

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Personnel Review Committee
CHAIRPERSON: Don Hill
DATE/TIME: June 13, 2022 @ 10:02 a.m.

PRESENT:

☐ Bill Bingham	☒ Nicole Hermsen	☒ Kathy Phillips
☒ John Lang	☒ Melisa Hammer	☒ Laura Edmonds
☐ Vacant	☐ Steve Keeffer	☒ Joe Kratcha
☒ Don Hill	☒ Craig Ketelsen	☒ Angie Kaiser
☐ Vacant		

Others: Scott Toot, Dana Timmerman and Amy Gonzalez.

Don Hill called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. Roll call, a quorum was present.

1. **Citizens' Comments** – None.
2. **Unfinished Business** – None.
3. **New Business** -

- a) **Discussion and possible action on the recommendation for the Jo Daviess County Transit to create a Community Liaison Coordinator position** – Nicole Hermsen, Transit Director, spoke about how the Jo Daviess County Senior Resource Center has recently closed. The closure and transition of that office has been difficult. It's becoming problematic and many seniors are upset. The Stephenson County Senior Resource Center has the Jo Daviess County Senior Resource Center contract, and believe they can do the work without additional personnel in their Freeport office. The job doesn't seem to be getting done, so Hermsen is hoping to get a Community Liaison Coordinator position created to assist the seniors in Jo Daviess County. Many concerned individuals have called Hermsen asking for help, because Stephenson County has not been much help for them. There is a contract stating they are taking over the responsibilities from the Senior Resource Center in Jo Daviess County, but they haven't sent us a signed copy back of that and it has been months. This position would also be a person to train passengers that ride Transit in the County, on their responsibilities as a passenger. There have been issues with bed bugs, and people becoming increasingly irate because of not being able to ride Transit. When these people become disgruntled, Hermsen has been suspending their service because of the way they speak to the employees. The situations they've experienced have progressed to threats of violence and death. In sake of liability for the County, Hermsen is creating a handbook that every single passenger has to read and sign, to acknowledge that they have received it. All the passengers would then understand the rules and if they cannot follow the rules, they cannot ride. The drivers don't have the time to train the passengers. Hermsen made a position description for the proposed position. A lot of the duties in the description are currently being done by Hermsen and it's been a lot more on her plate. Toot responded that this position was already approved by the County Board, but the County is going to start with a new study and compensation plan soon. There was much discussion over the position and whether it could potentially be something covered by the Health Department, as it somewhat pertains to Social Services. Kaiser said that this position could be paid for by grant money. The issue is, the State isn't going to be okay with spending that money on a position that isn't focused solely on Transportation. Hammer stated that her concern is that in 6 months, they will have to turn around and create another position to cover all the rest of the services that the seniors need. Kaiser said that would probably be the case and maybe half the money would come from Transportation and half of it come from our budget that we typically allotted to Senior Resource Center. She isn't completely

sure, but said that we didn't hire a Transit director to do Senior Services for the County. She can see we need to do this, but asked where we put it. Ketelsen asked if there is a minimum hour requirement that this person would have to work each week in order to receive the grant money to pay for it. Hermsen replied that there isn't a minimum requirement. Hermsen said she has researched and looked at the salaries for this position in other counties and that they're all the same salary right around \$58,710.00, with the exception of a couple counties being higher. Kaiser replied that the \$58,000, based on our current scale, salary is two grades higher than Hermsen is at herself. She said that cannot happen right now and we need to work within the scale we have right now and it can be incorporated once Archer does our Compensation Study. Kaiser asked Nicole if she had any suggestions on the scale. Hermsen said this position would not have reports, and her Operations Manager does, as well as herself. In the sake of attracting someone to apply for this position that is professional and educated, she wouldn't feel comfortable with too low of a salary. Hammer asked about the education requirements in the job description and questioned the Bachelor's Degree requirement. She said on other descriptions, they typically state 'or equivalent'. Even the Administrator's position doesn't make the applicant have a Bachelor's Degree. Hermsen replied that she got ideas from the other counties' position descriptions and made it close to what those had. Hammer made aware that with the requirement of a Bachelor's Degree, it will be difficult to get people to apply for the position with the wage that we can currently put on our wage scale. Lang agreed and said that he agrees and we should add 'or equivalent experience' on the education section. Kaiser said that she appreciates Hermsen's struggle as far as trying to find someone because the pay isn't great, but she doesn't feel comfortable, without the assistance of an outside agency, just creating a position and saying they're essentially a Grade 14. There is no way we can do that. Toot replied that he would call his contact for Archer Company and see what they suggest, since they're be doing the reevaluation and the work shortly. Lang said he didn't want to keep this and wait for something that wouldn't end up happening. He thinks that we need to get this going move forward. Hammer said she too empathizes, but we cannot go against what our policy states. If we are in a contract with Carlson-Dettmann, we need to break that contract before we can go and do anything else. Hermsen said while she typically works 7 days per week, she would still be willing to scrap this all if she had some kind of game plan on what we are going to do as a County, to assist and further these social services. That's the bigger picture and bigger problem. She said with the time being spent to train this position and get them up to speed, in her opinion, it would be more beneficial getting Social Services in the County. Kaiser said it looks like we have a couple of things at play here: Senior Resource Center in Stephenson has the contract, but we're also talking about the Transportation contract. They also get money from us, for example, agency funds. Is that contracted? Because they were providing service for Jo Daviess County, so what is this budgetary gift that we're giving them? How are we locked into that? Is it a gift, or is there something we are somehow committed to? Toot replied that it is not a gift, and the discussion has already occurred about eliminating it in the 2023 Budget. Kaiser wanted to confirm that the only contract we're talking about is for Transportation – and Stephenson County hasn't signed it. That means we have no contract with the Stephenson County Senior Resource Center for anything, which means they don't have to provide service to us. She asked if we have given them money for this fiscal year. Hammer replied that she would have to look and see. Kaiser noted that if we have, that would at least commit them to doing something for us. If it's in the budget, clearly we have to give it to them. Hammer asked what the contract pays Stephenson. Hermsen clarified that our contract doesn't pay Stephenson; they pay us from their State funds they receive for Transportation for the seniors. Kaiser noted that is another

aspect. There's state money out there available that Stephenson is getting to pay for it and we aren't receiving this. Hammer asked if this is something we could get back; the State funded money? Hermesen said yes, that the State said nobody else has bid on it so they just give the money to Stephenson. Kaiser said this is so much bigger than just arranging for rides for seniors. We need an agency, which again, would more than likely be the Health Department. She said The Workshop could bid on it. Anybody able to could bid on it. Nobody is disputing that this service needs to happen, the only thing that she has a problem with the Committee setting a pay level for it. Kaiser continued that she doesn't know where this leads us. Toot said that the path forward is to tweak the position description and send it off to Carlson-Dettmann. Kaiser mentioned that this needs to be on the Social & Environmental Committee. Not this position, but this whole thing. She said that the hospital could even do it. Hermesen said that when she spoke to someone at the hospital, they haven't made any progress on creating a position. It's just a lot of people that want to do something that aren't doing anything, which is why she has taken on a lot of this. But she noted that she cannot be a Senior Resource Director, Transit Director, PCOM and everything else all at once. She said she will get this put on the Social & Environmental Committee Agenda. Kaiser they're realizing there are more layers to this and that if the Senior Resource Center in Freeport isn't doing their job, we will have to do it for them, and in turn not get paid for it, plus we would be eating the costs on their Transportation and this entire position Hermesen is trying to create. We can't get paid until we get the contract paperwork. They're not fulfilling their end of the bargain with this contract. Kaiser asked if Hermesen has looked into this. She said she has looked into it and the grant funding is from the State and IDPH. Transit is seeing a very steep decrease in revenue, just because they're not scheduling the rides. What they've been doing and what they've said is that they don't want to service Jo Daviess County because it's a pain, especially with the cost of gas. They just have been servicing Stephenson County to the best of their ability and leaving Jo Daviess County by the wayside but still collecting the money. Hammer said it looks like we need to get in contact with the Grant Provider and say that Stephenson County is not providing the services, and that we want to and ask how we can get the funding. They're paying them for nothing. Kaiser said if we can figure that out and get the funding, Transportation could pay for the portion of Transit, and then we could have the grant that would pay for the remainder of this position that we actually need here. Hammer said she'd be willing to reach out to someone to figure out the funding portion of this all. John Lang said the position has already been approved by the whole County Board. Hammer stated that they didn't follow policy to do it. Lang replied the County Board can do what it wants to do, when it wants to do it. It has done something, and now we need to get a salary and something set so at least something can go forward. There are a lot of issues and he feels bad for the people, but at least we can do something on the rides so people can get the services that they need. Toot said that we need to focus on the position description and tweak that. Hill mentioned that he doesn't feel we need to go to an outside temp agency, but this could be a temporary position until we can establish what a full time position will look like. Until we get the full scope of things, we have already approved this position and we can make comparatives, but we can come up with something as a temporary pay scale until we get our new pay scale in place, and then we can reexamine and maybe roll it into a full time job. Ketelsen asked Hermesen if she already had the grant money for this position and she said that yes, it was already allowed by the State. The Committee started to focus more on the position description Hermesen had created. Kaiser feels it should be around a 10 on the scale, based on what the responsibilities of other 10's are, because that how it would be graded. Lang said the only thing he would change is the education and to add the 'or equivalent' with the Bachelor's Degree requirement. Hill made sure to emphasize that this

is just temporary. Much discussion was held over the comparisons of this position with other positions. Kaiser asked what this person's day-to-day duties would look like, that is different than one of Hermsen's dispatchers. Hermsen replied that this person isn't going to be necessarily scheduling, but they'd work with the Senior Resource Center and keep on them, field those calls from angry seniors, and calm them down, but also going to those community meetings at night. This position is also for community outreach. Going to those meetings can make for a late day sometimes. They'd also do a lot of training for the passengers, and get an initiative together for community outreach and organization. They'd keep track of all of the Jo Daviess County policies, and they'd help write policies. Also, record keeping, research, and help with grants. Hammer reminded that we have a Grants Administrator, and she is a good resource to help with funding and the facilitating of these grants for Transit. The funding portion of it would be something that would need to go through Tammy, the Grants Administrator, anyway. Hill spoke that we have a temporary position, Grade 9 Step 3. Toot replied that we're amending this position description to state 'must have a Bachelor's Degree or equivalent experience'. **John Lang made a motion to make the Temporary Position of Transit Community Liaison Coordinator a Grade 9, Step 3 on the Pay Grade Schedule. Seconded by Ketelsen.** Kaiser said when she's looking at the duties and responsibilities, it's sounding more like an assistant position. Ketelsen replied that if you substitute seniors with tourists, it's a lot like a CVB assistant position would be. Where are they at and maybe we can compare it to that. Hill said this is why we are doing this as a temporary position and then we can look at what a full-time position would be like. Kratcha spoke and said for the record, the Committee that this is kind of like an emergency situation and he doesn't want to do this again for a different position and Nicole definitely needs someone right now, but the purpose of this Committee was to review job descriptions and pass them on. Since we can't pass them on, what we're doing here is above and beyond, so for the record, this is a one-time deal. Hill agreed. Toot also agreed and noted that we are in a unique situation right now and that we are between administrations and we will have the Archer Company here by September. Kaiser said we have 8's that have the same or more responsibility than this position. They have people that report to them or they supervise someone. The only 9's we have right now are Code Enforcement Officer, Planning & Development, IT Technician and Engineering Technician. 10's are Operations Manager, Chief Deputy County Clerk and Bret Gempler, Mary Althof and Tammy Cahill. 8's would be Chief Deputy, Circuit Clerk, Recorder, Treasurer, Assessment, Victim-Witness Coordinator. Think of what the Victim-Witness Coordinator does. She's a liaison for the Court System. The CVB Marketing Manager was an 8. **Kaiser made a motion to amend the original motion; to make the Temporary Position of Transit Community Liaison Coordinator a Grade 8, Step 3 on the Pay Grade Schedule. Seconded by Hammer.** Kratcha asked Hermsen if she felt she'd be able to get anyone at that rate. Hermsen responded and asked what the rate would be. Kaiser said \$19.76. Hermsen said her only concern with that is that this job has a significant amount of duties and responsibilities, and is only 20 cents higher than her dispatchers. The dispatchers aren't required to go to any meetings, work hourly and have a set schedule and they don't have to train anyone. They just answer the phones and schedule rides. This position doesn't have a set schedule and will be attending lots of meetings. Kaiser said that the issue with the dispatcher's rate is that they came in a lot higher rate from The Workshop than what our scale said. If it were on our scale truly, it wouldn't be 20 cents difference. She said that's neither here nor there, but it's worth pointing that out. Lang said he'd like to keep it at a Grade 9. **Amendment failed following a roll call vote resulting in 3 Ayes and 6 Nays. Ayes: Angie Kaiser, Melisa Hammer and Laura Edmonds. Nays: John Lang, Don Hill, Nicole Hermsen, Joe Kratcha, Craig Ketelsen and Kathy Phillips. Absent:**

Bill Bingham and Steve Keeffer. Now the original motion is on the table, Grade 9, Step 3. **Motion passed following a roll call vote resulting in 6 Ayes and 3 Nays. Ayes: John Lang, Don Hill, Nicole Hermsen, Joe Kratcha, Craig Ketelsen and Kathy Phillips Nays: Melisa Hammer, Angie Kaiser and Laura Edmonds.** Hill noted that there is still work to do, and we will figure out what this job will look like in the end. Toot said that the language on the job description still needs to be done. **Lang made a motion to accept the job description with the modification on the educational requirements. Seconded by Kratcha and motion passed following a voice vote resulting in all Ayes.**

- b) **Discussion and possible action on the recommendation to create an IT Specialist for the Sheriff's Office** – Ketelsen talked about the IT demands they have in the Sheriff's Office. They have been increasing lately, especially with the software and things they're getting there in the office. The IT Department is spread thin enough already, but a majority of their duties happen in that office. Sgt. Amy Gonzalez has worked with the ETSB and they are willing to fully fund an IT Specialist for the Sheriff's Office that strictly pertains to Communications. Sgt. Gonzalez said that they've come very far in the past year in terms of technology. They're implementing a new 911 System and they're only in the first phase of that. They've taken and upgraded their CAD system by integrating several other pieces of software. They're continuing to further that. She said it's moving very quickly and fast-paced in terms of technology. That will not go away. Most likely they'll be going through a radio upgrade in the next 6-12 months as well. Her idea for this position is that they're going to be PSAP focused, which is the call center downstairs. The primary responsibilities are all listed in the packet, but this position would take ownership of the Next-Gen 911 System in terms of its functionality, the VOIP phone system, and CAD System. Kratcha said to think of IT as the front-end and the back-end. Front-end would be where you're helping and doing help desk things. That is more what this position would be. The current staff would be taking care of the networking, servers and that sort of thing. This position will be more front-end focused, and they would be a liaison with different vendors, technical support, etc. That is how we talked about it and thought it would fit, and fit well. Lang said he'd be for the position, and would like to see it under the Technology Department, but the person would be assigned to the Sheriff's Department. He said he wants to make sure that if there are problems in the Courthouse, that person could still come over and help, or Joe could come help that person in the Sheriff's Department. Kratcha said there would still be that cross-training and that we could talk about that as well, but it would be primarily focused on the PSAP. Hammer said that was also her same question. Kratcha replied yes, if someone was on vacation or something, or if there was a big problem, we of course would want them to come over and help. Kaiser asked if an IT Technician is a Grade 9. Kratcha said that yes, a technician is, but this position would be the like the Network IT Systems Manager, which is a 12, and that's where his hope is where Ryan will get because he's doing that kind of work. This position would come in lower than that. We aren't going to implement until 2023. The Archer Company would decide where it would go. Gonzalez said this would be more of an Applications Specialist, so this is someone that would be trained, in the specific applications that we use only at the Sheriff's Office. Obviously they'd be cross-trained, but for purposes of funding this project, they need to be focused on the PSAP. Edmonds said she was very pleasantly surprised to see this position, because she feels it's been a long time coming. Hill said if we're going to implement this in 2023, we need to take a look at the duties and job responsibilities and present to Archer when they come aboard. Gonzalez said her purpose to bring this forward now is to get ahead of the 2023 Budget. She wants to ensure ETSB can budget for this so we can figure out where it will come in at now. Hammer asked if since it would be under IT, would the expense be IT and the salary be under Joe. Ketelsen said it would be

reimbursed by ETSB, so whatever we have to do to move that in an Interfund Transfer. Kaiser replied that the money that's going to pay for this is coming from State funds, for example, with Nicole's grants; would this 911 money be similar to that? Would we have to expense this position from ETSB, or could we do the Interfund Transfer? Gonzalez replied that she thought we could set it up similar to how we have it now, where we're contributing a certain amount to IT/GIS every month, and go about it that way – but to cover the full payroll and benefits of this position. We are allowed by legislation to cover payroll and benefits out of that fund. Kaiser said that covering it is one thing, but some grants actually want to see the expense; not just an Interfund Transfer. Gonzalez replied that this is actually not a grant. It would come directly out of the disbursements that we get from 911 surcharges. Hill asked if the timeline with Archer coming on in September would work and Toot replied yes. Much discussion was held over the Position Description. Kathy Phillips left the meeting at 11:15 a.m. Hill said that the red on the 4th bullet should be black and remain. **Angie Kaiser made a motion to approve and accept the Position Description for IT Specialist for the Sheriff's Office as presented and work toward creating this position for 2023. Seconded by Laura Edmonds and motion passed following a roll call vote resulting in all Ayes.**

4. **Committee Member Comments/Concerns** – Kaiser said that after today's discussion and some comments, she's wondering what everyone sees this committee doing in the future. Hill said he thinks it will continue the way it has been, and reminded of Joe's comment about this being a one-time emergency deal with the Transit position. Hill apologized for the special circumstance today, but he said he felt it needed to be done. Kaiser replied that was fine, but going back to the start in 2013, the whole purpose of the Committee was to stop things from happening will-nilly, because when you're on the County Board, you don't have access to all this information, and that's what we're here to do is help you out and help you make the best decisions. This Committee is supposed to be 15 members. We are short one County Board member, we're short our HR person is Dana, and she isn't officially appointed, and our Department Head we're missing. Do you want to continue to appoint people by name or by position? Hill said we need to do it by position. Kaiser said that we will make a note to do that at the next available County Board meeting, where members of this Committee will be appointed by position. Kratcha said 15 is too many people, and he would say around 7. Kaiser said 15 is a lot of people, but you also don't want it to be a monarchy. Possibly 2 County Board members instead of 4. Hammer said her concern is that 15 is a lot, but she doesn't know how we can be fair in eliminating department heads. There are 10 total. 10 Department Heads and 2-3 Board Members would be a good idea. Toot suggested you could rotate Department Heads in and out. Hill said we'll think about it and let him know any other thoughts. Toot thanked the committee for the exception made today because we're in a unique situation right now. Hammer said another concern is the Carlson-Dettmann contract. We need to follow our contract, and would legally have to break it. Toot said we'll get that taken care of. More discussion over the Archer Company was had.
5. **Establish future meeting date** – The next meeting date is to be determined.
6. **Citizens' Comments** – None.
7. **Adjournment** - Joe Kratcha made a motion to adjourn at 11:25 a.m., seconded by Laura Edmonds; roll call motion passed 9 ayes, 0 nays.