

EUREKA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Budget Meeting – February 24, 2010

STATE OF NEVADA)
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COUNTY OF EUREKA)

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Eureka County Commissioners met pursuant to law on February 24, 2010. Present were Chairman Leonard Fiorenzi, Vice Chair Jim Ithurrealde, Member Mike Page, District Attorney Theodore Beutel, and Clerk & Treasurer Jackie Berg. The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. and began with the Pledge of Allegiance. The interactive video conference system was connected and utilized between Crescent Valley and Eureka for the entire meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Page made a motion to approve the agenda as written. Commissioner Ithurrealde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Ithurrealde made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 3, 2010, budget meeting. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Fiorenzi called for public comments. There were none.

BUDGET TRANSFERS AND BUDGET AUGMENTATION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010

FY 2010 Budget Transfers: Mike Rebaleati, Recorder & Auditor, explained that funds originally budgeted under the Recorder/Auditor should now be placed under Human Resources, a department created during the past year. Another new department is the Public Guardian, which is budgeted under the Hospital Indigent Fund. Commissioner Ithurrealde motioned to transfer funds from the Recorder/Auditor Fund into the Human Resources Fund in the amount of \$68,000.00; Commissioner Page seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0. Commissioner Ithurrealde motioned to make an internal transfer of \$59,000.00 in the Eureka County Hospital Indigent Fund to the Public Guardian category; Commissioner Page seconded the motion; motion carried 2-0. Chairman Fiorenzi abstained from voting on this fund transfer due to a close family relationship with the Deputy Public Guardian.

TELEVISION DISTRICT BUDGET AUGMENTATION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010

Eureka County Television District: Mr. Rebaleati provided the Board with a draft resolution to augment the Eureka County Television District budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010. The beginning balance for the Television District was \$356,921.00 for FY 2009-2010; however, the funds available to-date for the Television District are \$439,812.00 which comes from the designated tax rate. The Television District's budget can be augmented by an increase of \$82,891.00 which will ensure that the budget is not exceeded because of current projects. Mr. Rebaleati explained that if the augmented funds are expended, the funds will not be available for the next fiscal year.

General Fund: Mr. Rebaleati explained that he may propose to augment the beginning fund balance for the General Fund. If an augmentation occurs, funds may be moved into the Retiree Health Insurance Reserve Fund. The draft resolution also included augmentation of the General Fund if approved by the Department of Taxation. Commissioner Ithurrealde made a

motion to propose the draft budget augmentation resolution for consideration on March 19th. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Priority List of Capital Improvements: Mr. Rebaleati reported that the Spring Rehabilitation Project will be moved from FY2011 to FY 2012 with the exception of two spring developments.

Tentative Budget: Mr. Rebaleati explained that the County's tentative budget is due April 15th and the final budget is due in June.

UPDATES AND CHANGES TO EUREKA COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

Personnel Policy: The Board and employees who were able to attend the meeting reviewed the proposed changes to the County Personnel Policy along with the recommendations made by employees and managers at previous focus group meetings. Chairman Fiorenzi stated that changes made today by the Board are only proposals and will be brought forward for official approval after the manual has been reviewed and commented on by the County employees. Jerry Larson, Human Resources Analyst, explained changes and recommendations as needed throughout the discussion.

Pay Increase After Six Month Evaluation: Discussion was had on allowing or rescinding the pay increase for employees after the initial six month evaluation. Chairman Fiorenzi noted that if the six month pay increase was discontinued and the one merit step increase was allowed per year, then an employee has the potential to reach step 30 by year 30 at retirement. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to propose that there will be no step increase for the three and six month evaluations. Chairman Fiorenzi seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-1. Commissioner Page voted no.

Three Month Evaluation: Discussion was had on adding a three month evaluation for new employees and the benefit to the manager and employee. Commissioner Page made a motion to propose that the addition of a three month evaluation for new employees be left in the manual. Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Accrual of Sick and Annual Leave While on Approved Leave: Several employees expressed that an employee on leave, such as worker's compensation, should continue to accrue sick and annual leave, especially if a person was injured on the job. Discussion was had on continuing to accrue leave while on Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave, annual leave, sick leave, worker's compensation, and active employees versus inactive employees. Sick and annual leave must be used for FMLA leave and can be used for worker's compensation leave. Commissioner Page made a motion to continue the practice of allowing employees on approved leave to continue to accrue sick and annual leave. Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Solicitation Policy: Mr. Rebaleati and Mr. Larson explained that there is currently a 'no solicitation' policy in the manual, but it is not enforced. At previous focus meetings, employees suggested that solicitation be allowed at the discretion of department heads. Discussion was had on the size of the community, groups in the community being supported by County employees, and potential distractions in the workplace. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to remove the solicitation policy from the manual. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-1. Chairman Fiorenzi voted no.

County Cellular Phone: Mr. Rebaleati provided the Board with a list of County-supplied cell phones and associated costs. County cell phone charges range from \$35 up to \$300, and some personal calls are made on these phones. Commissioner Ithurralde suggested giving employees who use personal cell phones for County business a partial reimbursement for the use, rather than providing County cell phones. The exception to the discussion included cell

phones in County emergency units and Road Department vehicles that are fixed to the vehicles. Discussion was had on subsidies for cell phone use when County business is conducted on a personal cell phone, and the necessity of using a personal cell phone for County business being approved by the department head. The department head would also have to have the Commissioners' approval before allowing an employee to receive the cell phone subsidy. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to reimburse employees \$20 per month for conducting County business on personal cell phones, if approved by the department head and County Commissioners, excluding County emergency and safety vehicles. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Cellular Phone Use: Discussion was had on using personal cell phones during work time for matters such as calls from medical offices and emergencies. Commissioner Page made a motion to allow employees to use cellular phones for personal use at work within reason. Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Notice for Rescinding Benefits: During a previous focus meeting, employees requested that advanced notice and a reason should be given if benefits are to be rescinded for any reason. Mr. Damele noted that the term "modification" of benefits should be used rather than "rescinded". Chairman Fiorenzi proposed that the policy manual state that employees be notified 30 days prior to the modification of benefits.

Hiring Freeze Options: Discussion was had on instituting a hiring freeze before layoffs. No changes were made concerning this matter. The policy manual already contains some language addressing the issue.

Driver License Checks: Mr. Larson explained that a proposal was made to obtain employees' driver license information in order to conduct validation checks of licenses for those driving County vehicles. The employee would be asked to provide the information to the County, and the County cannot obtain the information without signed approval. Discussion was had on insurance and liability issues, validity of licenses, the employee's responsibility to report a revoked license or violation to the employer, and new employee driver license check. Mr. Larson explained that the current policy states that the County can periodically check an employee's driver license. The suggested change to the manual would institute a yearly driver license check for employees driving County vehicles. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to leave the driver license policy as is. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Focus Meeting Commissioner Attendance: Discussion was had on the attendance of a Commissioner at the Human Resources (HR) focus meetings. Commissioner Page made a motion to have a Commissioner attend the HR focus meetings. Chairman Fiorenzi seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Exempt Employee Benefits: Mr. Larson explained that there are concerns regarding equal benefit packages for all exempt employees. Previously, the Board clarified that exempt employees who are supervised directly by the Board of Commissioners receive a certain health insurance subsidy package, and other exempt employees not supervised by the Board receive another subsidy package. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to leave the policy as is, with exempt employees supervised by the Board of County Commissioner receiving a 100% health insurance subsidy. Chairman Fiorenzi seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-1. Commissioner Page voted no.

Longevity Pay: Mr. Rebaleati explained that the current policy reflects a 20% longevity increase which is set by Nevada Revised Statutes; however, the Board previously voted to provide a 30% longevity policy. Longevity pay is equal to 1% increase of an employee's salary per year, not to exceed 30%. Commissioner Page made a motion for the manual to reflect the 30% longevity policy, at 1% per year based on the employee's salary. Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. Mr. Rebaleati indicated that he would provide a 30% longevity cost analysis for the Board to review.

PERS Match: Chairman Fiorenzi explained that the Board previously approved a retirement health insurance subsidy option or a Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) retirement buy-out option. Mr. Larson and Mr. Rebaleati indicated the options would be added to the policy manual.

Health Insurance Subsidy for Non-Exempt Employees: Commissioner Ithurralde explained that employees hired after July 1, 2009 would receive a 60/40 insurance subsidy split between the County and employee for dependents. Employees hired prior to July 1, 2009 receive a 70/30 health insurance subsidy split for dependents. The Health Insurance Committee previously requested that the subsidies be incorporated in the policy manual. Commissioner Page made a motion to incorporate the County/employee health insurance subsidy split for dependents in the policy manual. Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Insurance Subsidy for Retirees: Mr. Larson explained that employees have requested that the manual state that employees hired after July 1, 2009 would not be eligible for the retiree health insurance subsidy option. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to add the eligibility date for the retiree health insurance subsidy option to the policy manual. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Non-Employees Visiting Employees: Mr. Larson explained that a draft paragraph was added to the revised policy manual that would prohibit non-employees from visiting County employees during work hours. During the HR focus meetings, employees requested that the visiting of non-employees with employees be left to the discretion of the department heads. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to remove any policy change to the manual regarding visiting of non-employees with employees. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Driving of County Vehicles: Discussion was had on individuals prohibited from driving County vehicles. Mr. Rebaleati explained that liability issues arise when non-employees drive County vehicles. Mike Sullivan, EMS Coordinator, requested that volunteer EMTs and firefighters be allowed to drive County vehicles. The Board agreed that allowing emergency service volunteers to drive emergency service vehicles should be clarified in the policy manual. Discussion was also had on volunteers taking County vehicles for out of town training, fuel reimbursements for volunteers, and non-licensed County equipment use. Mr. Rebaleati and Mr. Larson were directed to clarify the language regarding volunteers driving licensed vehicles and to also remove the exact fuel reimbursement rate. The fuel reimbursement rate changes from year to year.

Meal Allowances for Emergency Volunteers: Mr. Larson explained that time allowances for meals are set for certain shifts within the County. A proposed change to the policy included allowing all emergency volunteers, as well as the Sheriff's Office, to be allotted the same special meal allowance. The special meal allocation allows employees and volunteers to take time for a meal as time is available or the emergency allows, especially at odd hours of the day. Commissioner Page made a motion to allow EMTs and firefighters the same special meal allowance as the Sheriff's Office. Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Forms: A request was made by employees that forms be available in the manual and any changes made to forms be approved by the Commissioners. Mr. Rebaleati noted that any change made to any form has always been approved by the County Commissioners. Commissioner Page made a motion to have forms available in the manual and leave the current practice of form changes being approved by the Board in place. Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Pets/Smoking in County Vehicles: Discussion was had on allowing pets and smoking in County vehicles. There was a previously rescinded resolution not allowing pets in County

buildings and vehicles. Common courtesy regarding smoking with other individuals in vehicles was discussed. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to leave the “no pets” policy in place with the exception of guide/service animals. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. Smoking was not addressed in the personnel policy. Discussion was had on designating certain vehicles in the County car pool as “smoking” vehicles and also on allowing smoking in regularly used vehicles such as Sheriff’s Office vehicles and road equipment.

Inactive Volunteers: Mr. Larson explained that there are a number of volunteers who have not been active for some time, and a time limit may need to be institute to identify an inactive volunteer. Because there is no definition for inactive volunteers, no action was taken on the matter.

Working from Home: A proposed paragraph was added to the revised policy manual addressing employees working from home. The proposal addressed allowing an individual to work from home and is applicable and at the discretion of the department head if the job performance was acceptable. Several employees expressed concerns with fairness and discrimination. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to remove the proposed paragraph addressing employees working from home. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. In the absence of the paragraph, any matters relating to employees working from home would have to be brought before the Commissioners for consideration. Chairman Fiorenzi requesting rewording of the paragraph for review if there was a desire to address the matter in the manual.

Thirty Step Pay Program: Mr. Damele explained that the Wage and Salary (W & S) Committee wanted to alleviate employees topping out after a set number of years. The W & S Committee suggested that the current thirty step pay program be replaced with a percentage increase set each year, and to also have additional job descriptions for each position in the County. The multiple job descriptions would allow employees to be rewarded for additional training, knowledge, and expertise within a position, and also allow for consistency throughout the County work force. Sheriff Ken Jones noted the difference between job qualifications for a job description. A different step within a wage scale for different qualifications was discussed. Mr. Rebaleati indicated that information can be available for the Commissioners regarding different qualifications under job descriptions and corresponding pay scales by March 5th. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to direct staff to provide information to the Board regarding sub job descriptions to allow growth steps within categories of employment. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. The W & S Committee will be involved in the sub job descriptions and corresponding pay scale designations. Discussion was had on a percentage increase (based on step one) for the step pay program and having the Commissioners set the percentage on a yearly basis. A proposal from the W & S Committee was also made to only allow a single step increase per year with no ceiling. Mr. Rebaleati agreed to bring cost figures back to the Board for review regarding percentage based step increases.

Casual Employees: A request was made to include casual employee designations in the manual. A casual employee cannot work over 1,039 per year and does not receive benefits. Mr. Larson agreed to add the casual employee details to the manual.

Acknowledgement Form: A request from employees was made that the acknowledgement form state that any changes must be made by resolution with timely notification. After discussion, the Board agreed that no changes needed to be made to the policy. Notification is already given through resolutions, public hearings, and ordinance changes.

Defensive Driving Course: Discussion was had on requiring a defensive driving course for all County employees versus only for employees who have been in accidents as needed. Mr. Rebaleati noted that having employees participate in a defensive driving course could help lower the County’s insurance rates. Mr. Larson reported that a free course through POOL/PACT

has been scheduled in Eureka during the month of April. The course can be utilized yearly. Commissioner Page made a motion that employees participate in a defensive driving course be left in the revised policy manual. Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Instant Read Drug Test: Mr. Larson explained that some managers suggested that an instant read drug test be available in order to test an employee after an accident. In the case that a drug test is positive, the employee could be put on immediate administrative leave without waiting several days for results. Discussion was had on presumptive testing, lab testing, and safety and liability issues if an individual is allowed to work while awaiting results. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to propose that County employees involved in accidents during work hours be put on administrative leave with pay until drug test results are received. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Leave Request Form: Mr. Larson explained that some managers suggested that a leave request form be filled out for all types of leave (sick, annual, funeral, etc.). Mr. Damele added that signing a leave form would hold employees accountable for taking leave. Mr. Larson drafted a leave request form and included the form in the revised policy manual. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to include the leave request form in the manual. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. Discussion was also had on paying employees for unused vacation at the end of the calendar year.

Supervisor Bullying: Mr. Damele explained that some managers felt that the issue of supervisor bullying was addressed under the harassment policy. Mr. Larson explained that supervisor bullying goes beyond harassment. Commissioner Page made a motion to leave the supervisor bullying policy in the manual. Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Alcohol Level: Mr. Larson explained that an acceptable breath alcohol level for employees had been put in the original policy manual. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to remove the breath alcohol level out of the manual. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Public Meetings for Policy Manual and Other Issues: Mr. Larson explained that employees had requested that public meetings and hearings for matters pertaining to employee issues be held when people are better able to attend. The Board agreed that meetings or hearings regarding employee issues held during the evening would be beneficial.

Holiday Pay: Discussion was had on ten-hour four-day employees receiving extra paid holiday time compared to employees working eight-hour five-day employees. Ten-hour employees get two extra hours of holiday pay when a holiday falls on a regularly scheduled work day for that employee. Fairness issues were discussed. Mr. Larson was directed to contact other counties and conduct a survey on methods for addressing holiday pay for ten-hour employees versus eight-hour employees.

Pro-Rated Holiday Hours: Mr. Rebaleati explained that $\frac{3}{4}$ employees receive $\frac{3}{4}$ pro-rated holiday pay and other part-time employees receive similar pro-rated holiday pay. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to clarify the pro-rated holiday pay for part-time employees according to the budget set for that employee. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Leave for New Hires: Mr. Larson explained that a suggestion was made to address leave taken by new employees before leave time has been acquired in the manual. Discussion was had on leave accrual starting later than 6 months after hire if leave is taken prior to the 6 month eligibility date. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to leave the policy as is regarding leave for new employees because employees are already penalized by taking leave without pay. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Merit Increase Date for Casual Employees: Mr. Larson explained that casual employees receive merit increases on July 1st every year; however, issues arise when a casual employee has not yet worked 6 months prior to July 1st but receives a merit increase. Commissioner Page made a motion for casual employees to be eligible for merit increases only on yearly employment anniversary dates. Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Payment Program for Deputy Caring for Drug Dog: Discussion was had on providing a stipend for the employee responsible for caring for the County Drug Dog. This discussion item was tabled.

Electronic Texting on Cellular Phones: This item was addressed under personal cellular phone use by employees during work hours.

Exit Interviews: A suggestion was made that exit interviews for voluntary or involuntary terminated employees be done by the Human Resources Analyst unless the employee refuses. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to propose that exit interviews for voluntary or involuntary terminated employees be done by the Human Resources Analyst. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Changes: Mr. Larson indicated that the changes to the policy manual would be made and distributed to the employees for review. After the revisions to the policy manual have been sufficiently reviewed, a public hearing will be held. Additional focus meetings will be held as needed.

RECESS FOR LUNCH

The Board recessed for lunch from 11:57 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

ESTIMATED REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES BY FUNCTION AND ACTIVITY

Eureka County Tax Rate: No action was taken on this agenda item.

Department Proposals: Proposals received from the County's department heads was provided to the Board for review.

Water Related Financing: This agenda item was not discussed.

Personnel Budgets: Mr. Rebaleati provided the Board with budget information relating to every County employee and volunteer. Salary scale information charts were reviewed by the Commissioners, including a status quo scenario and a 6% increase scenario. Discussion was had on merit increases and percentage increases.

Sheriff's Office: Sheriff Ken Jones proposed that a command level officer be promoted to the position of Lieutenant. The job description for the position was amended to increase the authority and responsibility of the Lieutenant. Sheriff Jones indicated that the position amendments would be submitted to PERS for approval if the Board of Commissioners approved the position. Previously, a proposal was submitted to the Board to approve the new job description for the position of Captain. Sheriff Jones suggested that the amended Lieutenant position would be sufficient if filled. The position would qualify as an exempt employee under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), and the salary would be tied to the Sheriff's salary at 85%. The Sheriff's salary is set by statute. Sheriff Jones explained that making the position exempt would ensure that the Lieutenant's salary does not exceed the Sheriff's salary, and also noted that the individual being considered for the Lieutenant's position is aware of the salary limits. The position will not be eligible for cost of living adjustments or merits, but will be eligible for longevity and benefits similar to regular non-exempt County employees. Commissioner Page made a motion to approve the Lieutenant job description and proposal. Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion. Commissioner Page amended his motion to include that the Lieutenant job position will receive longevity and insurance benefits just as regular non-exempt employees receive. Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. Mr. Beutel

suggested that a description of the Lieutenant and Undersheriff salaries being tied to a percentage of the Sheriff's salary be addressed in the Personnel Policy Manual.

NEVADA DIVISION OF FORESTRY

2008 Fire Truck Purchase: Ron Damele, Public Works Director, reported that the Board previously approved the purchase of a 2008 fire truck for the Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) through State purchasing; however, State purchasing only allows current model year vehicles to be purchased under the State plan. The County can still purchase the 2008 fire truck, but it must be carried out as a sole source purchase. The solicitation waiver request form was reviewed. Mr. Damele explained that the 2009 and 2010 model vehicles have not been proven for fire service; however, the 2008 model vehicle has been proven and is still available. Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to authorize the sole source purchase of a 2008 fire truck for NDF in the amount of \$71,800.25 plus the title fee. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

TIME AND DATE OF NEXT BUDGET MEETING

Commissioner Ithurralde made a motion to schedule the next budget meeting on March 17th at 9:30 a.m. Commissioner Page seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES AND CORRESPONDENCE

Legislative Issues: This agenda item was not addressed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Fiorenzi opened the floor to public comments. There were no comments.

ADJOURNMENT

At 3:42 p.m., Commissioner Page made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Approved this 19th day of March, 2010

/s/ Leonard Fiorenzi
Leonard Fiorenzi, Chairman

Attest: /s/ Jackie Berg
Jackie Berg, Clerk