

## **OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE:** Tuesday, October 15, 2020  
**TIME:** 1:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Wood County Courthouse – Conference Room 114

**PRESENT:** Ed Wagner, Donna Rozar, Lance Pliml, Mike Feirer, Adam Fischer (via Webex)

**OTHERS PRESENT** (for part or all of the meeting, in person or via Webex): Bill Clendenning, Dennis Polach, Ken Curry, Al Breu, Jake Hahn, Kim McGrath, Kelli Quinnell, Al Thurber, Ed Newton, Amy Kaup, Jordon Bruce, Jason DeMarco, Jason Hausler, Reuben Van Tassel, Peter Kastenholz, Trent Miner, Marissa Laher, Chad Schooley, Mary Schlagenhaft, Randy Dorshorst, Jodi Pingel, Sue Kunferman, Lori Heideman, Erik Engel, Heather Gehrt, Tiffany Ringer, Shane Wucherpfennig, Jo Timmerman, Mary Solheim, Sarah Christensen, Brent Vruwink, Jason Grueneberg, Quentin Ellis

The meeting was called to order by Chair Wagner at 1:00 p.m.

Chair Wagner gave the Committee gave a brief introduction to the topics of discussion for the meeting.

Finance Director Thurber shared with the Committee that departments made decreases to their budget as requested at the Department Head Meeting held on October 7, 2020. Thurber stated that, due to the decreases to budgets, the 2020 forecast become more favorable. Thurber stated that he put together three versions of the budget that Chair Wagner requested. One budget includes no wage increase in 2021, one includes a 1% increase in 2021, and the third includes implementing the new wage structure.

Discussion ensued at length. Wagner proposed creating a personnel subcommittee where any requests to fill a position or create a new position needs to go through. Rozar expressed that she felt oversight committees could be charged with reviewing positions to be filled or creating new positions in departments that they oversee and it wasn't necessary to create another committee. Fischer stated that he agreed that creating another subcommittee was not needed. Wagner explained the reasoning and mechanism behind the option of a 1% increase in 2021. He stated that the problem is structural. Rozar stated that she believes the new wage plan needs to be implemented because a lot of time and money was spent on it and the general feeling is that it is a fair plan.

Rozar brought up the option of voluntary furloughs. Pliml stated that reducing the number of employees, whether through attrition, re-evaluating programming, or reducing programming, would save on the budget. He further stated that there is a structural problem that needs to be addressed. Wagner suggested that the Committee could be tasked with reducing the number of employees by 50 over the next couple of years. Rozar stated that oversight committees should be tasked with discussing historically unfilled positions that could be eliminated with Department Heads that report to them. Pliml requested that HR Director McGrath provide the Committee with a list of historically unfilled positions. Pliml stated that he would put a memo out through HR regarding reducing workforce and the need for every department and oversight committee to look at mission and mission creep.

The Committee discussed freezing wages for the beginning of the year and then implementing the new wage plan in July or June. Discussion ensued at length. The Committee asked Department Heads in attendance for their feedback. Various Department Heads weighed in. Wagner asked McGrath if HR has received any feedback on the new wage plan. McGrath explained that HR has received a number of questions from employees. McGrath stated that there is an emotional component to wages so there are some employees that are pleased with the new placements and some that have questions on why they were placed where they were. McGrath stated that she felt an implementation halfway through the year was a good compromise.

**Motion (Pliml/Feirer) to adopt the new wage plan and implement that plan effective July 1, 2021 with no wage increases between now and then. Motion carried unanimously.**

The Committee will work to creative initiatives to address the structural problem in 2021.

Wagner expressed gratitude to Finance Director Thurber, Finance Deputy Director Newton, and County Board Chair Pliml for their efforts on working to balance the budget.

The Committee discussed procedural questions related to the resolution for the wage plan with Corporation Counsel Kastenholz and County Clerk Miner.

A brief discussion regarding sales tax ensued.

Chair Wagner declared the meeting adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

Minutes recorded and prepared by Kelli Quinnell. Minutes in draft form until approved at the next meeting.