is highly regulated, and that any time there is a loss of body fluids, there are certain protocol that have to be followed. He said the annual supply budget of \$50,000 has been strained this year, because the new Juvenile Justice Center came online, and the demand for supplies had not been anticipated. He added that the supervisor he is asking for will be a working supervisor who will assist with cleaning, and provide progress reports on specific work requests.

JP Allen stated that he felt they were sold a bill of goods when they repeatedly questioned the staff regarding the supplies and personnel needed for the new JJC. John Sudduth stated that he could not address that, since he was not here at the time, but for the present, he is struggling very hard to keep up with the demand of a new building and with keeping enough staff on board. He said he has very high standards, and he feels that the staff has met those standards, and that the buildings are noticeably improved.

Further discussion was held on the increased demands on the janitorial staff, the scheduling of the staff, and the functions of the supervisor position.

7. Planning and Environmental Services

a. Delete (1) Senior Planner

Add (1) Planning Division Manager

b. Delete (1) Part-time Staff Assistant

Add (1) Full-time Staff Assistant

Director of Planning & Environmental Services Christopher Ryan stated that there are two fairly critical modifications that need to be made to their organizational structure. He said the role filled by the Senior Planner has evolved into one that requires managerial experience, but the positions current grade does not support the salary necessary to hire someone with those qualifications. He said the two junior planners need the oversight, planning, and training that a supervisor will provide.

He noted nearly a 100% increase in Planning Board agenda items over last year, an increase in Large Scale Development applications from 18 in 2011 to 48 by the end of 2012, and an increase in the number of building permit inspections from 1,471 in 2011, to 2,594 by the end of 2012.

Christopher Ryan explained the need for specialized knowledge, training, and expertise due to the increase in volume and complexity of the Planning Department's workload, adding that they have advertised for the Senior Planner position, but have been unable to hire anyone at that salary. He said that if they get the new description and grade approved, he will consider re-advertising the position.

JP Jones expressed concern that a lot is still being asked of the person who will fill the position for that salary.

JP Allen questioned the projections for the number of Planning Board items, etc. for the end of 2012. Christopher Ryan stated that they extrapolated the current numbers over the remainder of the year, noting that there has been a steady increase, particularly in the last month or so.

Further discussion was held concerning the difficulty in filling the position for the current salary.

JP Moore requested information on whether there has been an increase in fee revenue associated with the increase in activity in the department. Christopher Ryan stated that he would provide it for the June 26 meeting, but noted that in building receipts alone, there has been an increase from \$121,321 in 2011 to \$144,248 in 2012. JP Carr expressed concern that the trend could be temporary.

Discussion was held concerning how and why the department was created, the fluctuations in building fee revenues and number of positions in the department.

Christopher Ryan presented a request to change the Part-time Staff Assistant which is currently funded for 19 hours per week to a Full-time Staff Assistant, listing all of the duties in the job description and stating that it is impossible to perform all of these in 19 hours a week, especially the minutes of the Planning Board meetings, which by itself takes 10 to 12 hours per meeting. He cited the increase in planning activity, and the need for research, noting that there is no other administrative staff in the office, so they would anticipate that if this position is funded full time, this person would fill that need for all of the departments in the building, including Environmental Services.

Elizabeth Bowen pointed out that the length of time of the Planning Board meetings alone sometimes limits the amount of time left for this person to actually be in the office, so they have had to have additional assistance from the part-time clerical pool.

JP Moore stated that he is not in favor of part-time positions because of the inefficiency of the use of time, and felt it should either be funded full time or not at all, and hire temporary help when you need it. Following discussion of the pay rate for the full time position, Barbara Ludwig stated that she would have the exact numbers for the next meeting on June 26.

8. Juvenile Detention Center

a. Delete (1) part-time JDC Worker

Add (1) full-time JDC Worker

Juvenile Detention Director Dennis Cottrell stated that the new Center is working great, and the staff has done a great job. He said when the staff needs were estimated 2 years ago, 1.5 positions were requested. He said he had never had a part time position before, and has discovered that it does not work well in the Juvenile Detention Center, because there is a constant turnover and hours of training are lost with each new hire. He said he is requesting that the part time position be extended to full time, noting that the bed capacity has doubled. He said that Washington County's Detention Center is the only one comparable to Benton County's, and the employ 19 full time staff for a 36-bed facility, while this additional half-position will put our staff at 18. He added that Garland County operates a 22-bed facility with 14 detention workers. He said safety is the main issue, because they have to have coverage in all areas. He said that the new building is slightly more labor intensive than anticipated, due to all movement going through the central control center, but that there is more direct, controlled supervision of the kids, which is a positive thing. He said they have tried to be very efficient with the staff, which takes care of all feeding, routine custodial duties, and light maintenance.

Dennis Cottrell stated that they have begun to study the possibility of approaching the various cities in the county to let them know that the county is open to the possibility of housing juveniles who have

appeared in the District Courts, which previously was done only as a courtesy when there was extra room in the former JDC. He said that the \$75 per day could be a new source of revenue.

Dennis Cottrell stated that he accepted responsibility for underestimating the staffing needs, but he felt like this was a reasonable request and hoped it would be considered.

JP Jones asked if there had been an increase in detainees. Dennis Cottrell stated that as yet there had not been an overall increase, but the word is beginning to get out throughout the region, and in July, the Center will be housing some juveniles from Washington County for about a week and a half during some construction at their facility. He said that he would not seek to increase staff in order to house more juveniles, because the number of detainees fluctuates so much, but he felt that with 18 they could handle any increase in the number of juveniles that may occur. He noted that it is a credit to the county's Juvenile Court and Probation Office that there are not more juveniles being housed, because they try to keep from having to take that step.

JP Allen stated that he remembers asking how many additional staff would be needed, and although being in the building is different from projecting, at some point they have to live with what they asked for. He said that everyone is only asking for modest increases, but when they are all added up, it becomes a large increase in personnel cost. He noted that these are tough times, with a decrease in jail collections, and unknown property tax collections.

JP Sandlin stated that her recollection of the initial request when the building was being discussed was that Dennis Cottrell had stated that the 1.5 positions was an estimate, and that they could find out later down the road that additional staff would be needed. Dennis Cottrell stated that he tries to be very conscientious with the budget, and with staffing requests, and has always tried to ask for only what it absolutely needed.

Dennis Cottrell introduced Assistant Director Denise Collins and stated that she has been with the JDC for two years, is a hardworking person of integrity, and it is wonderful to have her working with the kids.

9. Road Department Reorganization

- a. Delete (3) Road Superintendent's (Grade 15)**
 - Add (1) Road Superintendent (Grade 18)**
 - Add (1) Assistant Road Superintendent (Grade 14)**
- b. Add (2) Asset Control Coordinators (Grade 13)**
- c. Add (1) Foreman (Grade 9)**
- d. Delete (15) Truck Drivers**
 - Add (6) Truck Drives I's**
 - Add (9) Truck Drivers II's**
- e. Delete (42) Heavy Equipment Operators II's**
 - Add (19) Heavy Equipment Operators I's**
 - Add (17) Heavy Equipment Operator II's**
 - Add (4) Heavy Equipment Operator III's**
- f. Delete (9) Mechanic/Welders**
 - Add (4) Mechanic/Welder I's**
 - Add (4) Mechanic/Welder II's**
 - Add (1) Mechanic/Welder III's**
- g. Delete (1) Road Department Secretary**
 - Delete (1) Welder/Fabricator**
 - Add (2) General Laborers**

Add (1) Form Setter/Finisher

Road Department Director Scott Stober stated that he is in the process of reorganizing the department, essentially doing away with multiple superintendents, and instead, having one superintendent position along with an assistant. He said he plans to keep the Shop Superintendent/ Fleet Manager, and add two "Asset Control Coordinators".

He said the main reason for the reorganization is that the department has never had a succession plan, and when people are hired into the same position, they do not always turn out to be equal. He said he would like to create additional grades within the department to recognize performance and longevity. He said he would like to increase the number of foremen from four to five, and noted that in the past the position of foreman was not a working position, but that has been changed. He said they now carry full equipment, fuel tanks, and run equipment on the job sites instead of just observing.

Scott Stober stated that the proposed reorganization results in a net reduction in personnel costs of \$113,662.26 and no additional people are being added.

Following a brief discussion regarding the format of the chart illustrating the reorganization, Barbara Ludwig stated that she would have a revised version available at the next meeting on June 26.

10. Information Systems

a. Add (1) GIS Coordinator

b. Delete (1) Programmer

Add (1) Assistant Network Administrator

c. Delete (1) Computer Operations Assistant

Add (1) PC Support Specialist

Information Systems Director Sidney Reynolds stated that he is requesting to delete a Computer Programmer and a Computer Operations Assistant, and add an Assistant Network Administrator and a PC Support Specialist. He said there are 63 servers which have to be maintained and backed up each day, and the Network Administrator is currently performing these duties along with maintaining the routers and switches, and it is getting harder and harder for one person to keep up with it.

Sidney Reynolds said that the Computer Operations Assistant position was designed to be partially administrative, along with assisting in the computer operations, tape backups, and the different rules associated with the administration of the computers. He said in the last year, several of those responsibilities have been eliminated, by automating the tape backup system and several other systems. He said during that same time, 33 PCs have been added, which have to be supported, in addition to the new digital security camera system, which was previously supported by the vendor when it was an analog system. He said that IP-based phone systems have been added in the Administration Building, the new JJC, and the Public Services Building.

Administrator of General Services Elizabeth Bowen stated that she previously held the position of GIS Coordinator before she was promoted to her present position, and the Coordinator position has been unfunded since that time.

Elizabeth Bowen gave a brief history of the creation of the GIS Department and reviewed its functions, which involve assisting all elected official and departments with GIS functions. She said the number of staff using GIS programs has increased from 12 to over 150 since it began in 2003, including deputies in patrol cars, and CID investigators. She said even in the last year, the workload has increased significantly in the number of servers and websites that the GIS department is providing data for, as well as to the public, so the Coordinator position needs to be filled. She added the amount of work has increased to the point that they only able to maintain what is already in place, but not expand or increase

the functions. She cited the Sex Offender Mapping program, whereby the department is able to provide the information not only to the Sheriff's office, but also to all the local police departments. She said with only two staff members, they are not able to progress to any additional programs.

JP Jones asked if this would be an internal promotion. Elizabeth Bowen stated that it would be a new hire, because there is currently no one on staff who she feels would fit the needs of this position. She also added that of the 2 positions funded by County General, and the 5 funded by the Assessor, there are currently 3 vacancies, with another position to become vacant in 2 weeks.

JP Allen questioned the salary. Elizabeth Bowen stated it is the same grade as it was when she held the position; they have not regraded it or increased the salary. JP Allen asked how the workload compares to a similar position in the Planning Department. Barbara Ludwig stated that since this position impacts every department in the county, the responsibility factor would be higher, and the technology in GIS is valued more than the technology involved in Planning. Elizabeth Bowen stated that this is a more technical position versus a more administrative position. Barbara Ludwig also pointed out that the Coordinator position supervises technical people as opposed to clerical. Elizabeth Bowen added that everything the Central Communications department does is based on GIS mapping, so this position is very important to that department.

JP Allen stated that they have done without this person for two years. Elizabeth Bowen stated that they have worked very hard and put in a lot of extra hours to get the necessary work done. JP Allen stated that since he works in real estate and planning, he feels that position is of equal importance, so he does not see how the JESAP Committee weighed this position more heavily than the planning position. He stated that he keeps hearing that we are losing people because we are not paying enough, but they have vacation and health insurance, so perhaps the employees should start contributing to that, and then we could increase their salaries. He said the county has the best benefit package you can find, compared to the public sector. He said perhaps that is something that should be looked at, and may have been put off for too long, because dollars are important to people today.

JP Moore noted that GIS is a very hot thing right now, and governments and private industry are competing for the same people.

11. CENCOM

a. Add (1) Public Safety Dispatcher II

CenCom Director Josh Billis presented a request for a Public Safety Dispatcher II, explaining that call volume has increased 179% since 2005, while the staff has increased by 1 person, which is a 3% increase. He said additionally, the number of deputies in the Sheriff's Office has increased from 63 to 81, which also increases the workload in CenCom.

He cited national standards for emergency call centers, and stated that compared to those most similar to Benton County's size and demographic, the recommendation is for 34 full time staff, but Benton County has only 27.

JP Moore asked if the personnel are solely funded by County General, or if there is any reimbursement from 9-1-1. Josh Billis stated that the wireless tariffs provide \$400,000 to \$500,000 per year which goes to supplement the staffing costs.

Other Business

None

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.