

**COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES
KITITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
COMMISSIONERS AUDITORIUM
SPECIAL MEETING**

THURSDAY

11:00 A.M.

FEBRUARY 12, 2009

Board members present: Chairman Alan Crankovich; Vice-Chairman Paul Jewell and Commissioner Mark McClain.

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Patti Johnson, Solid Waste Director; Marsha Weyand, Assessor; Gene Dana, Sheriff; William Holmes, Probation Services Director; Joyce Julsrud, Clerk; Kirk Holmes, Public Works Director; Greg Zempel, Prosecutor and Lisa Young, Human Resource Manager.

SPECIAL MEETING

COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

COMMISSIONERS

At 11:00 a.m. **CHAIRMAN CRANKOVICH** opened a special meeting to receive proposals from the county's Compensation Committee.

Marsha Weyand, Assessor, said the committee felt the merit system has been making no progression and they would like to go back to having "steps" for all non-union and exempt employees. She said they felt by taking no action, it would create a financial loss to employees and reduce employee morale and productivity. She said their committee recommended a CPI with a cap of 3% on January 1 and a 2% increase on the position date (not tied to an evaluation, which keeps pace with bargained groups with step increases). They felt an annual COLA increase for all non-bargained employees would especially benefit those at the top of their scale. They would like their proposal to be retroactive to January 1, 2009.

Lisa Young, Human Resource Manager, reviewed a working document which included data such as COLA's; COLA + a 2% increase versus the current practice for those who receive an above average on their annual performance evaluation which is a total of 4.8%. Greg Zempel questioned the motivation for the merit system, when employees in the Union only have to show up for work, do their job, and they still get a 3% for COLA and an additional 2 - 2.5% increase on their anniversary date. There were comments shared about long term, non-union employees who have reached the top of their range and on their anniversary date, are given no increase whatsoever. Greg said if the Board approved the Compensation Committee's proposal it would be an additional \$25,000 the County would come up with, above what has already been budgeted for. Chairman Crankovich asked what the departments would be willing to give up for the additional money it would cost. He explained that when they are negotiating Union contracts for increases, they usually are giving up something else.

Marsha explained the committee had completed their analysis as previously directed by the Board and they felt that ultimately, everyone deserved at least a COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment).

Commissioner Jewell said he did not feel the proposal made sense because there are a lot of employees out in businesses that they don't get an automatic raise each year, but also understood that the long term employees who are at the top of their scale, should be at least given a COLA. There was discussion regarding the vast differences from supervisors when rating their employees and that the process should to be looked at. Commissioner McClain noted that when discussing budgets, they need to consider the actual funds coming in, and at this time, they are lower than anticipated. He indicated that in order to implement the committee's proposal, there would need to be additional cuts to staffing.

Joyce Julsrud, Clerk, spoke of the significant cost to train new employees versus the cost of keeping their long term employees and being able to reward them in some manner for their dedication to the County.

Commissioner Jewell said it was important for those employees at the top of their scale to be addressed as soon as possible since they are no longer being compensated at the time of their annual evaluation. Chairman Crankovich reminded everyone that 3 Union contracts are coming up for negotiations.

The Compensation Committee agreed to meet again and keep working on proposals to bring before the Board. The Board of County Commissioners said they would be willing to meet with the committee at any time.

Meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

CLERK OF THE BOARD

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Julie Kjorsvik

Alan Crankovich, Chairman