

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD
COMMITTEE MINUTES

POLICY, PERSONNEL, & APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 8, 2006

Meeting Rm. 1, Brookens Administrative Center
1776 E. Washington St., Urbana

7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Beckett, Betz, Fabri, Feinen, Knott, Moser, Putman, Wysocki

MEMBERS ABSENT: Busboom

OTHERS PRESENT: Deb Busey (County Administrator of Finance & HR), Denny Inman (County Administrator of Facilities), David DeThorne (Office of the State's Attorney), Joel Fletcher (Office of the State's Attorney), Ron Gremore (Deputy County Administrator of HR), Susan McGrath (Office of the State's Attorney)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Betz called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The Recording Secretary called the roll. Beckett, Betz, Fabri, Feinen, Knott, Moser, and Wysocki were present at the time of the roll call. The Chair declared a quorum and proceeded with the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDUM

MOTION by Wysocki to approve the agenda and addendum for the meeting; seconded by Knott. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Beckett to approve the regular session minutes of February 8, 2006; seconded by Wysocki. Motion carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one for public participation.

MONTHLY REPORTS

County Clerk Fees Report

MOTION by Wysocki to receive and place on file the County Clerk's monthly report for February 2006; seconded by Knott. Motion carried.

COUNTY BOARD

Appointments/Reappointments

Pesotum Fire Protection District

MOTION by Moser to accept the resignation of Roger Miller as a Trustee of the Pesotum Fire Protection District, effective 2/28/2006; seconded by Beckett. Motion carried.

Eastern Illinois Economic Development Authority

MOTION by Wysocki to appoint Mitchel Swim to the Eastern Illinois Economic Development Authority with a term ending date of 12/31/2008; seconded by Moser.

Wysocki reminded the committee that the Eastern Illinois Economic Development Authority is a ten-county organization put together by the Governor as a bonding authority. The appointment was advertised and appropriate candidates were searched for, but Swim was the only one to surface. Wysocki interviewed Swim and felt he had a good understanding of bonding authority and what it could mean for the development of East Central Illinois. Wysocki stated, for the record, that Swim is a commercial loan officer with Central Bank in Champaign. This is the bank that holds Wysocki's mortgage. Wysocki contacted the County's attorneys and was advised that this does not pose a conflict of interest, particularly because Wysocki is almost finished paying off her mortgage. Betz stated he was going to abstain to avoid a possible conflict of interest. Knott asked about a possible conflict of interest because Swim recently worked with his department at the university and was assured by McGrath that he would only be in conflict if he possessed dispensing authority to pay Swim for his contract. Knott stated he did not.

Motion carried with one abstention by Betz.

Putman entered the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

Workforce Development Board of East Central Illinois

MOTION by Wysocki to appoint Steve Beckett to the Workforce Development Board of East Central Illinois; seconded by Knott. Beckett informed the committee that the group's title will be the Construction Industry Diversity Taskforce instead of the Workforce Development Board of East Central Illinois. The committee noted the name change.

Beckett listed the names of the other members of the taskforce, including Kathy MacArthur. Wysocki emphasized this taskforce is not a creation of the County Board. Wysocki informed the County Board members, in one of her weekly emails; of the taskforce's existence and that they were entertaining names of interested individuals who wished to participate. Beckett was the only County Board member who responded to the request to take part in the taskforce. Wysocki spoke to MacArthur recently and it was her understanding that once the taskforce's vision and scope were more defined, they would be inviting more individuals to participate based on their background, expertise, skills, and community involvement. The committee discussed the taskforce's major goals and its membership. Beckett has attended an organizational meeting. In response to a question from Putman, Beckett stated the taskforce's two major goals are 1. to build a foundation for a pre-apprentice educational and work program to assist all youth, with particular focus on minority youth, to enter into the construction labor force and 2. a disparity study. Through this organization, Beckett learned Labor & Industrial Relations performed a disparity study for Cook County at a cost of \$25,000 three years ago. Beckett noted the municipalities and other organizations are *wary* ~~wary~~ of the thought of a disparity study because the issue has become heavily politicized at the County level. The

organizations are not *wary weary* of the possible results of a disparity study, but are *wary weary* because the issue has become political and involved finger-pointing. Beckett is aware that he might be criticized for becoming involved in the taskforce, but felt he can add to the group and is the only County Board member willing to actually become involved in it.

Fabri echoed the positive comments other committee members made about MacArthur. He stated the taskforce should be a great group with important goals. He was concerned about the timing of the appointment due to issues of political taint.

MOTION by Fabri to defer the appointment to the April Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee meeting. Motion failed due to lack of a second.

Feinen asked when the taskforce's next meeting will be, because she would like to have a County Board member at the table. Beckett said he thought the next meeting will be during the last week in March, but he could not say for certain because he did not have his calendar.

Fletcher asked if the Workforce Development Board of East Central Illinois was just a prior working title of the Construction Industry Diversity Taskforce. Beckett affirmed it was.

Betz ordered a roll call vote. Motion carried with a vote of 7 to 1. Beckett, Feinen, Knott, Moser, Putman, Wysocki, and Betz voted in favor of the motion. Fabri voted against the motion.

Appointments Expiring Through June 2006

The appointments expiration list was provided for information only.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Vacant Positions Listing

The vacant positions listing was provided for information only. Busey pointed out, with the exception of Court Services and the Correctional Center; there are only eight vacant positions.

Designation Regarding Assignment of Payroll Administration

Busey requested the committee defer this item to the April agenda. There was no objection and the Chair deferred the item.

Discussion of Draft Revised Personnel Policy

Busey distributed the latest draft of the Personnel Policy. Changes have been made since the agenda packet was mailed to the committee last week. Busey gave highlights of the substantive changes. On Page 5, designation of parent committee for the offices of elected officials was eliminated, pursuant to the County Board rules, and the definition of domestic partner has been added. On Page 22, the changes include: 1. an increase to the limit for accrual of compensatory time for non-bargaining employees to seventy-five hours or the equivalent of two weeks and 2. removal of the payroll advances sections because there are very few organizations or entities that still offer payroll advances to their employees. With the use of direct deposit, it seems far less necessary to need payroll advances than it was twenty years ago. Busey recommended removing this language, but informed the committee that this language is in thirteen bargaining unit contracts. Elimination of the language in the Personnel Policy will not eliminate the language in the

contracts. It will take time to eliminate the language from bargaining unit contracts. This is the likely place to begin.

Betz asked the reason for the change to compensatory time accrual. Busey explained the recommended accrual amount is two weeks and employees are allowed to use it a week at a time. The language is more consistent with the language in the bargaining unit contracts. It could give a little more flexibility to departments during times when a project requires a lot of compensatory time and the employee has accrued the compensatory time limit, but is too busy to take time off.

Wysocki asked how frequently payroll advances are utilized by employees. Busey said the use is somewhat infrequent by the employees who are affected by the Personnel Policy. Busey informed the committee if the advances are eliminated, objections will be heard because it is used by some employees.

Feinen asked questions about the compensatory time accrual. Busey explained the accrual limit is seventy-five hours total balance determined at the end of the pay period. There are about two hundred non-exempt employees that would be covered by this policy. The bargaining unit contracts do include language about comp time, usually the equivalent of two weeks.

Fabri asked if the affected department heads and elected officials had a chance to review the draft revisions. Busey said the draft was reviewed at the department heads meeting this morning and all were clearly told that the Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee would only be looking at the draft revisions tonight and not taking any action. Busey strongly encouraged the department heads to provide any feedback, ideas, or changes they have so those can be incorporated in the revisions that will be brought to the committee next month.

Feinen asked about compensatory time for exempt employees. Busey referred her to Page 21, which describes compensatory time for exempt employees. Feinen asked for the reasoning behind allowing the accrual of compensatory time for salaried employees. Busey explained it is a government employees provision that is allowable under the Fair Labor Standards Act and it has been in the County's policies for decades. Part of the reason for the compensatory time is because exempt government employees are not treated the same as exempt employees in the private sector. For example, the County can dock exempt employees for two hours of sick time if they go to a doctor's appointment or four hours of vacation if they take half a day off. Typically, with exempt employees in the private sector, if an exempt employee shows up to work for an hour, then they worked that day. Compensatory time is made available because the County keeps much closer track of its employees. Fletcher noted the elected officials are not automatically subject to this policy and the State's Attorney has already adopted a more stringent policy for the attorneys. Feinen asked if the County Administrators receive compensatory time. Busey stated their contracts only allow compensatory time within a pay period; it is not carried over from one pay period to the next.

Fletcher noted the legal review of the draft revised Personnel Policy remains ongoing. Other revisions to the Personnel Policy included a correction to the holidays on Page 23, a slightly enhanced definition with regard to an employee's ability to use sick leave for others, including domestic partner on Page 24, and bereavement leave includes domestic partner on Page 25. On Page 30, there is a significantly enhanced and extended Workers' Compensation and Return to Work Following Injury Policy. This policy has been developed through the work and initiative of Denny Inman, Debbie Chow, and Ron Gremore working with the Carle Workforce Injury Network. Busey encouraged the committee to review this section thoroughly. There will likely be some fine-tuning during the legal review. The Personnel Policy draft includes the Victims Economic Security and Safety Act. Pages 44-45 concern the streamlining with the new positions and positions classification process for departments. The request for re-evaluations or creation of new positions will all go to the Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee, instead of going to a parent

committee because a number of the elected officials' offices do not have a parent committee. The County Board Rules currently require that the Finance Committee be the last committee to act on any matter that will have a financial impact, such as new positions or salary changes. Page 46 incorporates the County's longtime Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace Policy into the Personnel Policy. The Workplace Violence Policy and Illegal Harassment Policy are new to the Personnel Policy. These policies were developed through work with other counties.

Knott wanted to make sure the policy will include language to the effect that if an employee files a harassment claim against an immediate supervisor, there is a mechanism in place to bypass the supervisor in question and go directly to the Deputy County Administrator of HR or one of the County Administrators. DeThorne stated he is working on that language.

Busey stated the County's ~~Ethics~~ *Ethics* Ordinance has been included in the Personnel Policy. The domestic partnership registration has been included under General Rules & Procedures.

Beckett asked if the elected officials' departments would not be subject to the Personnel Policy unless each elected official chose to be. Busey said he was correct, but the committee may want to consider some mechanism to enable the elected officials to sign off on certain policies within the Personnel Policy if the officials do not sign off on the entire policy. Certain policies are the policies of the County Board, for example the Workers' Compensation and Return to Work Following Injury Policy and the Ethics Ordinance, so it would be beneficial for the elected officials to agree to abide by these policies. Beckett was concerned with having a cohesive policy and, as it stands, an elected official could refuse to comply with the Domestic Partner Policy. He wanted to know if there was a way to protect the employees uniformly. Betz agreed there is no method to ensure an elected official would comply with the Personnel Policy. Betz asked which elected officials have signed on to the Personnel Policy in the past. Busey believed the Treasurer and Recorder are the only two elected officials to sign on to Personnel Policy. Busey encouraged the County Board members to be proactive in communicating to the elected officials that by adopting the certain sections of the Personnel Policy, they would get the benefit of the County's policies. An elected official can also adopt their own policies that are copies of the Personnel Policy. Wysocki stated she can understand an elected official wanting the autonomy, but a number of offices already comply with certain sections of the County's Personnel Policy.

Betz asked when Busey thought the revised policy would be ready for action. Busey said she hopes to receive department heads' comments, have the legal review finalized, bring an updated version to the committee in April, and have the final version ready for action in May. This will give the committee another opportunity in April to review the policy. The full County Board should receive a draft version in April before it is submitted to the Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee and voted on in May.

Putman requested the Environment & Land Use Committee be listed as the parent committee for the Zoning & Enforcement Department. Busey agreed. The committee discussed the definition of parent committee and whether it is needed anymore.

Discussion of Draft Revised Travel Policy

Busey stated one of the primary changes to the Travel Policy is on Page 5 and concerns travel reimbursements. The Auditor has recommended more time be allowed to pay travel reimbursements. The policy extends the time period from forty-five days to sixty days. Article 7B outlines the procedure for submitting travel reimbursements at end of the fiscal year so they do not cross over fiscal years. The reference to parent committee has been eliminated from Article 10 about credit cards. Such requests would go to the Finance Committee. Betz asked when this policy would be ready for adoption. Busey said the

legal review is still ongoing. Feinen said, based on her understanding, it was discovered County Board members cannot be paid per diems for attending meetings that are not County Board meetings. She recommended rewriting a section of the Travel Policy to make this clearer. Knott stated the University of Illinois has a policy stating if a reimbursement for travel was not filed within sixty days it would become a taxable expense, due to IRS changes. Knott recommended looking into this to ensure travel reimbursements are fully compliant with the IRS. Betz asked the legal counsel present for an approximate timeframe for the legal review. Fletcher said legal review should be complete by next month. Betz noted the Travel Policy can be reviewed in the same timeframe as the Personnel Policy.

Recommendation for Appointment of Hearing Officers in Compliance with Article 6-4 of Champaign County Personnel Policy

Busey said, pursuant to the Personnel Policy, the Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee is supposed to appoint three Hearing Officers in January of every odd-numbered year, the beginning of every County Board term. This has not been done for approximately three or four terms, so the County does not currently have any Hearing Officers. There has not been a request for a hearing for about eight years. There is currently a request for a termination hearing. Busey requested the committee consider the appointment of Catherine Barbercheck as the County's Hearing Officer for the remainder of the current term. Busey has spoken with Barbercheck, who is available and willing to assume this responsibility. Barbercheck handles this responsibility for the City of Champaign and other entities. The policy does not set compensation for the Hearing Officer. The assignment is time-consuming and has a fairly high level of responsibility. Busey has spoken with other entities and reviewed the time commitment required. She recommended the committee designate a lump sum of \$500 to be paid to a Hearing Officer for each termination hearing conducted.

Feinen said a hearing can involve fifteen hours worth of work by the Hearing Officer. She stated the County has been able to find retired individuals who are willing to donate their time to Hearing Officers in the past. Feinen realizes the County is a situation where a Hearing Officer is immediately needed. She stated Barbercheck would do a good job and \$500 is cheap for this responsibility. Feinen would prefer the County find a Hearing Officer to work for free. Busey stated she requested names from a couple of different sources and none of those names were of individuals who were retired, might be willing to do this, and had the appropriate level of expertise. Busey said they might be able to locate someone to be a Hearing Officer for free for the next County Board term.

MOTION by Wysocki to appoint Catherine Barbercheck as a Hearing Officer for Champaign County, pursuant to the Personnel Policy, and to designate \$500 to be paid to a Hearing Officer for each termination hearing conducted; seconded by Moser.

Beckett stated he would abstain from voting because he has a client who has a legal dispute with Barbercheck's law firm.

Motion carried with one abstention by Beckett.

ADDENDUM

Discussion of County Board Rule 16 – Amendment Regarding Duties of Finance and Policy, Personnel & Appointments Committees relevant to the Champaign County Personnel Policy

Busey stated, as a result of revising the Personnel Policy, it became clear that the County Board Rules do not accurately reflect the duties and responsibilities of the Finance Committee and the Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee. A memorandum was distributed with the recommended rules change. The committee could not act on this tonight, but with the committee's consensus, the notification

will be sent to all Board members to recommend these changes to the County Board Rules to be adopted in a timely manner. The changes can be adopted in either April or May. Betz stated the changes seem like logical revisions. The committee agreed the recommended changes to the County Board Rules should be distributed to the County Board members for review.

CHAIR'S REPORT

2006 NACo Conference in Chicago, Illinois

Busey, at the committee's request at the February meeting, researched the possibility of a block of hotel rooms for County Board members to attend the 2006 NACo Conference in Chicago, Illinois. She distributed a memorandum to the committee and explained Chicago hotels do not make blocks of rooms inexpensively available to agencies other than the agencies who are bringing in the conventions. She researched other sources and the best option was Club Quarters Hotel at Wacker and Michigan. The County Board could reserve a block of rooms at a rate of \$147/night plus room and tax. A 25% deposit would be required with the initial reservation and the total amount must be paid thirty days in advance. This rate is only \$10 less than the rate advertised by NACo. County Board members might be able to negotiate a better rate as individuals and by searching online. Busey said this was the best rate available for a group. Feinen asked if there was a benefit for Board members to stay at the NACo hotel headquarters in order to interact with board members from other counties. She also asked if Busey had asked for the government rate. Busey stated this was the best rate for a government group. Busey was told that it is not easy to get group rates in Chicago, especially in August. Individual Board members can ask for a government rate. Betz stated there would be advantages to staying at the same hotel as board members from various counties.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Knott stated if any County Board had any issue they would like to have more information about or have the Board take action on, please contact either Beckett or himself. Knott said he would like the County Board to support the bills delaying the woodlands assessment implementation. Knott requested a letter from the County Board be prepared in support of the bills to delay the woodlands assessments until a better formula is in place to ensure consistency in assessments. Owners of woodlands could see their tax assessments increase significantly and this could lead to the owners developing the property rather than pay the higher taxes. Moser said the Association of Supervisors of Assessments has asked for a three-year moratorium on woodlands assessments. Moser advocated sending a letter in support of the moratorium. Betz asked if Knott had a particular bill in mind. Knott suggested general support of several bills because it is not known which bill will be put forth. He recommended the letter be prepared and signed by the County Board Chair. The committee concurred that Wysocki would prepare a letter.

OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion of County Board Rule 15 Amendment Regarding Addenda Items

Betz asked Beckett to address this issue because he brought it to the attention of the committee. Beckett stated the genesis of the amendment was the discussion on the RFP process held at the February committee meeting. He heard criticism because some Board members did not understand what was going to be discussed from the item on the agenda. The RFP process item was on the regular Policy, Personnel, & Appointments agenda and was not on an addendum; but Beckett has noticed there have been addenda items Board members were not aware of until the meeting. Board members are not able to review addenda items as thoroughly as items on the regular agendas because the information is not received until the meeting. Beckett felt the County Board should be very careful about what items are placed on addenda and hurriedly voted on by a committee. Beckett reviewed the November 2004 Justice & Social Services Committee agenda and discovered the item "Approval of contract to conduct a Disparity Study for Champaign County"

was on an addendum, not the regular agenda. Beckett said if he was a minority party member, then he would be concerned that a majority party member would request an addendum item with little or no notice and it would be rammed through. He recommended an amendment to County Board Rule 15. The idea of the amendment is that any addenda items would require a two-thirds vote of the Board members in attendance at the meeting to be approved by the County Board or a committee. This would ensure any addenda items would require bipartisan support as a matter of policy. Any addenda items that do not pass by a two-thirds vote could be placed on the next month's regular agenda and passed under the normal Board Rules. Beckett stated he is not asking for action on this matter tonight, he is just introducing the topic. He would like this item to be placed on the April Policy, Personnel, & Appointments Committee agenda.

Fletcher clarified the proposal would actually only apply to committee addenda because they cannot change the vote requirements for a County Board action. It would make more explicit the current policy that only items that have previously been presented to a committee would come to the County Board, so there would still be an assurance of notice and deliberation. Fletcher recommended changing the proposal in Paragraph 2 to include Rule 9 to the list of rules that cannot be suspended.

Betz stated this was a good idea and asked if the committee wanted this amendment to be added to the other suggested revisions to the County Board Rules that will be sent to the County Board for review. Busey noted the County Board does occasionally vote on emergency budget amendments that come up after the Finance Committee meets. She requested emergency budget amendments be included as an exception to this rule. The committee agreed to send the amendment to the full County Board for review.

DESIGNATION OF ITEMS TO BE PLACED ON COUNTY BOARD CONSENT AGENDA

No agenda items were designated for the consent agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kat Bork
Administrative Secretary

Secy's note: The minutes reflect the order of the agenda and may not necessarily reflect the order of business conducted at the meeting.

Minutes amended at 4/5/06 meeting. Alterations shown in italics and strikethrough.