

LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Special Meeting
September 16, 2015
9:00 a.m.

Chairman Walls called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

Commissioner Carrington-Atkins 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, Barb Stenger, Chuck Vayda and Karl Walls.

Absent: Dan Sloan

Commissioner Fairbanks moved for approval of the agenda, seconded Commissioner Stenger, And Commissioner Carrington-Atkins stated that per the OMA, if not all are present; we cannot discuss “any other matters” as it is stated on the agenda. Discussion to “Strike” that portion of #7 on the agenda, and by voice vote, carried.

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

No persons present wished to speak.

Chairman Walls opened up the discussions to the proposal by Abraham and Gaffney regarding the proposal for a wide range of accounting and consulting services for Lake County.

Commissioner Stenger stated that as Commissioners, we need to look towards the future, and not always go for the short term. She stated that she has reviewed her responsibilities as a County Commissioner, per the handbook that was given to her when she started, and the needs and priorities need to be addressed. We need to move forward and we need to look at the budgets and financials and this is one of the things we are responsible for as Commissioners. She read off each of the items of importance on the list of duties as County Commissioners. She stated it is very important to get to know the “team” that works for us. She stated that they are here as Commissioners and are only a small part of the whole picture, and we need to work on strong working relations with all of the elected officials, not only in the county, but in the townships and villages too. Everyone that she has talked with stated the communications are lacking and that they want to make changes so that everyone works together.

Commissioner Fairbanks agrees that the Commissioners need to work together with the persons working in the courthouse as they are the foundation that keeps the functions strong.

A question was asked that by using the services of Abraham and Gaffney, would that result in the cutting of current personnel? Discussion followed regarding outsourcing services.

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Commissioner Carrington-Atkins stated that she has reviewed the Personnel Manual and she has looked at the 3 options that have been presented. She stated that nothing states in the handbook exactly what duties the department heads are supposed to perform, and wants to know if we already have persons performing some or all of these duties.

Chairman Walls stated that we have a good system in place, and throwing more duties on our CFO is not going to work, as it is not a one person job any more.

Commissioner Dan Sloan arrived at 9:24 a.m.

Commissioner Carrington-Atkins stated that there are things that are missing in the handbook and questions whether or not they are being done and what are we actually replacing?

Commissioner Sloan explained that Steve is just the current auditor and only does a sampling of the financials and does not review everything.

Steve Kirinovic, Abraham and Gaffney, was present to review all of their current services and what they may test and/or sample. Steve explained the F65 report form and some of the other audit processes. As per their proposals, most of the items on that list are now management duties. This proposal could result in future audit costs being lowered.

Lengthy discussions followed relative to the proposal and availability of the firms staff, especially at all Board of Commissioners meetings. Steve stated that they would be there, and yes, it would be at a cost. When asked if they could use email, telephone or Skype, Steve stated that would be an option that would be less expensive.

Commissioner Carrington-Atkins asked what staff members here at the courthouse would their firm utilize or would he be using strictly his own staff, over the county staff. Steve stated that he would use county staff when necessary to keep costs down. Commissioner Sloan stated that there still would be a cost no matter whose staff is used. Commissioner Sloan then asked for an approximate annual cost, and it was stated that it could be around \$100,000.

Commissioner Stenger asked about helping with new grants, writing of such, administering them, and all of the duties relating to them, and it was stated that this could be covered as part of the proposal.

It was stated that it is still possible that one or two key point people would still be needed to keep the costs down.

Commissioner Sloan asked if by law, the General Ledger needed to stay in the Clerk's Office. Steve stated that he is not an attorney, and is not sure on that, but does not think it must be kept there, just that the Clerk is the "Keeper of the Records".

Commissioner Fairbanks asked everyone how they felt about this subject. The Clerk stated that she is comfortable with the concept, but not the price. Taking the financials out of her office

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would be a great help. Treasurer and Trial Court Administrator stated they like the proposals, and gave their input.

Commissioner Fairbanks stated that he wants to try to make everyone happy and comfortable in the courthouse. Discussion followed relative to the proposal, and job duties.

Chairman Walls stated that he has been called away on work duties, and his thoughts are still to go with a County Administrator. He turned the meeting over to the Vice Chair.

Chairman Walls left the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Vice Chair Sloan stated that this could be hard to sell to the constituents and he is sure that we can probably get applicant #2 to come back since we lost all credibility with applicant #1. He feels that duties would not be lessened on our CFO and she would probably still want to keep her stipend anyways.

Commissioner Carrington-Atkins stated that she would like a little more research done on the pay scales for County Administrators around this area, and agrees with the Chairman for the need for an administrator, but wants a bit more time for research.

Steve stated that he could come in for assistance with the new administrator, and then still be able to perform our audit.

Commissioners Brunn and Vayda stated that they would like to see the CFO and Steve sit down and work out the details so that a more accurate price could be brought forth, and then get with an administrator that may wish to work part time.

Vice Chair Sloan stated that if you have a Hybrid system in place you will still have a problem.

Commissioner Carrington-Atkins stated that we are still faced with the health care issues and the unfunded liability issues and still need answers for the questions that the employees are asking.

Commissioner Fairbanks stated his suggestion would be that Steve and Shelly get together on the list and come up with a proposal for Year One, then a proposal for Year Two and then possibly for Year Three. He continues to have a concern with bringing in a person that will come in at a salary over our senior employees' salaries.

Commissioner Stenger stated she has talked to a lot of people and they want us to look towards the future and want continuity of government and leadership. She does not wish this to be a band aid.

Commissioner Carrington-Atkins agrees with the need for an administrator and still is not confident that the search was done effectively and as widespread as it could have been.

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Commissioner Fairbanks stated that he still feels that it may be beneficial to look at both the proposal from Steve and the cost of an administrator to compare.

CFO stated that she feels that a couple of Commissioners are only looking for an EDC person, to help with EDC Administration and the others are looking at the financial duties, and thinks everyone should come together first, and then look at the total numbers.

Vice Chair Sloan stated that he agrees with Commissioner Stenger that they need a “leader” and someone to work for them, and wants to look at an overall solution.

Commissioner Carrington –Atkins feels that we are not the only county looking at this issue, and does not hear any need for direction from any of the department heads, and would like to know more about that. She would like more information about how other counties are handling their issues and what they are paying for their administrators.

The board took a short break at 10:50 a.m.

The board reconvened at 11:05 a.m.

Vice Chair Sloan stated that the next item on the agenda was the Resolution that needs to go to the Building Authority first for their approval, prior to coming to this Board for adoption.

Discussion followed regarding the money insured through our banks and the Federal Insurances for the investments that the Building Authority handles.

CFO asked if the Building Authority was bonded to handle these types of funds, and stated the Bonds would be in the Treasurer’s office if they are.

Commissioner Fairbanks requested that the Resolution be placed on the agenda for the next Board Meeting, and also asked that Julie Hoffman be placed on the agenda under old business to address her concerns.

Being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelly Myers, Clerk to the Board

Karl Walls, Chairman