

TUESDAY, JULY 13, 2010

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING HELD**

**STATE OF MINNESOTA)
DODGE COUNTY)**

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
MANTORVILLE, MN**

2010-13 C.O.W.

The Dodge County Commissioners met in Committee of the Whole July 13, 2010, in the Commissioner's Room at the Dodge County Courthouse Annex, Mantorville, MN, at 9:00 a.m. CDT. Lyle Tjosaas opened the meeting at 9:02 a.m. CDT.

Meeting Convened

The Chair acknowledged those present:

Those Present

Members present: Klaus Alberts District #1
Lyle Tjosaas District #2
Don Gray District #4
David Hanson District #5

Members absent: David Erickson District #3

Also present: Jim Elmquist County Administrator
Becky Lubahn Deputy County Clerk

Court Administrator Annette Hodge informed the Board that effective July 16, 2010, she will be retiring as Court Administrator after 31 years of court service.

Court Administrator
Update

Ms. Hodge informed the Board that it has been a pleasure working with them and noted that she appreciated their professionalism and their willingness to listen to her ideas and requests.

Ms. Hodge shared with the Board the state's plan for replacing the Court Administrator position in Dodge County. As of July 19, 2010 the Dodge County Court Administrator position will become a combined position. Patty Ball who is the Mower County Court Administrator will be working in both Mower County and Dodge County. When Ms. Ball isn't able to come to Dodge County, her supervisor Kristine Bartness, will fill in as needed when her schedule allows.

The Court Administrator informed the Board that Judge Joseph Wieners will be introducing Patty Ball at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Hodge assured the Board that Ms. Ball has experience in the Court Administration Office and in the Court Administrator position.

Commissioner Hanson wanted to know if there would be a problem with not having someone in Dodge County full-time.

The Court Administrator reported that Ms. Ball has staff that goes into court on a regular basis in Mower County so it isn't necessary for her to be in court in Mower County every day.

County Administrator Jim Elmquist wanted to know what the downside would be if Dodge County didn't have a full-time Court Administrator.

Ms. Hodge stated that the downside would be that the Court Administration staff wouldn't have a go to person. The Court Administrator noted that the Judges prefer to have their own Court Administrator but due to the money issue Mower County and Dodge County will have a temporary shared position.

Court Administrator
Update - Continued

Ms. Hodge informed the Board that she has wonderful staff in the Court Administration Office and indicated that she feels they will be fine with the change. The Court Administrator pointed out that there will be days when the new Court Administrator and her supervisor will not be in Dodge County.

Commissioner Hanson wanted to know if there was a schedule worked out for the two offices.

The Court Administrator stated that there isn't a schedule yet, they will need to look at court calendars and staffing levels in both Mower County and Dodge County and determine where Ms. Ball is needed.

The Court Administrator commented that she appreciated the Board's support of Drug Court and hopes the Commissioners will give this program top priority through this time of fading funds. Ms. Hodge stated that time has proven that Drug Courts do in fact work to improve the lives of the participants as well as the communities and noted that working with the Drug Court Program has been a highlight of her job.

Commissioner Alberts believes the Dodge County Drug Court Program is a tribute to Annette Hodge and Judge Agerter and noted that the program has been very successful with the help of these two individuals.

Ms. Hodge informed the Board that working with the Drug Court Program has been very fulfilling. The Court Administrator reported that the Drug Court team is a wonderful team to work with and commended them for the work they have done to bring everyone together. Ms. Hodge noted that the offices that work with the Drug Court Program participants work very well together. The Court Administrator thanked the Board for being supportive of the program over the years.

Commissioner Tjosaas stated that the county is very proud of the job Annette Hodge has done in Dodge County and thanked Ms. Hodge for the update on the Court Administrator position.

Human Services Director Jane Hardwick met with the Board to discuss the proposed reorganization of the Human Services Support Services.

Support Services
Reorganization
Discussed

Ms. Hardwick commented that with continuous pressure on Human Services caseload and budget and other management considerations, she proposes to reorganize the department's Support Services area to position them to better respond to the opportunities and challenges ahead. On June 22, 2010, the Human Services Director reviewed this plan with the Human Services Committee and Administrative Committee.

Mr. Hardwick discussed with the Board organizational and staffing changes she would like to implement. Preliminary fiscal estimates of the impact of this reorganization were also discussed.

It was Commissioner Alberts' opinion that it would be pretty tough to downscale once they've added employees and wanted to know if the 0.8 FTE position would bring in funds from the state.

Support Services
Reorganization
Discussed -
Continued

The Human Services Director clarified that 66% of the position would be covered by federal funding that would require some matching funds from the county. Ms. Hardwick stated that applicants would be notified that the position is not a permanent position.

Commissioner Hanson discussed the use of regional collaboration and commented that he was leery of bringing in someone new to the Child Support position.

Ms. Hardwick informed the Board that in order to get someone with Child Support experience they would have to pay more. The other option would be to hire someone new and train them or possibly find someone within the courthouse that could take on some additional work for two and a half years. The Human Services Director stated that she doesn't believe anyone from another county will be interested in shifting to Dodge County for this temporary position.

Commissioner Gray asked for input from the Employee Relations Director.

Ms. Hager commented that she agrees with the concept and feels it is the right thing to do for this department.

The Human Services Director shared with the Board Child Support performance rankings for Region 10 in the following areas:

- Paternity
- Current Support Collections
- Arrears Collections
- Establishment
- Cost Effectiveness

It was noted that Dodge County is ranked #1 in each of these areas.

Commissioner Tjosaas stated that it is interesting to see how well the Dodge County staff does in this area.

Ms. Hardwick informed the Board that she is requesting authorization to continue the proposed re-organizing plan for the department's Support Services area.

The Employee Relations Director reported that the first step in the process would be to re-write the job description; the job description would then come back to the County Board for approval and then be sent to Olmsted County for review.

It was the consensus of the Board that they were supportive of the re-organization concept.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:32 a.m. CDT.

Meeting Adjourned

ATTEST:

LYLE TJOSAAS
CHAIR, COUNTY BOARD

BECKY LUBAHN
DEPUTY CLERK

DATED: