

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Personnel Review Committee
CHAIRPERSON: LaDon Trost, Chairman
DATE/TIME: June 20, 2024 @ 10:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

☒ Steve Endress	☒ Nicole Hermesen zoom	☐ Craig Ketelsen
☒ John Lang	☐ Vacant	☒ Angie Kaiser
☒ LaDon Trost	☒ Steve Keeffer	☐ Kathy Phillips
☒ Scott Toot	☒ Kristina Tranel	☐ Tina Brandel

Others: None.

John Lang called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Roll call, a quorum was present.

1. Approval of Minutes –

- a) Minutes of the November 16, 2023 Personnel Review Committee meeting – Lang made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2023 Personnel Review Committee meeting. Seconded by Endress and motion carried following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.

2. Citizens' Comments – None.

3. Unfinished Business – None.

4. New Business –

- a) Discussion and possible action on the Chief Deputy County Clerk position description with the removal of the Safety Coordinator duties – Angie Kaiser explained that the Safety Coordinator position was created around 2017. There was an employee that did the position part-time and once the individual retired, it became part of the Chief Deputy County Clerk position. Because of payroll, workman's compensation claims, etc., it made sense to put it with the Chief Deputy position. Prior to the last year, the Chief Deputy position was also graded higher because of that. After the positions were restructured in 2023, the position is now graded the same as all the other Chief Deputy positions. Kaiser is asking that the Safety Coordinator duties outside of workman's compensation claims, be put with the Emergency Management Agency Coordinator position, where she believes they belong. When coordinating safety trainings, inspections of buildings and emergency procedures, those duties really do lie within the EMA position. That will free the Chief Deputy position up to be able to take on more of the duties it's supposed to be taking, and doesn't right now. She is suggesting that because this used to be a part-time position on its own, it should be added to the Emergency Management Agency Coordinator position description. She read some of the duties in the Safety Coordinator position description. Endress asked if the County Clerk's office will continue these duties until the EMA position is filled. Kaiser said they would. Tranel asked if the loss prevention duties would still stay with the County Clerk's office. Kaiser said that their office currently puts the claims in, but when it's property/casualty, that one tends to be a hit or miss on whether or not someone brings it to them when they're supposed to. They usually find out there's a claim after the fact. It puts them behind. It's a little frustrating and part of the reason why she doesn't want this position to be part of it anymore. **Kaiser made a motion to accept the Chief Deputy County Clerk as amended. Seconded by Lang and motion carried following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.**

b) Discussion and possible action to on the Emergency Management Agency Coordinator position description with the addition of the Safety Coordinator duties –Toot said the advertisement for the EMA Coordinator position included the current position description. They are to have interviews tomorrow with some applicants. He asked if there would be an increase in compensation for the EMA position to add the additional safety duties. Kaiser stated that there wasn't an increase for the Chief Deputy County Clerk position when they took on the safety duties. She said that when these duties were added to the Chief Deputy position, it raised it one grade. There was compensation before, but last fall, when everything was restructured, the Chief Deputy position was lowered a grade to be with all the other Chief Deputy positions, so she would not expect that there would be any reduction in pay. There was some discussion on the Emergency Management Agency Coordinator's position. Toot replied there is a lot of grant responsibility that lies in the position. Kaiser said up until a year or so ago, the position was 999 hours, which wasn't eligible for IMRF. A couple of years ago, it was put at 1,000 hours or more and eligible for IMRF. She believes that there are a lot of things that could be done in the position that maybe aren't always being done. She thinks that raising the compensation isn't the key, it's that maybe the position should have more hours. Toot explained that the position was raised from 999 hours because the County had signed an agreement because of the EMA grant. He was told by the State EMA Coordinator of the area, Kathy Spellman, that it is required the position be 1,000 hours or more. Trost agreed that the EMA Coordinator should take on the safety coordinator duties. The duties have already been spelled out, and he thinks we'll have to offer something extra. Kaiser disagreed. She said that the EMA Coordinator is already at a Grade 12, and the Chief Deputy County Clerk position is a Grade 10. If you add the safety duties in there, you're not talking more money or responsibility, it's basically along the lines of what they're already doing, and maybe the contract will just have to be for additional hours. She doesn't think it necessarily deserves more money per hour. There isn't a lot of time being put into the Safety Coordinator duties. It's just having to conduct training quarterly for the entire County. The workman's compensation portion of it is the lion's share, and the County Clerk's office is keeping that portion. Endress stated that he believes the benefit of taking on additional duties could be reflected in getting a few more hours. Toot said the position is required to work at least 20 hours per week. Lang said they could raise it a couple of hours each week and that could help. Keeffer said if the Chief Deputy County Clerk position is graded at a 10, and the EMA position is at a 12, then they are only taking on Grade 10 duties when they're already graded higher. If you want to use that theory, it's 10-worthy duties, adding it to a person doing 12-worthy duties. It's more of a quality, not quantity, type of situation. He believes the extra hours would make it more palatable. Lang agreed that additional hours are the way to go. Hermesen spoke. She said she agreed with Toot in the regard that it should be raised because there are additional duties. The County has numerous times, increased people's pay because of additional responsibilities. She said if we don't in this instance, then we need to keep doing that going forward. Lang said this will not require any additional skills – it's the same skills we are already paying for. Toot said it's the same skillset, it's just going to be additional time. **Angie Kaiser made a motion to add the Safety Coordinator Emergency Management Agency Coordinator position description and the budget for the Emergency Management Agency Coordinator to be raised to 25 hours a week, \$1,300 per year. Seconded by Lang and motion carried following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.**

5. **Committee Member Comments/Concerns – Kaiser said that Policy P2023-9 that was passed last year, had a caveat that the Jo Daviess County Non-Represented Employee Classification/Compensation and Performance Management Evaluation Policy is to be**

reviewed annually in June by the Personnel Review Committee before the County Board Budgetary Guidelines have been set. That fell through the cracks and she wanted to ask if they need to have another meeting to review. Toot said yes. She said we need to make sure the starting wages are still good. If they aren't, that would be part of a recommendation, depending on whatever percentage of increase the Finance Committee would suggest, maybe you need to add a little to that. Keeffer said we want to make sure this doesn't sit on the shelf for years and we continue to review it annually. Kaiser said she thinks that Personnel Review would have the responsibility to at least discuss with the Finance Committee, what would be a fair percentage of increase for labor and benefits. We are currently looking at a 9.3% increase in health insurance. Toot said there was a department head that came to him throughout the year, concerned with the maximum pay in the Compensation Plan and that they would like it reviewed. He thinks this needs to be addressed by the committee. Kaiser said that one thing to remember is, when that scale was initially put together, she wasn't sure if the maximum was an appropriate column and that the County Board would have to decide going forward. Its original intention, was to be able to show a set range for each grade. They had people that were outside of the maximum that were not penalized and were not frozen in pay. Keeffer asked if the 'Advanced Step Hire' was out of the question at this point with the new pay schedule. Kaiser said she thinks that was even in the policy and that there would be no more advanced step hires. This is the starting wage and now the Department Heads are in control of the annual increases that the employees are receiving, based on their evaluations. If you start messing with the starting wage, the whole thing is going to collapse. There was discussion on the next meeting date. Toot said everyone realize that this system is new and there will be growing pains. Hermesen said that she's had a lot of people retire lately. Part-time employees keep accruing a lot of time off. When you look through the handbook, it's almost a loophole for them to not have to use it or lose it. She suggested changing the policy so that isn't a huge liability for when they do decide to leave. Kaiser agreed that they should have an item at the next meeting. Hermesen said it's prorated, but because they don't use it, some have hundreds of hours. Kaiser said they accrue a percentage based on the last three pay periods. With the Paid Worker Leave Act, we are complying with it by doing this, but we do need to do something about the accrual and put a limit on it. The policy talks about full-time employees, but it's not as specific for part-time. Trost stated that he wants to bring to everyone's attention, he has been working with Carroll County Chairman, Joe Payette, and they're discussing the possibility of combining the EMA Coordinator position between Jo Daviess County and Carroll County, to make it a full-time position. He's always been in favor of consolidating services. It would be a good way to start. We could have an Intergovernmental Agreement between two counties.

6. Establish future meeting date – Lang made a motion to set the next meeting to Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 10 a.m. Seconded by Endress and motion passed.
7. Citizens' Comments – None.
8. Adjournment – Kaiser made a motion to adjourn at 10:35 a.m. Seconded by Keeffer and motion carried following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.