

Minutes of the Executive Session of the Finance Committee
Tuesday, August 5, 1997

The Finance Committee of the McLean County Board went into Executive Session at 6:25 p.m. on Tuesday, August 5, 1997 to discuss personnel matters with regard to the Metro McLean County Centralized Communications Center.

Chairman Stevens asked the status of the personnel issue at the Center. Mr. Ed Williams, Assistant County Administrator, advised that the Committee had asked him to meet at the Center with Ms. Barb Phelps. Mr. Williams advised that, approximately a week later, he met with Mr. Bill Gamblin, Director, and Ms. Phelps for approximately four hours.

During the meeting, Ms. Phelps indicated that the problems were the hours of work. Mr. Williams explained that the County tried to address the number of hours by bringing in a telecommunicator to assist. Ms. Phelps indicated that this additional telecommunicator has helped, but there is no way she can cut down to a 40 hour week because of the status of the Center. Ms. Phelps agreed that this is just a temporary situation, but there is no way she will be able to cut her hours below 40 because of the current demands.

Mr. Williams advised that he then discussed the main issue regarding the salary. Mr. Phelps had originally indicated that she would stay but, when she did not get a salary adjustment, her statement was that she was continuing to look and will continue to look. Ms. Phelps indicated that the salary issue is not something that would immediately make her leave her employment. Mr. Williams explained that, as Database Coordinator, this position has a 40 hour work week. Ms. Phelps' current position requires a lot more hours. As a result, the County gave Ms. Phelps a 5% increase under the County's compensation plan. Mr. Williams advised that Ms. Phelps did indicate during the meeting that she did not realize what the salary was going to be until after she accepted the position.

Mr. Williams advised, after his meeting with Ms. Phelps, he relayed to the County Administrator and Mr. Gamblin that her issue regarding the number of hours is probably due to Ms. Phelps' reluctance to delegate duties. Mr. Williams stated that he encouraged Ms. Phelps to use the assistance of the telecommunicator to do some of the work. Mr. Sorensen commented that someone should not have to be surprised about a pay raise.

Mr. Ware asked if this particular individual from the Center ever communicated with the Assistant County Administrator regarding this issue. Mr. Ware asked, when this individual became an employee of the County, was she not given all the pertinent employee information. Mr. Gamblin responded that part of the problem was his being new to County employment. When he interviewed this individual, he looked at the range, thought this individual was competent, and said that this is what you are going to make. Mr. Gamblin stated that this mistake is definitely his fault.

Mr. Sorensen commented that Mr. Gamblin was the supervisor of this individual. Mr. Gamblin told this individual that she would make this amount of amount, but the individual did not get this amount of money. As a result, Mr. Sorensen asked if the County could be liable to a lawsuit by this individual. Mr. Williams replied that it does not make it right but, Ms. Phelps has had an opportunity to resign after being presented with the dollar amount. Mr. Williams explained that this is one of the reasons why he spent over four hours explaining the County's Personnel Policy as well as the compensation plan to this individual.

Mr. Gamblin explained that when he and Ms. Phelps were hired and saw the length of the project, both were thinking full speed ahead. As a result, a lot of the standard procedures were rushed through. Mr. Gamblin noted, unfortunately, he should have been at the County Administrator's Office asking what is the County's Personnel Policy and Procedures.

Mr. Gamblin reminded the Committee members that, at the same time, he was dealing with many Emergency Telephone System Board's people who were telling him to do what he did.

Mr. Sweeney stated that the real issue that the Committee is concerned about is that it had a resignation on the table and neither the Assistant County Administrator nor the Director of the Metro McLean County Centralized Communications Center informed the Committee that the resignation was rescinded. Mr. Williams commented that he was not aware that this was an issue. Mr. Sweeney advised that it looks like Mr. Williams and Mr. Gamblin were using the resignation to obtain an increase in this individual's salary. The Finance Committee earlier, in Executive Session, discussed the resignation issue for over 40 minutes. Mr. Williams stated that he is sorry that the Committee understood it that way and apologized for not mentioning that the individual had rescinded the resignation. This was discussed extensively with the Operational Board of the Center. Mr. Sorensen stated, if the Committee had been informed that the resignation had been rescinded, the Committee would have had a two minute discussion on the matter.

Mr. Sorensen commented, during the last discussion in Executive Session, it sounded like Ms. Phelps was holding a gun to our head. As an employer, the County has the ethical obligation to say go ahead. Mr. Williams stated that he and Mr. Gamblin were not holding any gun to the Board's head. Mr. Sorensen commented that it sounds more like Mr. Williams and Mr. Gamblin were holding a gun to the Committee's head. Mr. Gamblin stated that, since it was out in the public, he assumed that the Committee was aware that the resignation had been rescinded. He wants the Committee to understand that he would never be a part of a deception.

Mr. Sweeney stated that his position up front was, if this individual resigned, to just let her go period. In most circumstances, if an employee turns in a resignation and then rescinds the resignation or is talked into staying, the individual normally leaves within a short period of time anyway. Mr. Sweeney advised that if he had known that the resignation had been rescinded by this individual, he would have taken a different position.

Motion by Sweeney/Ware to come out of Executive Session and return to Open Session. Motion carried.

The Finance Committee of the McLean County Board returned to Open Session at 6:40 p.m. on Thursday, August 5, 1997.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer L. Drummond
Recording Secretary