MINUTES & NOTICE OF BOARD ACTION

BOOK 153 PAGE 1924

APPROVED September 15, 1993

LANE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

This document, upon approval in a public meeting by the Board of County Commissioners, serves as official minutes of such meetings as required under the Open Meetings Law, ORS 192.650.

Pursuant to notice made by mailing agendas to news media, a selected list of jurisdictions and individuals in Lane County, a meeting of the Board of County Commissioners was held.

Questions should be directed to The Board Office Specialist 3, ext. 4203.

August 9, 1993 11:00 a.m.	COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW PROCESS BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS	Harris Hall Main Floor

ROLE-PLAYING ORAL PRESENTATIONS BY CANDIDATES

Chair Steve Cornacchia presided with Ellie Dumdi, Marie Frazier, Jack Roberts and Jerry Rust present. Sharon Giles, Recording Secretary.

Prior to the beginning of the presentations, Cornacchia asked for an explanation regarding the exercise itself and the information that had been transmitted to the candidates, as the two responses were so different. Bill Van Vactor, Acting County Administrator, stated that the exercise was intended to be a textbook analysis of the budget function and the related organizational considerations. George Russell, Director of Human Resources and Management Services, reported that each candidate had been sent the same material: 1) the question, with related background; 2) Lane County's organizational charts; and 3) Lane Manual information. He indicated, too, that this was intended as a textbook exercise in the organizational context. Roberts noted that the candidates were to be judged on their presentation, not regarding whether the Board liked the response or not.

11:00 a.m. - VIRGINIA COLLINS

DISCUSSION AND ACTION/Distribution of Duties Between the County Administrator and a General Support Services Department and Other Proposed Structural Changes.

Collins reviewed this item for the Board. (See material on file.) She indicated that her presentation included specific recommendations as well as other considerations. Collins stated that she would be recommending that the Board: 1) Approve the transfer of the County budget responsibility from the Department of Human Resources and Management Services to County Administration; and 2) Approve the transfer of the County Historical Museum and the Animal Regulation Authority to the Health and Human Services Department. She noted that the Board had recently modified the departmental structure and that she had been asked to re-think those decisions and provide recommendations.

With regard to the budget transfer, Collins remarked that the County Administrator is responsible for policy recommendations and that the most significant document is the budget. She added that the County Administrator is responsible for providing ideas and innovative approaches to budget issues. With regard to the Museum and Animal Regulation transfer, she stated that these are direct public and client services, not support services.

Collins offered other alternatives and options, including: 1) privatization/contracting out of the Museum and Animal Regulation; 2) reestablishing a separate Department of Human Resources and Management Services; 3) Consolidation of the JTPA functions as a Division within Health and Human Services; and 4) Consolidating the Regional Information System as a Division within the separate Management Services Department.

Collins recommended, with regard to her two main proposals, that they be presented to the appropriate citizens advisory groups for review.

In response to a question from Roberts, Collins stated that the formal organization can be structured in many ways, but that what is more important is communication. She explained that she feels strongly that budget staff working in a direct relationship with the County Administrator is more worthwhile and allows for more free-flowing communication.

Rust asked Collins to elaborate on the benefits of combining the performance auditing and internal auditing functions. Collins stated that she advocates for joint auditing in most areas to provide investigative analysis to help correct operational inefficiencies.

Dumdi questioned the recommended transfer of JTPA to Health and Human Services, instead of leaving it as a separate entity or adding it to Human Resources. Collins replied that she recommended this linkage to make it possible to use federal funds to train people into needed areas, such as nursing. She indicated that Human Resources provides services to the internal County structure. In response to a question from Roberts, Collins stated that, although JTPA is contracted out to SWPIC (a private non-profit), the transition can still be done as the grant comes to Lane County. She added that it would require further discussion.

Frazier questioned Collins' assertion regarding staff developing policies, noting that the Board of Commissioners make policy and the staff is responsible for implementation. Collins stated that she did not mean to imply that staff would make policy themselves; simply that their expertise should be used to help develop policy for recommendation to the Board. Frazier also questioned Collins' recommendation that the two department directors whose departments were proposed for consolidation would retain department director pay until their attrition/retirement. Collins noted that this would be a difficult decision, but that it can often be more costly to pay off a laid off employee in terms of accumulated sick leave, etc. She stated that generally speaking, from the "human point of view", she recommended their retention, possibly with no COLA in the future, thereby maintaining their expertise.

In response to questions from Rust and Dumdi regarding privatizing animal control, Collins offered potential savings on overhead, the need for a more regional approach and the competitive benefits of an RFP as justification.

Collins responded "yes" to Cornacchia's question regarding whether staff who perform the functions would go with the department transfers she recommended. He noted that the base premise for this exercise was hypothetical, as the current Board had already made a decision on this matter. He stated that, therefore, he was more interested in the process that had been used by Collins to arrive at the recommendations and conclusions. Collins stated that in a real situation she would read and analyze all the pertinent documents and discuss the matter with involved parties - which was not possible in this hypothetical case, noting that she understood the Board's decision in this matter was based on people issues, not organizational issues. In addition, she indicated she also would rely on her own background, experience, education and training. She concluded that her recommendations in the exercise had been arrived at by past practice and good organizational structure.

In response to Cornacchia's additional concerns related to her recommendations on department directors whose departments had been consolidated, Collins stated that 1) her "humane" approach staves off litigation as she has found it unproductive to litigate personnel issues; and 2) while she had not recommended reduction, she had recommended no increases, and she felt this would equal out in the long run. Cornacchia asked Collins what her response would be if she realized that the structure and authority under the Lane County Charter gives the Board authority to make changes, and treatment within the Lane Manual removes the threat of litigation. She indicated that, if that is the set of circumstances, further exploration would be required and the employee would probably be asked to accept the reduction to division level or terminate.

Cornacchia thanked Collins for her presentation.

11:30 a.m. - Kent Taylor

Proposed review of functions assigned to the county administrator's office and the department of human resources and management services.

Taylor noted that he had presented his written report to the Board (see material on file) and would summarize it briefly. He stated that he was recommending that the Board direct the County Administrator to look at the duties assigned within the County Administrator's Office and the HRMS department and report back to the Board at a later date.

Taylor stated that the item was administrative and that he wanted to look at the transfer of budget staff to HRMS. He observed that the budget function is typically assigned to the County Administrator and, in his experience, that had always been the case. He indicated he was also concerned about the workload in HRMS, noting the immense variety of duties. However, he noted that, after review, the Board may conclude that the current arrangement is appropriate.

Taylor indicated he would also like to review several other areas, including Animal Control, Economic Development and Justice Services. Noting that HRMS does internal services for internal customers and that animal control is a public service, Taylor stated he would like to explore the possibility of placing Animal Control with either Health and Human Services or Public Safety. He also discussed the possibility of linking Economic Development with the job training programs. In addition, he commented that it may be healthy to review the options of linking Justice Services with Public Safety, Youth Services and/or the District Attorney.

Taylor stated that the review process would include discussions with affected department heads, with the advisory committees involved and with Board members. He stated that this organizational study would take approximately four months; and that if the budget function were to be transferred to the County Administrator, that should occur prior to the 1994-95 budget process. Taylor asked that the Board direct that the study take place.

In response to questions and concerns from Cornacchia, Taylor stated that his approach to the assignment was based on the need for a reasoned, thorough and deliberate review of the process which he felt was professionally appropriate. He suggested that the Board may want to give the benefit of the doubt to one who is not knowledgeable of the special circumstances surrounding the Board's decision to move the budget process initially; and he stated that perhaps "different" would have been a better choice of words than "illogical".

Rust expressed concerns about the potential for higher costs if the animal control function was shifted to Public Safety and the possible dilution of the functions of law enforcement. He also asked for comment regarding public education related to unlicensed dogs and pets that are not spayed/neutered. Taylor stated he did not contemplate the upgrading of present animal regulation staff to the level of sworn staff in law enforcement. He noted that the aura of law enforcement may be beneficial, but impacts would need further review and the status quo may be the final result. He suggested the use of college students/youth crews in the summertime to canvas neighborhoods to remind them about dog licensing.

Roberts asked Taylor what considerations he would weigh to reach a decision as to whether to recommend a change in the organizational structure as related to the budget. Taylor responded 1) how responsive currently assigned staff is to the County Administrator; 2) County Administrator time and resources; and 3) other alternatives such as reorganization within the finance area. He assured the Board that he would not make proposals that would increase costs.

Dumdi asked for clarification regarding Taylor's proposal regarding consolidation of Economic Development and JTPA. Taylor stated his review would include whether there was value to any merger and whether the concept was in the County's best interest. In response to a question from Dumdi regarding the integration of the Jobs Program into Economic Development, Taylor indicated the essence of the idea was to look at the relationship between targeted industries and their need for a trained workforce.

Frazier asked Taylor if she was correct in assuming that he believes that if the process is right, the results will happen. Taylor responded that his experience is that if the process is not right, that it is almost impossible for results to be successful. In response to a question from Frazier, Taylor indicated his process to assess the strengths and weaknesses of individuals would include review of employee files and performance evaluations. He stated that he does believe that employee talents are more important than the organization.

Dumdi asked for Taylor's views on contracting out or privatization. Taylor indicated his review would include looking at those options. He noted that that would need to include communication with potentially affected employee groups from the start.

Cornacchia thanked Taylor for his presentation.

There being no further business, this meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Sharon Giles

Sharon Giles
Recording Secretary