

Minutes of Meeting
Human Resources: Personnel Changes
February 24, 2022
11:00 a.m.

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios, Commissioner Leslie Duncan and Commissioner Bill Brooks met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were KCSO Sheriff Robert Norris, KCSO Undersheriff Dan Mattos, KCSO Captain Brett Nelson, KCSO Lieutenant Ryan Higgins, Assessor Bela Kovacs, Chief Deputy Assessor Allyson Knapp, Residential Appraisal Manager Troy Steiner, Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke, Finance Director Dena Darrow, Auditor's Office Accounting Manager Grace Blomgren, Human Resources (HR) Director Sylvia Proud, HR Generalist – Employee Relations Kimberley Van Slate, Parks & Waterways (P&W)/Noxious Weeds/Snowgroomers Director Nick Snyder, Information Technology (IT) Director James Martin, Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Darrin Murphey, BOCC Communications Coordinator Jonathan Gillham and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio. Lieutenant Higgins and Mr. Snyder were present via teleconference.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. Business:**

Higher Duty Pay Request to Heavy Equipment Mechanic/Parks & Waterways

Parks & Waterways (P&W)/Noxious Weeds/Snowgroomers Director Nick Snyder reported that one of his staff, a Maintenance Worker II, had taken on duties from a Heavy Equipment Mechanic who had been out due to a work-related injury. He asked the Board to approve higher duty pay retroactive to February 9, 2022. He stated that he was not sure how long the injured person would be out and asked that the Board approve the increased pay through to May 1, 2022, at which time he would provide an update. He added that, if the injured person was able to return to full duties earlier, he would inform them.

KCSO Lieutenant William Klinkefus and KCSO Sergeant Zachary Sifford entered the meeting at 11:03 a.m.

Commissioner Leslie Duncan moved that the Board approve the higher duty pay retroactive to February 9, 2022, to be reevaluated on May 1, 2022. Commissioner Bill Brooks seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, Deputy Clerk Ginorio called the roll:

Commissioner Brooks: Aye
Commissioner Duncan: Aye
Chairman Fillios: Aye

The motion carried.

Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Code §74-206(1)(b) to consider the evaluation, dismissal or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent. – BOCC Division (Closed Session – Discussion)

Decisions/Direction (Open Meeting – Action)

No information requiring an Executive Session was submitted.

Additional Overtime Funding Request/Assessor’s Office

Assessor Bela Kovacs asked the Board to approve additional overtime funding for his department. He said they were projecting the expense to be about \$17,000, through to the end of this fiscal year. He explained the Land Records Division, Residential Appraisal Division and other areas were short staffed, had suffered losses of institutional knowledge due to staff turnover and had new personnel in training. He said that the overtime would be needed for his divisions to meet statutory due dates.

Assessor Kovacs confirmed this would be a budget neutral request.

Commissioner Duncan moved that the Board approve the additional overtime funding request, to be paid for from salary savings. Commissioner Brooks seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, Deputy Clerk Ginorio called the roll:

- Commissioner Brooks: Aye
- Commissioner Duncan: Aye
- Chairman Fillios: Aye

The motion carried.

Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Code §74-206(1)(b) to consider the evaluation, dismissal or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent. – BOCC Division (Closed Session – Discussion)

Decisions/Direction (Open Meeting – Action)

No information requiring an Executive Session was submitted.

Salary Increase for Applications Systems Manager/Information Technology

Information Technology (IT) Director James Martin informed the Board that his department had been trying to fill an opening for an Application Systems Manager for two months and that he had found a suitable candidate. He said the person had substantial experience and that he would like to offer them a starting salary of 97% of market, at Grade 10.

Mr. Martin explained that this would cause a complication with the Application System Manager he had hired just prior to this; that person had been hired at a lower wage and would be making less than the new hire. He asked that this person’s wage be moved to 97% of market at Grade 10, as well.

Human Resources (HR) Director Sylvia Proud confirmed that Department Heads and Elected Officials had the authority to hire at up to 97% of market, per policy. She said, based on experience and other factors, that she felt it would be appropriate to increase

the earlier hire's salary to 97% of market as well. She added that this had been done in the past, with existing employees.

HR Generalist – Employee Relations Kimberley Van Slate remarked that technology professionals were in high demand at this time.

Commissioner Duncan moved that the Board approve the salary increase for the Application Systems Managers for IT. Commissioner Brooks seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, Deputy Clerk Ginorio called the roll:

Commissioner Brooks: Aye
Commissioner Duncan: Aye
Chairman Fillios: Aye

The motion carried.

Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Code §74-206(1)(b) to consider the evaluation, dismissal or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent. – BOCC Division (Closed Session – Discussion)

Decisions/Direction (Open Meeting – Action)

No information requiring an Executive Session was submitted.

Assessor Kovacs, Mr. Martin and Residential Appraisal Manager Troy Steiner exited the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

Temporary ECO Position Request/911/Sheriff's Office

KCSO Lieutenant Ryan Higgins explained that a person that had previously worked for 911 as an ECO (Emergency Communication Officer) was willing to return for a short duration as a temporary employee. He said the person had been fully trained before she left and would require only minimal time to be prepared for a return to service. He asked that she be offered a non-benefited position at a rate of \$25.08 per hour, since she had over eight years of experience and possessed a level 2 certification. He pointed out that 911 had eight openings right now and that two more people had given notice that they would be leaving in March, so they were very shorthanded.

Commissioner Duncan moved that the Board approve the temporary ECO position as outlined by the Sheriff's Office. Commissioner Brooks seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, Deputy Clerk Ginorio called the roll:

Commissioner Brooks: Aye
Commissioner Duncan: Aye
Chairman Fillios: Aye

The motion carried.

Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Code §74-206(1)(a) to consider hiring a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent. – Sheriff Division (Closed Session – Discussion)

Decisions/Direction (Open Meeting – Action)

No information requiring an Executive Session was submitted.

Overtime Proposal/Sheriff's Office (Action)

KCSO Sheriff Robert Norris reminded those present that his departments were suffering from serious staff shortages. He said he had just received three more letters of resignation and stressed the ongoing issues he was having in recruitment and retention.

Sheriff Norris pointed out that the Board had given a COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) of 2% in 2020, when the actual CPI (Consumer Price Index) had been about 5.9%, and 2.1% in 2021, when the CPI was around 6%.

Sheriff Norris asked the Board to bring KCSO's overtime pay into a competitive position with other agencies in the market. He explained that deputies lost overtime pay if they did not complete a full 86 hours on duty in a two week period. He said this meant that if a deputy had a sick day or other valid day off the duty roster, that person would lose the time-and-a-half rate for extra hours worked.

Chairman Fillios said that he would prefer to wait until the wage study had been completed before considering this.

Ms. Proud reported that Ameriben had just received the information they had been waiting for from Washington. She said that HR should be able to complete the reports the Board was waiting for in a week or so. She also stated that straight wages would be reviewed in the study, not the specific question the Sheriff had raised about overtime.

In response to a question from Commissioner Duncan, Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Darren Murphey confirmed that Kootenai County's overtime policy conformed to the law, but the County was free to exceed the provision of the law, if the Board so decided.

Commissioner Duncan noted that the cost for the Sheriff's proposal would be about \$235,000.

KCSO Undersheriff Dan Mattos said he did not think that a valid cost estimate could be made, since there was no way of knowing how much overtime would be required.

Chairman Fillios asked Mr. Murphey whether, if the Board chose to bend the existing policy regarding overtime accrual for KCSO, they would be obliged to do the same for all County departments.

Mr. Murphey said that this would have to be evaluated by Legal and HR and the information should be circulated to all Elected Officials before any such action were taken.

Sheriff Norris remarked that treating law enforcement differently than other departments was not unusual. He also listed advantages in pay and benefits enjoyed by Coeur d'Alene Police over KCSO.

Chairman Fillios commented that people were leaving law enforcement for other professions all over the country right now, for reasons beyond the scope of the BOCC. He said that, if KCSO staff were leaving for other law enforcement agencies, the Board could try to address it. He reminded those present that the Board had limited taxing authority which could not be exceeded. He stated he was willing to consider the request after the results of the wage study were received. He added that the Board would have to consider whether a similar change would need to be made for other departments.

Sheriff Norris disputed the need to treat other departments equally with KCSO. He said they might also have to exceed the wage study results in order to staff the Jail.

Commissioner Duncan suggested that Mr. Murphey, Finance Director Dena Darrow and Ms. Proud do a holistic review of the impact of changes in overtime policy. She said she would not oppose implementation of temporary accommodations, but she felt the Commissioners needed to be aware of the impact on other departments, even if they chose to proceed anyway.

Sheriff Norris said that KCSO had been forced to suspend the Marshall contract at the Jail and lose \$389,000 in revenue due to prisoner counts and staff shortages.

Commissioner Brooks voiced his support for KCSO but said he would also like to see the wage study data so they could work to provide what was needed.

Undersheriff Mattos continued to dispute the calculation of the estimated cost.

Ms. Darrow explained the rules governing provision of overtime rates to law enforcement personnel and to other County employees. She said she felt the proposed change would inflate the overtime budget but they would have to review the numbers more closely to provide a more accurate estimate.

In response to questions from Sheriff Norris, Mr. Murphey explained how state law impacted the way in which the County had to operate in terms of pay for law enforcement staff. He also explained "disparate impact" and how the Board tried, where appropriate, to treat all staff the same.

Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke asked if a temporary holistic policy could be put in place for this fiscal year, then addressed fully during budget season. She remarked that KCSO had salary savings available that could be used to fund their portion.

It was generally agreed that the Commissioners would be provided with additional information from both the wage study and the additional review Ms. Proud, Ms. Darrow and Mr. Murphey would make. Support for KCSO was voiced by the Commissioners and other staff present.

KCSO Lieutenant William Klinkofus stated he was present to represent the local FOP (Fraternal Order of Police) Lodge. He asked how many departments had employees who could be ordered to come in and work on their day off.

Commissioner Duncan that Solid Waste, Juvenile Detention and Adult Misdemeanor Probation could be so ordered.

Lieutenant Klinkefus provided other information in support of Sheriff Norris’ request.

Ms. Proud said that they would report to the Board on the overtime issue, then inform the other Elected Officials as the Board directed.

Commissioner Duncan suggested that the Elected Officials be informed now that the issue was under review. Chairman Fillios voiced agreement and asked HR to do it.

Commissioner Brooks urged that they proceed without any unnecessary delay.

- D. Public Comment:** This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. Idaho Law prohibits Board action on items brought under this section except in an emergency circumstance. Comments related to future public hearings should be held for that public hearing. There were no public comments.
- E. Adjournment (Action):** Chairman Fillios adjourned the meeting at 11:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

BOCC SIGNATURE

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk