

Administration & Personnel Committee  
January 5, 2017

Present: Wallace Habegger, Pete Peterson, Mary Von Ruden, Sharon Folcey, James Schroeder, Mary Cook, David Pierce, Nodji VanWychen, Paul Steele; Carol Las joined the meeting at 4:40 p.m.

Others: Jim Bialecki, Ken Kittleson, Ed Smudde, Andrew Kaftan, Cedric Schnitzler, Garry Spohn, Scott Jerome, David Ohnstad, Becky Pitel, Bill Pieper

The meeting was called to order in the Rolling Hills Activity Room at 4:00 p.m.

- Filling of Highway Commissioner Vacancy Discussion –

Ken Kittleson explained that there have been three commissioners in the last 50 years. Within the last 30 years, an engineering degree has existed. Seven applications were taken. Of those, three met the engineering qualifications. The County Administrator appoints Department Heads. Ken asked to have the Highway Committee to be on the interview panel.

Members discussed the possibility to change the policy that limits those without an engineering degree to apply. Ken explained that part of the compensation is a degree. Reclassification would have to go through the Administrator. Removing the degree may affect the classification. There is no state requirement that the commissioner has to have an engineering degree. It was also discussed that some surrounding counties do not have a commissioner with an engineering degree and others share a commissioner. Other members felt that an engineering degree is used day to day including help at municipal levels.

Some Highway members felt they had no involvement before the application process and the engineering degree would have been brought up. Some would like to slow down and see what direction they are going before moving forward. Kittleson explained he went forward with the hiring process with permission from the Administrator. The Administrator appoints Department Heads. Members discussed that the job ad was already announced and those qualified should be interviewed. If the three interviewed are not found to be qualified, then the job could be reposted. At that time, reclassification could be looked at.

Carol Las joined the meeting at 4:40 p.m.

Ken Kittleson explained the interview process. It was the consensus of the committee to move forward with interview of the three qualified candidates. There will be a closed session at the end of the regular meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> for interviews. After the interviews, the county can move forward with hiring or go back to the drawing board if none of the candidates are qualified. One member recommended to have a commissioner from another county on the panel.

- Public Works Concept Discussion – Jim Schroeder explained the public works concept. Those that are placed on Maintenance tend to leave. Public works should contain one employee that is strictly assigned to Maintenance while the others are strictly working at Highway.

Ken Kittleson explained that in theory, the concept is a good idea. However, the experience since the first hire is that everyone wants to go from Maintenance to the Highway Department. The pay is same but the hours may be different. The training for maintenance is very high which has caused productivity issues.

It was an overall consensus of members to change the concept back, eliminating the shared maintenance position. Interim County Administrator, Jim Bialecki will be looking into the situation with Ken Kittleson and reporting back. The public works concept was an Administrator initiative, the county will need to verify if any resolutions were passed regarding the concept and what actions would be needed in order to set the concept back.

- Motion by Pete Peterson second by David Pierce to adjourn at 5:10 p.m. Carried 10-0.

Shelley Bohl, County Clerk  
Recorder