COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: **Personnel Review Committee**
CHAIRPERSON: **LaDon Trost, Chairman**
DATE/TIME: **June 26, 2024 @ 10:00 a.m.**

PRESENT:

☒ Steve Endress	☒ Nicole Hermsen 10:20 am zoom	☐ Craig Ketelsen
☒ John Lang	☐ Vacant	☒ Angie Kaiser
☒ LaDon Trost	☒ Steve Keeffer 10:01 am	☒ Kathy Phillips
☒ Scott Toot	☒ Kristina Tranel 10:01 am	☒ 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 June 20, 2024 Personnel Review Committee meeting – **Angie Kaiser made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 20, 2024 Personnel Review Committee meeting. Seconded by John Lang and motion carried following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.**
2. **Citizens' Comments –** None.
3. **Unfinished Business –** None.
4. **New Business –**
   a) Review of P2023-9, Non-Represented Employee Classification/Compensation Plan and Performance Management/Evaluation/Merit Pay Policy – Angie Kaiser commented that this policy was passed last year with the understanding that Personnel Review would review it every June prior to the budget guidelines being set to make sure we are paying attention to our starting wages and that we don't get into another situation where they are stagnant for eight to ten years. The policy as a whole if there is anything in it that doesn't seem to be working, needs to be tweaked a little bit, but mainly we are talking about starting wages and possibly the column for max wage. Kathy Phillips commented that there are a couple that are close to the max so we need to discuss how to address that. John Lang believes any changes in the scale should be whole dollars. The percentages are not fair to the people at the bottom. Joe Kratcha sent his concerns to Scott Toot. The maximum should be eliminated on the pay scale for non-represented positions to be consistent with represented positions, elected official positions and those positions that fall into other categories such as County Engineer. There was never a maximum before under the plan that was approved until September 12, 2023. Angie Kaiser thinks there was a max that was quickly done away with. That's where the merit increases came in. It was proven before that it wasn't a great idea so she doesn't think there is anything wrong with getting rid of the column and just having a starting wage. Employees that are being evaluated yearly are going to be getting their increases based on that evaluation. The only thing that is important is the starting wage. Phillips agrees it is probably a good idea to remove the column altogether. As for the starting wage amounts does anyone have any opinions on that for the coming year? Phillips thinks we do not want to have it stagnant sitting at one rate because that's where we got into problems last time. We need to revisit it all the time and stay active at keeping these compatible. Lang feels if we are going to make the

adjustment it should be across the board in terms of whole dollar amounts. Kaiser was in agreement. Steve Keeffer thinks we need to adjust this but we also are going to run into an issue if we adjust it every year you are going to have people that have been here for five years making the sane money as somebody starting out. He doesn't think we want to fall into that. You are going to alienate the people who have been here but you also need to be competitive so you can hire new employees. Keeffer hasn't hired anyone since this has been in place. Can anyone who has hired speak to whether it has been competitive or not? Are you getting decent candidates? Advance step hiring is no longer supposed to happen. Maybe we let this ride for one year to avoid getting the starting wage ahead of…Kaiser feels maybe waiting a year wouldn't be a bad idea. Keeffer feels we should dump the max and wait a year on adjusting this starting scale just to have another year of experience. So if the starting wage stays the same for 2025, we remove the maximum column, what do you think would be an appropriate recommendation for percentage of increase for labor for the coming year? Right now for budgeting purposes we have been operating on a 3% increase. We have a 9.3% increase in health insurance premiums. Keeping in mind the cpi used to calculate taxes for the last two years has been 5%. For 2024 payable 2025 it will be 3.4%. Kaiser did do a rough calculation. A 3% increase on the exciting general fund salaries would result in $8,727,573.63. If we were to match the cpi of 3.4% it would be $8,738,798.39. About an $11,000 increase. 4% would be $8,727,573.52. This is totally up to Finance and the board as to what they can afford. These would be the numbers department heads would be working with doing their evaluations of their employees. A 4% increase in wage only is a 3.9% increase from last year. Keeffer commented that insurance has gone up faster than the cpi but the only thing the employees see is their paycheck.

b) <u>Discussion and possible action on a recommendation to amend P2023-9, Non-Represented Employee Classification/Compensation Plan and Performance Management/Evaluation/Merit Pay Policy</u> – **Angie Kaiser made a motion to amend P2023-9 Non-Represented Employee Classification/Compensation Plan and Performance Management/Evaluation/Merit Pay Policy to remove the column for maximum wage. Seconded by Scott Toot.**

Angie Kaiser amended her motion to include a recommendation for a 4% increase in wage. Seconded by Tina Brandel and motion carried following a voice vote resulting in nine (9) ayes: Brandel, Endress, Trost, Hermsen, Keeffer, Tranel, Kaiser, Phillips, Toot and one (1) nay: Lang.

Angie Kaiser made a motion to amend P2023-9 Non-Represented Employee Classification/Compensation Plan and Performance Management/Evaluation/Merit Pay Policy to remove the column for maximum wage and to recommend a 4% increase in wage for FY2025. Seconded by Tina Brandel and motion carried following a voice vote resulting in nine (9) ayes: Brandel, Endress, Trost, Hermsen, Keeffer, Tranel, Kaiser, Phillips, Toot and one (1) nay: Lang.

c) <u>Discussion and possible action on a recommendation to amend the Employee Handbook</u> – Angie Kaiser commented that this came up at the last Personnel Committee meeting when part-time sick and vacation benefits were implemented back when Transit became a part of County operations we neglected to put a use it or lose it cap like full-time employees have. Steve Keeffer discussed his suggested change to 6.09 Sick Leave to add five (5) days within a one calendar month period. His guys have made a work around when they get to the end of their career they will take three vacation days and two sick days. It's an opportunity to burn their sick time at the end which Keeffer doesn't think the County wants and it keeps them on the payroll costing his department money. Not only in wages but benefits as well since they stay on the insurance. If we do the five days within the calendar month it should eliminate the ability to play that little game at the end of their career. Kaiser added that the work around comes in when its common knowledge that they are leaving but they haven't officially given notice that they are leaving. They just all of a sudden start having a couple sick days and then they use a vacation day. Due to HIPAA we cannot ask them why they are sick. **John Lang made a motion to amend the Employee Handbook as presented. Seconded by Tina Brandel and motion carried following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.**

d) <u>Discussion and possible action to accept the Transit Mechanic position description</u> – Nicole Hermsen commented that last year during the budget review process we had received approved for a mechanic position so just looking to get this position approved so that when we get to the point to hire an individual all the steps are done. We created this as the operations manager had assisted as well since he is the lead mechanic in his position description. Just looking for feedback or suggestions for this position. This position description has not been graded because of the union negotiations. Angie Kaiser asked if Hermsen would want to wait on this because the committee would not want to approve a position description without a grade. If it becomes union maybe it won't matter. Kaiser asked what changes would be made to the operations manager position description with the implementation of a Transit mechanic position. Hermsen responded that this mechanic position would report directly to the operations manager. That would be the only real change. LaDon Trost stated that he thinks we should wait on this until we get the union negotiations completed and then bring it back to the table. There was no action on this item at this time.

5. **Committee Member Comments/Concerns –** Scott Toot thanked the committee for removing the maximum column. It's going to make morale for some people better and it is a wise move.

6. **Establish future meeting date** – Angie Kaiser commented that we already have it in the policy that we meet every June so we can just say June, 2025 at 10 am unless something comes up.

7. **Citizens' Comments –** None.

8. **Adjournment – John Lang made a motion to adjourn at 10:36 a.m. Seconded by Kathy Phillips and motion carried following a voice vote resulting in all ayes.**