

LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Special Meeting
September 1, 2015
10:00 a.m.

Chairman Walls called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioner Stenger said the prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance was said.

County Clerk Myers called the roll with the following Commissioners present:

Colleen Carrington-Atkins, John Brunn, John Fairbanks, Dan Sloan, Barb Stenger, Chuck Vayda and Karl Walls.

Commissioner Sloan moved for approval of the agenda, seconded Commissioner Carrington-Atkins, and by voice vote, carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT – *Limited to 5 minutes each, please!*

Lori Dewolf was present to read into the minutes a letter written by her, and stated that this letter was written with NO input from anyone else. *See Attachment "A"*

Tim Smith was present and stated a lot of employees are in agreement with Lori's letter. He also spoke on the retiree health insurance coverage being taken away, and yet the Commissioners can find funding for the administrators position. He does not understand the thoughts behind all of these decisions.

Sue Smith was present and stated that when she was hired in 2003 she was told that she would have health care benefits upon her retirement. That was one of the biggest reasons why she continued to work for Lake County.

Jackie Houze was present to state that she has been here for 24 years and it has not been easy, she also was promised health insurance when she retired. She stated that this is what "Not Fair" is.

Chairman Walls stated that only one thing is on the agenda, and they will move right into discussions on the County Administrator's contract.

Commissioner Sloan moved for approval and the Chair to sign the Employment Agreement that was emailed to the remaining 6 Commissioners for their review, seconded by Commissioner Stenger. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Stenger asked CFO Myers if she had a copy of said agreement. CFO Myers stated that she just received it laying on the table now.

Commissioner Fairbanks asked if this new person is salaried, and if so, why are they being offered Sick and Vacation pay. No other salaried employee receives these benefits.

Commissioner Sloan stated that all of these issues have been discussed in length at previous meetings.

LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Special Meeting
September 1, 2015 – Page 2

Commissioner Vayda stated that this is the time to discuss all of the issues in the contract at length.

Commissioner Carrington-Atkins asked for a total cost for this employment package.

Discussion followed regarding the additional \$5,000 for insurance for the domestic partner and other hardships that the new administrator will be facing.

Commissioner Sloan reminded the Board that this was negotiated with no additional cost to the County. He also reminded everyone what the cost was to the county was for the previous administrator in 2000, and went on to explain all of the issues that the county face with the Unfunded Liabilities that have not been addressed, and urged his colleagues to agree.

Chairman Walls stated that the reason that the vacation and sick days were stated was so that limits could be set as to the amount of days he could be away from his employment.

Commissioner Carrington-Atkins reported that at her DHD#10 meeting, another county was also looking for an Administrator, and stated that due to various issues, they may not be filling that position, and it was also stated “that for a County like Lake County, why would you be paying that much”. She continued to state that she feels that we need an administrator, but she is not prepared to vote yes on this at this time without more information as to the cost of the entire employment package.

Commissioner Fairbanks stated he thinks it is too much money and not fair to those who may have to work under this position. He also stated there may be animosity towards this person because of the pay and the benefit package as it is different than other employees. He stated he does not want any more animosity between the good employees that we currently have and all of the Commissioners.

Commissioner Sloan stated that this process was started approximately 1 year ago, and we as Commissioners are not County employees, we work for the voters of our district, we are not employees. He further explained that we were forced into a health insurance policy that we will see a 20% increase on next year. He went on to explain that we need an Administrator that will work for the Board and be responsible to the Commissioners. He reminded the Board that the current CFO “threatened” to quit if she did not receive a raise. We need a professional to enforce the will of the Board and work with the employees in a professional and positive way. He went on to state the ~~finding of~~** (correction, should be “exceptions in”) the Audit which were more numerous than in previous years.

Commissioner Carrington-Atkins stated that we have to be responsible to the citizens that we serve. It would be different if we had someone coming in here that wasn't so expensive, and we have a financial person here already that is doing a lot of these things, and not sure what part of this job she is not doing, and it can't be justified for the costs, the \$75,000 plus benefits. What additional services are we not already getting?

Commissioner Sloan stated we are getting a person with numerous degrees and a back ground in Private Sector budgeting experience and numerous other items. We are getting a person that has

LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Special Meeting
September 1, 2015 – Page 3

experience in making the needed cuts to lessen our unfunded liabilities, which is continuing to grow, with no plan in site ******(correction, word should be spelled “sight”). We need someone to put a plan together to address these issues.

Chairman Walls stated that we are not going to solve a lot of these issues as commissioners, and he has every confidence in this person, as it was stated that he has experience in dealing with employee benefit packages, and will be able to investigate what should be done, and what can be done. He managed employees and their healthcare, and not just looking at the dollars, but the entire scenario. We did negotiate away the longer term contract down to a 2 year contract with him.

CFO/Clerk Myers stated that the Employee Health Insurance is only increasing 9% and not the 20% that Mr. Sloan is stating.

Commissioner Carrington-Atkins stated how are we going to monitor this employee? How are we going to measure the success of this position?

Commissioner Stenger stated that he will answer to the Commissioners, and all of these issues must be addressed at budget time. She stated that she does not like having two different sides, and everyone should be in agreement, as this was everyone’s first choice for an administrator for the County.

Commissioner Carrington-Atkins stated that the driving force behind the issues was that he was coming from New Hampshire, and is she is very sad that there were not more applicants from the area (Michigan).

Commissioner Brunn stated that he has taken time to talk to his constituents and wonders why we are trying to fix something that isn’t broken. He went on to thank Ms. Dewolf for the exceptional letter in which he agrees with. No one at a County level should start out at \$75,000.

Commissioner Sloan stated in answer to Commissioner Carrington-Atkins questions, No one would work for \$75,000, and feels we are still on the lower end of the pay for the skills that are needed. As for something this in not broken, we are, as he feels he did not receive any support from the current administration here for his efforts with Economic Development.

Discussion followed regarding an annual review for this position and how to complete an evaluation, the process that should be taken and also the contract as it was presented. It was discussed that this is an “At Will” employee, and can be terminated.

Roll Call Vote on the above motion is 3 Yes, 4 NO, Commissioners Brunn, Fairbanks, Vayda and Carrington-Atkins.

Commissioner Sloan stated that raises have been given out by this board that he voted no on.

Commissioner Sloan moved to reconsider the vote, seconded by Commissioner Stenger. As the maker of the motion, he stated all items that he has worked on and trying to improve the services

LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Special Meeting

September 1, 2015 – Page 4

for the taxpayers. We must move forward. Commissioner Stenger agrees and we must look to the future.

Roll call Vote on the above motion is, 4 Yes and 3 NO, Commissioners Fairbanks, Vayda and Brunn.

Commissioner Carrington-Atkins stated the three persons who worked on this project are the Personnel Committee and there always seems to be an issue. The three are always in accord with an issue.

Chairman Walls stated that Commissioner Carrington-Atkins started this process by questioning the CFO and her ability to do her jobs. All the job duties that have been given to her being Clerk, Register of Deeds and CFO duties have all been done well. Some of these duties that have been placed on her desk he feels are for a full time position. She has done a great job especially with our health care. A lengthy discussion followed.

Commissioner Stenger stated when she first came on as a Commissioner she wanted Personnel to be part of Full Board so that everyone was aware and informed and part of a decision. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Sloan stated that we have been moving forward and he won't take all the credit for this but if we come to a road block on this, it will be tough to move forward after today and encourages the board to move forward.

The question was called by Chairman Walls for roll call vote on previous motion.

Roll Call Vote on the above motion is 3 Yes, and 4 NO, Commissioners Vayda, Carrington-Atkins, Brunn and Fairbanks.

Commissioner Fairbanks asked why we can't give a counter offer and was stopped by Commissioner Sloan who stated "I'm all done John, I move for adjournment," seconded by Commissioner Vayda.

Being no further business meeting adjourned at 12:07 pm

Shelly Myers, Clerk to the Board

Karl Walls, Chairman

LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Special Meeting
September 1, 2015 – Page 5

Attachment “A”

9-1-15

To the Lake County Board of Commissioners:

First I want to say, how ashamed I am to even tell people that I work for Lake County. The news article in the Lake County Star on August 27, 2015 was a SLAP IN THE FACE for your current Chief Fiscal Officer, who has been with Lake County for over 24 years and has held this position for over 15 years and has saved the County a lot of money, to read in the paper that someone has accepted the position for the Lake County Administrator at \$75,000.00. What a SHOCK it was that the exact date he accepted it was the same date as the Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting and that the board approved the additional \$5,000.00, to bring his salary to \$75,000.00. It surprises me in another “SPECIAL MEETING” that was held to review those candidates that interviewed and make a decision on whom to offer the position to, that Commissioner Sloan stated “he was FIRM on the \$70,000.00”. WOW, and since Mr. Tucker would not take the job unless he received the additional money since the County does NOT cover health insurance for “domestic partners” and Commissioner Sloan made a motion to increase the offer an additional \$5,000.00, which was pass on the 27th.

Mr. Tucker’s picture was even in the paper. I guess this was already a GO and the reporter Brendan Losinski, was just waiting to hear from Commissioner Sloan regarding Mr. Tucker’s decision to publish the article. As quoted in the Lake County Star, “The job of the county administrator is to assist the **PART-TIME** commissioners with running the county, etc. SO if the Commissioners are PART-TIME employees of the County, yes you are employees as the Taxpayers do pay your wages and fringe benefits, WHY DO YOU GET THE FULL TIME BENEFITS????

Not only does the new administrator receive the \$75,000.00 in salary, you are also giving him 20 days’ vacation right off the bat, 6 sick days and then an additional 6 sick days at the beginning of 2016, for a total of 12 sick days. The employees do not receive this, we get 6 sick days at the beginning of the year, and what is still on the books at the end of the year, and we receive ½ paid the first pay of the next year. FAIR, do you really want to get into this AGAIN!!!! US Non-Union employees AGAIN get that knife twisted further and further and further in our backs. These 20 Days he receives, is he to use them from the date of hire, October 7, 2015 – December 30, 2015 or do those roll over and then receive more?????

I am sorry that I even feel this way, but more so YOU have NO consideration for your Chief Fiscal Officer. You have kept her out of the loop from the beginning of this whole search for a new administrator. I have no issue with the new administrator and will in fact welcome him into our County with open arms, MY issue is with the Commissioners and how this was all done AND calling ANOTHER special meeting to pay per diems and mileage to review and approve a contract when Mr. Tucker has already accepted the position, SHAME ON ALL OF YOU.

I wish each and every one of you luck for those of you that run for Commissioner next year as there are A LOT of PISSED OFF people out in this county and word of mouth spreads faster than the newspaper does.