

Minutes of Compensation Board Meeting

DRAFT

January 17, 2024

In attendance: Doug Nelson, Michelle Crawford, Dan Portes, Patt Zamora, Molly Carlson, John Stavnes

Staff Present: Mahesh Sharma, Vanessa Wierman, David Farmer, Andrea Ahmann, Jennifer Stinocher

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 pm.

Dan called for approval of 12/12/2022 minutes.

Patt moved.

Doug seconded.

All in favor, minutes approved.

Dan called to vote on the chair.

Doug nominated Dan to remain chair.

Pat seconded.

All were in favor of Dan as the chair.

Dan called for an update on the budget.

David presented an update on the County budget. Explained in FY24 there was a 5.1% taxable growth, with recent years only being around 3%. David suggested that we are currently in a stable financial position after the unforeseen budget loss, previously. There is also a 3% growth in the basic tax levy.

David continued explaining the three strategic priorities with the money.

1. Staffing- different hiring market and the need to retain the staff we have.
2. Facilities- Capital needs on the way- IT, upgraded software, buildings.
3. Organizational plan- a 3-5-year plan that was developed from strategic planning.

David explained there are short, medium, and long-term goals in place. Just received the budget last week which he is trying to work into the strategic plan and decisions made today will also be worked in the budget plan.

Vanessa stated that wage and full negotiations are ongoing. Then shared the County recommendation of a 3% COLA plus a 3% merit increase for most units/non-represented to

encourage employee retention. Also states we may be a little behind with previous years' smaller COLAs.

Mahesh stated that Vanessa covered all the major points- falling behind, competitive market, and not falling further behind. Added that we need to live within our means but he's confident with a total 8.5% increase.

Patt questions how the number got to 8.5%

Mahesh explained 6% for the COLA increase and 2.5% for eligible step increases.

Dan asked for clarification.

Vanessa stated that the step increases are for eligible employees who aren't maxed out on the scale as well as if they receive a certain number on their review.

Dan asked if anyone had further questions.

With no further questions, Dan asks if the Sheriff is still behind on wages. Also points out that the Sheriff's salary is important because there are people that are underneath him, that are paid by a percentage of that salary.

Vanessa indicated that on attachment F in the packet, it shows elected official salaries.

Dan stated that some counties are compensated differently and then asked Vanessa for her thoughts.

Vanessa shares that the sheriff may be a little behind our comparables, and some counties are ahead.

Dan asks for clarification on how the sheriff being behind in salary affects the sheriff's staff below him.

Vanessa explained the Major receives 85%, Captain 83%, and four Lieutenants at 72% and 68%.

Dan suggests the Sheriff's position is more sensitive because it affects others' pay.

Doug states he understands the 3% and 3% but asks if the 2.5% happens every year.

Mahesh stated it was previously different, but currently, if the criteria is met employees would receive the 2.5%.

Patt states we should ignore merit increases because that isn't what anyone is here for. Then asks how much of an increase the county can afford.

Mahesh shared that we could afford 6%.

Patt indicated it was shocking since COLAs are typically smaller.

Mahesh explained that the maximum was lower in previous years, but an increased amount is needed to retain employees.

Patt agrees.

Dan stated that he was comfortable with 5%.

Michelle explained that she would like the number to be more conservative.

Doug recommended 6%.

Mahesh reminded everyone that the board can take the number presented lower, but not higher.

Michelle recommended 3%.

Patt recommended 5%.

John suggested 7% for the Sheriff and 5% for everyone else, including BOS.

Patt indicated that everyone should be treated the same and it should be 5% across the board.

Dan recommended 8% for the Sheriff, because of the people under him, and 5% for everyone else.

Patt moved for 5% across the board.

Doug Seconded the motion.

Dan asked for a voice vote:

John-Nay

Doug- Nay

Michelle-Nay

Molly-Nay

Patt- Yes

Dan- Nay

Doug then moved for 7% Sheriff, 5% everyone else.

Michelle Seconded the motion.

With all in favor, the motion passed.

Dan then moved to adjourn.

Michelle seconded the motion.

All in favor, the meeting adjourned at 4:01 pm.

*Due to an oversight, the discussion to maintain the additional payment for the Board of Supervisor's Chair occurred via email in the following days. There were no objections to maintain the \$3,000 annual amount allocated to the role.