

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

April 10, 2006

9:00 a.m.

Present: Chair Martin, Supervisors Baumgartner, Boockmeier, Pufahl and Westby

Also Present: Veterans Service Officer Chrzas, Hwy. Commissioner Dey, Corporation Counsel Ruf, Coroner Playman, Sheriff Rowe and County Clerk Miller

The Executive Agenda was amended to include a communication from the Town of West Point. Motion to approve agenda as amended was made by Supervisor Boockmeier, second by Supervisor Baumgartner. Motion carried.

Supervisor Pufahl, second by Supervisor Baumgartner, approved minutes of March 6 and March 15. Motion carried.

Highway – Seasonal Help

Hwy. Commissioner Dey indicated the original request, to the Human Resource Committee, was for seven seasonal employees, five were approved. Dey indicated that the salary range was established by union contract at \$11.50 per hour. Duties for seasonal positions included patching potholes, brushing, road projects/flag staff/traffic control, etc. Towns, County and or State would compensate for road project work. Work schedule would be 13 weeks full-time, with another three months of reduced hours.

Chair Martin indicated that discussion on the Human Resource Committee meeting related to the fact that no part-time or LTE employees have been hired since 2003. It was noted that there were other departments that could benefit from part-time/LTE's; but Highway's request had a defined job within a union contract, for a defined period of time. Motion, was made by Supervisor Baumgartner, to approve of the hiring of seasonal staff at the Highway Department, second by Supervisor Pufahl. Motion carried.

Clarification of discussion held at the Human Resource Meeting on whether the master mechanic internship (LTE) was one of the five positions approved for seasonal work. Jane Bescup, Human Resource Department had been contacted by a MATC student in an applicable program at that school and contacted Highway Commissioner Dey to discuss it. Subsequent conversations were held with the instructor regarding the student and the viability of an internship. Dey indicated that the department is currently down one master mechanic. He saw this as a benefit in that when the individual graduated they could be employed with the County.

Supervisor Westby indicated his strong support of this internship. Salary for the intern was \$11.50 per hour, same as outside field labor. Motion was made by Supervisor Westby, second by Supervisor Pufahl to approve of Hwy. Commissioner Dey initiating an internship program. While indicating their support, the committee also requested that the rules of the contract are followed and that the individual is supervised. Motion carried. Dey indicated he would keep HR, Executive and Finance Committees informed. He noted that the Highway Committee was supportive of the internship also.

Chair Martin discussed the fire at the Solid Waste facility, located on Highway 16.

Veterans Service Office (VSO) Status Report

CVSO Chrzas reminded committee members of the upcoming Youth Government Days on Weds., April 26th.

Training of new staff member and departmental workload were discussed. CVSO Chrzas indicated that the staff member would be attending a conference that will assist her in daily duties.

VSO Vouchers

Motion to approve of VSO vouchers was made by Supervisor Baumgartner, second by Supervisor Westby. Motion carried.

County Clerk Status Report

Election equipment current status, new election equipment, ballot costs and quantities ordered were topics of discussion. Clerk Miller indicated the current election equipment was not operable for the April election. Ballots were counted manually and the tally phoned in.

Election equipment could arrive as soon as June/July of this year. Ballot reprinting as a result of an error for the Portage School District Board Member race was discussed. Total number of ballots ordered totaled over 15,000 with only 6,600 ballots being voted.

County Clerk Vouchers

Motion was made by Supervisor Boockmeier, second by Supervisor Westby to approve of payment of vouchers. Motion carried.

Coroner Position vs. Medical Examiner

Chair Martin indicated the recommendation made by the Human Resource Committee was to change from an elected Coroner to an appointed Medical Examiner.

Corporation Counsel Ruf had researched the qualification of a Medical Examiner and reported on the pros and cons. He noted there are no qualifications required to be a Coroner. Ruf indicated that the statutes list no requirements for a Medical Examiner either. Having an appointed Medical Examiner, allowed the county to establish requirements/criteria for that position.

The County Board of Supervisors would continue to oversee that budget. Other advantages included management of the department, ability to change the compensation, and make changes to the medical examiners office itself. Changes to the office were seen as minimal. Counties that have gone from a traditional coroner position to a Medical Examiner have seen increased costs for facility improvements. Columbia County had included facility improvements during the construction of the Huber Center.

It was noted the Coroner's term is up for re-election this fall for a four-year term. According to Ruf, this is the only opportunity the County Board will have to change the office to that of "Medical Examiner".

Discussion was held on whether the Medical Examiner would be separate or a subsidiary of another department. General consensus was that it would be a separate department reporting to the Judiciary Committee.

Coroner Playman indicated smaller counties would find it difficult to change resulting in a movement toward cooperative agreements. Currently, Door County has a cooperative agreement with Brown and Oconto Counties. Further, he indicated that Columbia County has been approached to do the same thing. With the existing constitutional officer position, Playman felt that would be difficult to accomplish; but, could be done with a Medical Examiner position. Chair Martin indicated increased complex reporting was required and felt it would be in the best interest of Columbia

County citizens in terms of services provided. From a liability standpoint, the county would benefit by having a physician or individual with professional qualifications in the position.

Motion was made to forward the Executive Committee's recommendation to the County Board that the Coroner position be changed to that of Medical Examiner effective January 1, 2007. Motion was made by Supervisor Westby, second by Pufahl. Motion carried.

Chair Martin requested that Corporation Counsel Ruf draft a resolution for Judiciary, Human Resources and Executive Committees to sign and forward to the County Board.

Supervisory District 5 Vacancy

Chair Martin indicated that a vacancy occurred when the incumbent Ken Olson declined to not run for reelection. No other candidates filed for the position and there were no write-in's on election day.

Chair Martin indicated this Resolution was presented to the committee for discussion purposes. This vacancy presented an opportunity to decrease the size of the Board from 31 supervisors to 30. Chair Martin deferred the discussion to V. Chair Baumgartner. She did indicate that this suggestion had not been discussed previously with him.

V. Chair Baumgartner indicated that a similar situation had occurred in Green Lake County. As a result of a vacant seat and death of an incumbent, Green Lake County decreased their board size to 19. A petition for reducing their board size, was being circulated at the time.

Petitions to reduce board size can be accomplished with as few as 25 percent of the number of voters who voted in the last election signing a petition, making it feasible that someone from the public could petition to make the board much smaller than what is being suggested today. Any petition for board reduction would require a referendum, resulting in increased election costs.

Baumgartner felt Columbia County's system is by committee and provides the necessary checks and balances needed to make decisions. Pros and cons were discussed. A reduction in the size of the board to thirty (an even number) meant there was an opportunity for a tie. The committee did not feel that was a factor.

In the event a petition was filed for reduction in County Board size, operations could be affected. Supervisor Pufahl indicated that per diem and mileage budgets should not be a consideration in his opinion.

If the resolution is approved, the remaining supervisors representing the Portage area could respond to constituents from the vacant district. Redistricting would be required by November 2007 if this resolution were approved.

Motion was made by Supervisor Pufahl to place before the County Board, a resolution reducing the county board size by one (1) member, second by Supervisor Boockmeier. Motion carried.

Appointment

Carol Ziehmke was reappointed for three (3) years to the Ethics Inquiry Board. Her term would expire April 2009. Motion to approve of her appointment was made by Supervisor Pufahl, second by Supervisor Boockmeier. Motion carried.

Communications

- Decision was made to place the March 2006 County Board minutes on supervisor's desks because of postage costs.
- A memo from the Town of West Point Plan Commission requested that it be shared with the County Board. Chair Martin indicated her opposition to distributing this correspondence with the board suggesting copies could have been provided for distribution since all members do not have email addresses. Mailing a copy was not considered because of resulting costs. The response from Director Bluemke was reviewed.
- A formal resignation from former Supervisor Mike Kinney had been received and was effective March 23.
- Senate Bill 1: requires all people running for public office, to provide a detailed financial statement. WCA has indicated that they do not support this bill.
- Sales Tax reported was down \$17,000 from a year ago.
- AB1156 -will eliminate the counties abilities to impose an impact fee.
- Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance - reducing board size resulted in lower expenses incurred by the Board with an larger expenditures made by the Board.
- A number of resolution were received dealing with state funding for Human Services and Court systems; opposition to TPA, recommendation that sales tax be audited; changes to laws governing the use of value assessments for ag lands; and suggestion regarding retirement system contributions - that the State adopt a model similar to Alaska creating 401K for new State and local government employees.

The Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 11:21 a.m. on motion by Supervisor Westby, second by Supervisor Boockmeier. Motion carried.

Secretary of Record,

Recording Secretary,

Barry Pufahl

Jeanne Miller