

Morrow County Compensation Committee
March 29, 2016
Heppner, Oregon
Bartholomew Building Upper Conference Room

Committee Members

Lisanne Currin, Chief Financial Officer, Morrow County Grain Growers

Rob Brown, Irrigon, (retired)

Andy Fletcher, Manager of Finance & Administration, Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative

Staff/Audience

Jerry Sorte, Administrative Officer

Ronda Fox, Finance Management Assistant

Bobbi Childers, Clerk

Mike Gorman, Assessor/Tax Collector

Gayle Gutierrez, Treasurer

Stephen Haddock, Surveyor

Melissa Lindsay, Heppner

Ken Matlack, Sheriff

Greg Sweek, Heppner

Excused

Karen Wolff, Human Resources Director

Roberta Lutcher, Court Executive Assistant

Call to Order: 9:14 a.m.

Election of Chair

Mr. Brown nominated Ms. Currin as Chair. Mr. Fletcher seconded. Unanimous approval.

Duties of Compensation Committee

Mr. Sorte reviewed the statutory duties of a county compensation committee. He said statute specifies the committee shall recommend a compensation schedule for Sheriff, Clerk, Assessor, Treasurer, Commissioners, and Surveyor, but does not refer to District Attorney or Justice of the Peace.

Sheriff's Compensation

Mr. Sorte explained Undersheriff Steve Myren received a step increase, effective January 3, 2016. This created a situation in which he was earning more than Sheriff Ken Matlack, which is not allowed by statute (the Sheriff has to earn more than the next highest paid person in that department). Mr. Sorte explained Undersheriff Myren will retire April 1, 2016, so the time period of concern is January 3rd-April 1st. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Fletcher moved to make the Sheriff's pay greater than the Undersheriff's pay, retroactive to January 3, 2016 through April 1, 2016; with a recommendation to the County Court that they address and take care of the salary deficiency. Mr. Brown seconded. Unanimous approval.

Surveyor Compensation

The current yearly amount paid to the Surveyor is \$3,000. Mr. Haddock presented diaries of his activities starting in 2013. They showed he spent over 600 hours in the first year bringing the survey records up to a usable level. However, the hours decreased each year as the condition of the records improved. He said he now estimates he will spend about 40 hours per month on County Surveyor duties. However, in his upcoming fiscal year budget request, he said he used 30 hours per month, which equals \$36,000 using his office rate charge.

The Committee asked many questions of Mr. Haddock, but decided they would like additional information before making a recommendation.

Mr. Fletcher moved to request County staff gather additional information in order to pursue a more realistic salary or stipend recommendation to the County Court for the County Surveyor. Mr. Brown seconded. Unanimous approval.

Break

Commissioner Compensation

The group discussed the impending change in structure of the County Court and sought clarification from staff.

Ms. Currin moved to recommend all three part-time Commissioners be compensated equally (upon the elimination of the Judge position), with the understanding if one Commissioner has more responsibility, there should be additional compensation or stipend. Mr. Fletcher seconded. Unanimous approval.

Comments

Ms. Gutierrez said she received the Compensation Committee information packet on Friday, March 25th, which didn't give her enough time to address some issues. She said she would postpone her comments until next year unless this Committee will be meeting again. Ms. Currin said if the Committee is needed, they are available.

Mr. Gorman said he agreed with Ms. Gutierrez that additional time for review would have been appreciated. He also said the packet included a great deal of useful information. He then asked the Committee to consider the fact that the County has grown substantially as far as real market value, assessed value, and in-lieu-of tax payments, all of which impact public officials.

Ms. Childers stated she is the only County Clerk in the state who deals with confidential juvenile records and documents, and in past years, that difference was not considered by this Committee.

She also said she has endeavored to be a better elected official by additional education, and has been involved with an election center professional group.

Sheriff's Compensation and Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs)

Mr. Fletcher moved to recommend a three-percent COLA for the following positions: Commissioner, Assessor, Treasurer, Sheriff, and Clerk (leaving the Judge position to be determined by another body). Discussion about Sheriff's pay and how to apply a COLA. Motion died for lack of a second.

Cost of Living Adjustments

Mr. Fletcher moved to recommend three-percent COLAs for the following positions: Commissioner, Assessor, Treasurer, Sheriff and Clerk, effective July 1, 2016. Mr. Brown seconded. Unanimous approval.

Closing

Mr. Sorte recommended the Compensation Committee meet again to review additional market rates for surveyor work. The members decided to meet at this same location, 9:00 a.m., Thursday, March 31st with Mr. Brown attending by phone.

Adjourned: 11:00 a.m.