

Commissioner Minutes

August 31, 2023 – 10:27 a.m. to 11:21 a.m.

DISCUSSION REGARDING CANYON COUNTY PAYROLL

Commissioners Leslie Van Beek, Brad Holton and Zach Brooks

Chief Deputy P.A. Carl Ericson

Deputy P.A. Laura Keys

Treasurer Tracie Lloyd

Chief Deputy Treasurer Jennifer Watters

Clerk Chris Yamamoto

Controller Zach Wagoner

HR Director Kate Rice

HR Generalist Kendra Elgin

HR Generalist Cindy Lorta

HR Generalist Demi Etheridge

Sr. Administrative Specialist Anna Gray

COO Greg Rast

Deputy Clerk Jenen Ross _____

DISCUSSION REGARDING CANYON COUNTY PAYROLL

The Board met today at 10:27 a.m. for a discussion regarding Canyon County payroll. Present were: Commissioners Leslie Van Beek, Brad Holton and Zach Brooks, Chief Deputy P.A. Carl Ericson, Deputy P.A. Laura Keys, Treasurer Tracie Lloyd, Chief Deputy Treasurer Jennifer Watters, Clerk Chris Yamamoto, Controller Zach Wagoner, HR Director Kate Rice, HR Generalist Kendra Elgin, HR Generalist Cindy Lorta, HR Generalist Demi Etheridge, Sr. Administrative Specialist Anna Gray, COO Greg Rast and Deputy Clerk Jenen Ross.

Commissioner Holton opened the meeting by stating that he feels all the onerous for this topic may reside with him as he has conversations with HR and the COO and he is concerned about making sure everyone is protected. He felt there was an issue regarding double checks in the current payroll process. Mr. Rast noted that he spoke to each commissioner individually on the topic and there was support. Yesterday there was communication from Mr. Rast to the Clerk and Controller, there are four points the Board would like to address.

- Issue #1: Tracking of base pay
- Issue #2: Clerk Yamamoto indicated that the memo provided to the Board on August 18th by Director Rice was full of errors to which he would provide clarification on.
- Issue #3: Checks and balance of payroll. The Treasurer validates the aggregate amount but not individual entries.

- Issue #4: Adjustments to salaries without accountability

Commissioner Holton feels this is a change that needs to be negotiated between the two entities that process payroll. Commissioner Brooks stated that this Board sets the policy and this Board makes the change; Commissioner Van Beek said she is in support of Commissioner Brooks' position. Clerk Yamamoto said it makes sense for HR and Audit to get together, agree on the facts and if in they are in agreement move forward with the process. If they are not in agreement then it would be back to the drawing board. He Would like to have the opportunity to see what can be worked out. Commissioners Brooks and Van Beek feel that opportunity has already been given [the timespan between the meeting on August 24th and today] but the Clerk argued that both his Office and the Board's Office had large obligations during that time which did not allow for this topic to be given proper attention.

Commissioner Holton said he doesn't have enough knowledge to move ahead and blindly create policy based off the documents provided. He is aware of many nuances that need to addressed but needs to be done in a collaborative form. Commissioners Brooks and Van Beek think the specifics can be worked out once direction is given.

Commissioner Holton made a motion that everyone meet again on the 13th, time to be determined, and that the proposal, with the plan of how it would work would be reviewed then with the goal of making this change effective with the first payroll in October. At the request of Commissioner Brooks, he clarified the motion stating that if this is a policy Board then a policy needs to be approved, not a concept. He submits that he would like to have these two groups work with each other and report back to the Board on the 13th. If there are nuances that the Board is unaware of today, although he doesn't expect any, but there could be that the Board needs to be aware of and policy on making this change effective for the first pay period in October.

Commissioner Van Beek offered a counter motion, stating that the Board approve the transfer of payroll to HR with the same stipulation that there is clear direction and an outline of policy. Ada County is already using HR to formulate payroll successfully and so that would be her motion. There continues to be a lack of action and lack of information that would persuade otherwise and she works to not make blind or ignorant decisions. This continued discussion on evaluating and looking at areas to manage change that have greater efficiencies for taxpayer dollars appears to be of significant concern for everyone in the room and she believes that there are good reasons for the Board to look at change. That would be her counter-motion is that we [the Board] authorize the change, the handling of payroll to Human Resources and that they work together and on the 13th they bring that back with a goal of implementing that change October 1st.

Discussion ensued for clarification on each of the motions

At the request of the Board, Mr. Ericson said he feels it is more procedure than policy being discussed. Legal can offer assistance if needed but that they are not the experts on ADP or the processing of payroll. He thinks this is very nuanced and that procedure can be worked out by the affected parties.

Commissioner Van Beek withdrew her motion as it seems there are overlapping talking points that are not clear and she would like additional clarity. Her motion is to provide direction to transfer the oversight of payroll to HR and to have Auditing/Clerk's Office, come back with HR on the 13th and provide a procedural outline for Board review with the intent and an action item to have that be effective October 1st. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brooks. Commissioner Holton's motion died for lack of second. A vote was taken on the motion which carried unanimously.

Commissioner Brooks made motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Van Beek and carried unanimously.

The meeting concluded at 11:21 a.m. and an audio recording is on file in the Commissioners' Office.

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