

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Personnel Review Committee
CHAIRPERSON: Scott Toot
DATE/TIME: November 4, 2021 @ 1:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

☒ Bill Bingham	☒ Nicole Hermsen	☐ Craig Ketelsen
☒ John Lang	☐ Joe Kratcha	☒ Kathy Phillips
☐ Vacant	☒ Angie Kaiser	☒ Mary Jo
☒ Don Hill	☒ Laura Edmonds	Schoenberger
☒ Scott Toot	☒ Steve Keeffer	
☒ Melisa Hammer	☒ Eric Tison	

Others:

Scott Toot called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. Roll call, a quorum was present.

1. **The minutes from the September 25, 2020 and May 20, 2021 Personnel Review Committee meeting were not included in the packet at this time.**
2. **Citizens' Comments** – None.
3. **Unfinished Business** – None.
4. **New Business**
 - a) **Discussion and possible action on a request for classification of the County Administrator Administrative Assistant position.**

Toot said how this position has been like a revolving door. One of the reasons is because it has been classed as a Salary Grade 4. The original position description is not thorough. Since Stacy has been there, Toot said he has watched what she does and the different duties she does. This new description is more reflective of what she's doing, as does the JDQ. In the original description, one of the job duties are the Certificates of Insurance and maintaining of the insurance requirements for contractors. It's lengthy and involved. Even when we had a temp, she had to chase people down to get them to cooperate. 20% of the time is spent on clerical; receives and records documents, maintains and distributes County information involving confidential, technical and professional information. 5% is as receptionist. She's the first one people see when they come in. One of the things Toot mentioned that he wants to start doing for the Administrator's office is to scribe who is in and out of there and how long they were there, because that's something standard in offices. 3% is searching and locating documents for the County Administrator. 2% is attending monthly ETSB Meetings and acting as recording secretary. 20% is to assist with the Budget Preparation Process. That could change with usage of the new budgeting software. The Certificate of Insurance database has over 200 vendors, which wasn't accounted for in the original description. Maintains record and index of all contractor insurance files. That's very important, because if they don't have insurance and they slip through the cracks that can cause the County significant problems. Assist with coordination of the annual audit, and prepares meeting packets and transcribes minutes for the liquor commission. About 15% is the transcription of minutes for the Ad Hoc and regular committees. **John Lang made a motion to move forward a request for classification of the County Administrator Administrative Assistant position with corrections. Seconded by Bill Bingham; roll call motion passed 9 ayes: Bingham, Lang, Hill, Hermsen, Hammer, Keeffer, Schoenberger, Tison, Edmonds, Toot; 1 nay: Kaiser.** Kaiser said it sounds like the biggest issue is the position doesn't make enough money, which isn't a classification problem

as it is a scale problem. She noted there have been duties added in here that don't look to be new, and asked where the duties are coming from? Toot replied it's just documenting the duties the position has been doing. He doesn't know what Michelle did before this, because when he came in, there was a temp. He also said it's increased to where Stacy has started helping with the minutes. He knows that when the temp was there, she mainly focused on the Certificates of Insurance and a few other things, but the current person in that role has stepped up and taken on different duties. Kaiser said that these are not new duties, so it sounds like these duties have been reassigned. Toot disagreed and said we work as a team together and help each other. It's not that other offices don't do that, but if there are things that need doing, then we do it. Kaiser replied that each office has a list of responsibilities, and unless you've taken on something new in that office, you're just reassigning them from another position. Hammer also asked if the office has taken on new responsibilities since Toot has taken over. Toot replied no. Hammer then asked if they've been distributed differently. Toot agreed and said there were no additional duties, but it seems like the volume in the work has increased over what he remembers it has been in the past. He likened the Administrator's office to that of a police department. Police departments have to adapt to everything that comes up all the time; they're interrupted, have to change course, and calls happen. In the Administrator's office, they never know what's going to happen, people come in, and they have issues; and the next thing you know, those issues have to be responded to, and then they have to go back to what they were doing, with the workflow in there. Kaiser replied that it's like that in every office. Toot said it happens quite a bit in the Administrator's office, and it seems like every problem comes in there. He said as far as Stacy assuming more duties, we are just clarifying it by putting it in the job description. Kaiser noted that one of the things that we've dealt with in Personnel Review, when it comes to new position classifications and reclassifications, is that volume is volume, money is money, and responsibility is responsibility. She compared it to a 'pie analogy', similar to tax revenue. There's only so much in the pie, and it depends on how it's distributed. Now because of volume, the pie has increased for this position, which means another position is decreasing. Toot said another position isn't decreasing, it's that there are more duties and assistance needed for the minutes, and he doesn't see how one person can keep up with all of the minutes. Hammer said they're not increasing responsibility, but they're sharing the responsibilities in the office. She is all for a pay raise, but this shouldn't be about a job description or reclassification, it should be about doing an advance-step hire. She continued to say this was about the money, not the different responsibilities, because there are no new responsibilities; if there are new responsibilities, then we need to look at all of the positions in that office to see where and how they have changed. Kathy Phillips entered the meeting. Hammer said that she had a question on the fixed asset portion of it; when Hammer left the Administrator's Office, she was asked to take the fixed asset portion of it with her, which she did. She said she would be more than happy to give that portion back to the Administrator's Office, if they would like to take them on, but they shouldn't be listed as a duty in their office when it is now stated that the Treasurer has that duty. That is just one of the misunderstandings on the description. Toot replied that the description reflects what is going on in the office. The bottom line is there's a lot of work to do in there. The new position description clarifies what this position does, and the old one does not. It is basically shallow. This more clearly reflects what the position does. As far as it being a JDQ, or an advance-step hire; when he started he was asked if he would follow the Personnel Review policy and go through Personnel Review because it had been done, and he said he would – so he's trying to follow the policy as it's presented, and bring this forward for everybody to review. Hammer said that she thinks all positions should be looked at if one position is being reclassified. Kaiser agreed but said she couldn't find the position description for the Office Manager that was approved in 2019. Toot replied that this is not a question of the Office Manager and that he didn't bring forward an examination of the Office Manager

position, the entire function of his office, or all of the positions. What's on the Agenda is this particular position. Kaiser said that what this committee is tasked to do, is to see if the reclassification request is appropriate, and the information that we need to decide if it's appropriate to make a recommendation, we don't have, because they're not new duties, so where are the duties coming from? Toot said that he was going by the review policy and asked if there was anything else that governed this process other than the review policy. He continued to read Section 3, Internal Review: After review and verification by the Department Head and County Administrator, all classification and classification requests shall be submitted by the Department Head to the Personnel Review Committee for review and verification or comment on the accuracy of the request prior to being sent to Carlson Dettmann. Hammer commented if that's the case, she is questioning the accuracy, because it can't be on two job descriptions for a pay rate. John Lang said that he thinks they're missing the point; it's the volume that is going on in the Administrator's Office, it's not necessarily all new duties, it's the volume of things that they're dealing with. It is increasing, and Stacy has to take on more to relieve the pressure on Mary. They're still all doing things, but originally that position started as a part-time position, and a lot of things have changed. Kaiser said that is what they're saying as well. The point is that reclassification is not about volume, and the people from Carlson Dettmann will tell you that. If you're doing more of the same work, that doesn't mean that your responsibilities have changed, it just means you're doing more of it and you're busier. Hammer said that your status level hasn't changed, your volume of work has changed, which may increase your pay, but your status level on your position classification has not changed. I think what we're looking to do is look at the rate of pay. Toot said the position description does not adequately cover what is done in that position. Kaiser said they agree that this job description probably is more accurate, but what else has changed? Toot said the things that have changed are, Mary is in there, and she has had to do more things since he has become Administrator. Hammer said that her job should be reviewed as well. Toot said the workload has increased because his predecessor did a lot of different things that he simply cannot do yet, and he doesn't even know if it's appropriate for him to do some of those things to begin with. The issue is this position. He knows it's being worked in with the other positions in the Administrator's Office and what he doesn't understand about this process is that it turns into a Star Chamber, frankly. Hammer asked if we agree that this position should be re-classed, and this job description be changed, and this is what is stated, do we have the authority, or can we request that the other job description be reviewed as well? Toot re-read the policy. He said that if folks don't agree with what I've done, then folks have the right to comment on the accuracy of the request. Kaiser said this committee meets once or twice a year, and prior to meeting, the committee is asked if there is anything that needs to be on the Agenda. We weren't asked, we were only told there was a meeting. There is one item on the Agenda. We didn't have an opportunity to have any input on what needed to be on the Agenda, so therefore, the only thing that we can act on is the one item, and it's hard to act on that when we have concerns about other things. Hammer said that she is worried about a precedence starting here, that anyone in any office can go and change a job description and reclassify, and take duties from another person, that the other person normally did, give it to this person so that they can get reclassified, and not do anything about the previous employee's job. Kaiser agreed. Toot said this is about Administrative Assistant position, and I know that there has been some sentiment expressed about apparently reclassifying the Office Manager position, but as far as input on the Agenda and everyone being told there was going to be a Personnel Review Committee Meeting, I've talked about needing to reclassify this position for a while, and I've talked about it with the County Board, so it's not a secret that I was going to do this. And I know that I would never presume with anybody else's office, to sit back and put it on an Agenda, to suggest that somebody's employee in their office needs to have their position reclassified, myself. I would not do that, I would only concentrate

on my own office. I wouldn't do it, and I know at least one Elected Official that wouldn't even tolerate that. There has been a lot of work put into this; you have the old one and new one and the JDQ. This just clarifies what the position does; I didn't make the rules for how this should be handled. The next step is for you to look at it and decide what you think. Toot re-read the policy one more time. If people don't think this is accurate, they're entitled to that position and I don't dispute that. John Lang said that in his opinion, Mary is already exempt. She is probably underclassified. If you'd like to review it, I think Mary should be moved up. Hammer said that she was sorry, but begged to differ on that one. Kaiser brought up, that if she requested a Personnel Review Committee Meeting to be held next week and she brought revised job descriptions and JDQ's, for the deputy positions in her office, that mirror the Chief Deputy/Safety Coordinator position, so they all can be raised up to that level, is everybody going to be okay with that? She also said, I'm not opposed to this classification, but we don't have all the information here, and therefore I can't vote for it. Don Hill spoke and said we are here to look at the request and when I'm looking at the position description, I don't know that the new description mirrors another position in his office. The first one has 8 items for duties and responsibilities, and the one Scott is presenting now has 19. If I'm Carlson Dettmann, I'm going to say this person must be doing a lot more than this other one did 7 years ago. I don't know that this mirrors another job in his office; I guess, in a way, Angie is right – I don't have the information that shows me it does not mirror the other position in the office, so we are just looking here if we want to have Carlson Dettmann take a look at it. 11 more duties does allow me to say yes, let them take a look at it. Kaiser said the whole point of Personnel Review and reviewing these requests, was that prior to that, we had Department Heads that were submitting requests that may not have been completely appropriate, and Personnel Review was brought to do exactly what we are doing right now – to see if it's appropriate. That means asking questions like we're asking right now. Toot said this is not about the Office Manager position; if folks are concerned that duties from the Office Manager are now being assumed by the Administrative Assistant, it's because there are a lot of duties in there. Duties can overlap. I've never seen where duties haven't been allowed to overlap. Just because you have a title, doesn't mean you're limited to 'x' duties. Kaiser commented that duties overlap, but responsibilities – that's different. Duties aren't the same as responsibilities. Toot said ultimately in that office all the responsibilities land on me. You have the documents and I'll be happy to answer more questions. I'm not averse to answering more questions, but I will not sit here like a potted plant and not respond. Hammer asked if we do present this with the Fixed Asset responsibility, will that be in the Administrator's Office? Melisa said it's not the Administrator's Office's responsibility to do that at this point, so it cannot be put on the job description unless you want it back. Scott said we can strike it. Melisa noted that was something Dan took on in his office, on his own, and it was not his responsibility. Laura Edmonds asked about the monthly Real Estate Transfer Declarations and whether they come from Angie's office, and the building permits as well. Angela Kaiser said Dan had a Master's Degree in Accounting, and he used those numbers to project out years in advance, any possible recession. I don't know if that's going to continue to be used. Hammer said she doesn't believe it should be listed that the Administrator's Office does the Real Estate Transfer Declarations etc., because it's assumed that office actually does the work when they don't, they only handle the reports. As far as she's concerned, that office does an analysis of it, but they don't provide the information or pull it together. They just track it. Don Hill asked if we are editing the duties and responsibilities now. Hammer replied yes. Hill said if we are going to submit this, we need to edit it and take things off if necessary, and also if someone notices something that should be included, we need to put it on. Toot said that the policy says the purpose of this exercise right now is for review and verification or comment on the accuracy of the request prior to being sent to Carlson Dettmann, and that if someone has a problem with a request, put it in writing and we can send that to

Carlson Dettmann too. Hammer stated that is why we are here having this meeting. Kaiser said the purpose also is to be the stop-gap for requests that may not be appropriate, and we need to ask the right questions. If you don't have that stop-gap and things just go straight to Carlson Dettmann, what do they know about our job descriptions and what everyone does or doesn't do? That is the whole purpose of this review. Melisa Hammer made a recommendation to strike the responsibility of 'Assist with implementing and maintaining a fixed asset management policy. Inventory all County owned tangible assets associated with fixed asset management policy.' Toot said that we don't need to take a vote on it if everyone agrees - we can just take it off. Hammer also wanted to amend the portion of the job description that says 'Assist in the coordination of the annual audit.' She said it's too broad. She also said that she doesn't know what the Assistant does with the audit at this point, so to her those responsibilities really don't lie on that job. Everyone agreed. Hammer said she had another question on the minimum qualifications. She asked if Stacy were to quit tomorrow and you would have to hire somebody, you're telling me you wouldn't hire anyone with less than 5 years of experience? Toot replied that given the job market right now, that would be a big variable. I think you do need experience to come into there. Hammer asked if you would want to switch it from 2 years to 5 years. Angie corrected Hammer and said it was from 1 year to 5 years. Toot said that it's a combination; it says at least 5 years of related experience or any equivalent combination of related education and experience. Melisa stated that going from 1 year to 5 years is a lot. Scott Toot said that you're going from a lot more duties documented as opposed to the other one too. Kaiser said that 3 years would be more in line. Scott said that he's perfectly fine with changing that. Hammer said that she also sees in this description, where it states under ETSB 'attends monthly meetings and acts as recording secretary.' You're kind of explaining the recording secretary by preparing meeting packets and transcribing minutes. That's a recording secretary's job. Toot said it explains more in detail because not everyone knows what a recording secretary does. Kaiser mentioned that there are 'transcribing minutes' as a description for three bullet points. Toot replied that it breaks it out. Kaiser replied that it's redundant because it's for two committees, possibly three. Hammer said she knows that 'listen to and scribe minutes for eight county board committees' - but maybe it should be 'assist in', because she knows that it's a responsibility of the Office Manager. Toot said he spoke to Patrick at Carlson Dettmann when he first started about the original position description because he cannot figure out why people keep leaving. Kaiser said it's because there isn't enough money in the scale. People are hiring new people as advanced-step hires and doing what they need to do by advancing the scale. Toot said that he's had extensive conversations with Carlson Dettmann about increasing the scale for all of the positions. Hammer feels by reclassifying people that is not going to change whether they leave - the dollar rate on the scale is what's going to keep them. Hill agreed and said the entire compensation package should be looked at, not just the wage rates. Hammer said the 'budget preparation' should show 'assist in budget preparation' because that is more of what that position does. Toot said the wording can be switched to assist, but the position does prepare the final book. More was said about the wording and punctuation to make it more in line with what the position description should say. Mary Jo inquired about how the process works - does the committee approve the description and then is it sent to Carlson Dettmann and then they determine what the recommendation is? Don Hill replied that was true and that the County Board would then vote on the recommendation by Carlson Dettmann. Hammer said the purpose of this committee is to go over these things before because they have to pay every time they send something to Carlson Dettmann. They want to make sure they don't have to do it again. Kaiser mentioned that it was trying to introduce transparency. In the past, Department Heads would send these straight to Carlson Dettmann so it was hard to know if the position descriptions were completely in line with what the position entails. Instead of putting money on a scale, Department Heads started to do that and it wasn't always completely accurate. Toot

asked if when the Committee was created, was there a mission statement created? Was there anything defined as far as the role of the Committee? Kaiser said it was created by the County Board and it was to go over policies to make recommendations. Laura Edmonds said she didn't like the 'monthly updating and tracking' description portion because she wasn't sure that 'tracking' was appropriate. She isn't sure what is being tracked besides the numbers of how many documents come through. Hammer said she has an issue with the 'monthly updating of cash balance reports'. Kaiser said this was something the Administrator did to project possible recessions in the coming years and that this position is not doing that. So, real estate transfer declarations are hers, cash balance reports are the treasurer's, building permits are Eric's, water septic reports are the Health Department. If everyone tells the Administrative Assistant what the numbers are, even though they submit all that, the original intent was to project, and that is something that Dan did. If this position is going to do that, fine, but she doesn't think that's the case. Toot said someone needs to maintain the data. Even though the data isn't provided by them, the County Administrator's office maintains it. He said the Administrator Office verifies and re-verifies these things. Hammer said she'd be more comfortable wording it as 'tracks information from other County departments' so it's not showing the responsibility is in the Administrator's Office. They agreed to change it to 'tracks monthly information provided by other departments regarding real estate transfer declarations, cash balance reports, building permits, and water septic reports'. Edmonds asked what the 'Freedom of Information Act request recording' was. Kaiser replied that any office that has these requests and fulfills them, sends them to the Administrator's Office and they're all tracked and presented at the Executive Committee Meetings. Kaiser stated that as she looks at this, it is looking like the volume has increased, she doesn't see that this position has significantly changed in its responsibility. Toot said the new one clarifies the information. The old one is too vague and generic. This hasn't been updated since 2014. Hammer said she feels this should be done for the entire County. Kaiser asked Toot if the recommendation doesn't come back for a reclassification then what will he do then. Toot said he'd deal with that if that did happen at that time. He mentioned how other departments have had advance-step hires and this is the way he feels it needs to be done to get this position more money, by updating the description to more accurately describe the ins and outs of this position. Kathy Phillips spoke and said that she thinks money and the description change are two different things. She said that what they maybe feel the scale should be for money, is not an issue in the position description. She noted it's a grade 4 on the scale, which is lower than the cook, which we no longer have. She feels the wage should be higher, so she suggested to help Toot, because grade 4 for this position she thinks is ridiculous. Toot replied that a lot goes on, and the Administrator's Office has a high level of professionalism. There are a lot of things that other departments don't handle that the Administrator's Office does, and many departments send things they don't know what to do with, to that office. Hammer said that she thinks maybe the Committee should be a little more proactive in these descriptions because it seems like the only time a job description is looked at is when there is an opening. She asked if we should take on the responsibility or have the department heads look at all of the positions and see if they need to be updated – before the Compensation Study is done in the future. Kaiser stated that most job descriptions haven't changed. Hammer replied that we should be looking at these things prior to hiring somebody because we have all these complications and hoops to jump through to get a person hired at the rate. Kaiser said every time we put a Band-Aid on the scale it only makes it worse. She said maybe this is the time we either take it on at this committee level, or form another compensation committee to start addressing everything – especially the scale itself. She isn't saying that this particular one is inappropriate. She doesn't feel anyone should be a scale 4 working for \$12.00 an hour. Things are stretched way out of proportion here, and that's what we have to address. Not one person at a time, just because one Department Head is willing to come and ask for it. Hill said that today

the item is on the classification; we don't have anything else on the Agenda, but if we want to make a future meeting that discusses that, we can do that. Kaiser recommended that the Committee table this idea for the time being. Hill reminded her that there is already a motion on the floor. John Lang had a question on the motion that is out there. Hill asked him if he still had the same motion with these changes. Lang said yes. The changes to the position description all mentioned before were reiterated by Toot. Hill asked Bill Bingham if he was fine with his second on the motion after changes were made. Bingham said yes. Toot again read the policy for the Personnel Review Committee. Everyone read and went over Mary's request in the packet. Her concern was that all of the other Administrative Assistant positions on the scale were classed at a Grade 6 and this one was classed at a Grade 4. Hammer said to her it seems Mary was requesting it be moved to a Grade 6 like the others. Scott said that would ultimately be the decision of Carlson Dettmann. Don Hill said he's sure they could suggest, but they don't have to go for any suggestions the Department Head makes. Don Hill called for the vote.

5. Committee Member Comments/Concerns

Hammer made a request for an additional meeting to discuss job descriptions of all positions and the pay scale. Don Hill said that next time that will be on the Agenda. Hammer said she wants to make sure the job descriptions are all available and all are looked at, and if a Department Head feels there needs to be changes made, then they make the changes. If at that time there are changes made, if felt, the Department Head can request a reclassification. She feels the Department Heads have the responsibility to look at those descriptions in their office. Kaiser's concern is that each Department Head is going to believe that either they're appropriate or they should be higher. When you have a committee looking at it all, you're going to have discourse. But if you just put it at the Department Head level, there's a potential of making this worse instead of better. She feels when it comes to everyone looking at the grades and where they need to be, that should be what the Personnel Committee is for. There was some more talk on general job descriptions and how they should all be made available as public knowledge. Laura Edmonds said she also believes nobody should be working for \$12.48/hour and that something needs to be done with this. Kaiser said the reclassifications have made the scale very skewed. Many people believe it's unfair. Toot said he read through old minutes of this Committee and what has happened to this scale, is that market analysis and updating was never done by Carlson Dettmann. He said it has been discussed multiple times and his analysis of the situation is that the root of this entire problem is the lack of the market analysis done. Kaiser stated that other than them removing Steps 1 and 2 a couple of years ago, there have been no other changes in the scale in at least 11 years, so it's no wonder that when the County Board didn't put money on the scale, Department Heads looked for other ways to get their employees more money. Toot mentioned that there were a lot of things that needed to be brought up at the next meeting. Hammer wants everything to be looked at as a whole. We've been looking at this and talking about it for a long time and we keep dragging our feet. Don Hill disagreed some, saying that the County Board has been trying to change things, but have been looking at and assessing things. Kaiser said that she is thankful for everything they do, but the sitting Board right now is faced with the inaction of the last 10 years. Hill stated that pretty soon, the minimum wage will be \$15.00/hour, so this will need to be addressed, because on one page of the pay scale, there are only two jobs that are Steps 1-5 that are over that \$15.00/hour. Steve Keeffer spoke, and said he feels that the Committee should have a meeting sooner than later because he's concerned about doing a lot of preliminary work with all of this and that we shouldn't be working on a lot of the job descriptions until we know which path we want to take with Carlson Dettmann. Hammer asked if he had a suggestion on where to start. Keeffer said maybe in a few weeks once the Budget process is over and we have to digest what took place today. Kaiser said that we need

to be authorized by the County Board to do it. She said that reviewing the job descriptions at the Committee level would be okay, but everything else would need to come by the Board. It's already policy. Don Hill said a major concern of his would be the wages and he agrees things need to be looked at. Kaiser said there are two separate things we're talking about - the steps/scale, which is the money, but we're also talking about the grades and that is where the job descriptions come in. Prior to a couple years ago, the grades were somewhat in line. Some are skewed out of place. The grades need to come first – then the scale with the money next. Nicole Hermesen spoke up and said she agreed with a lot of the things that had been mentioned today, but the periodic review or classifications is important. Kaiser said that it's only natural to look at things closer to your department as possibly needing more, so she feels that a third party is more than likely going to be the best option. She doesn't know if we can do it in-house, but we can try. Hill said we will discuss that at the next Personnel Review Committee Meeting and decide if we can do it or need the third party.

6. **Establish future meeting date** – The next meeting date is to be determined.
7. **Citizens' Comments** – None.
8. **Adjourn**
Melisa Hammer made a motion to adjourn at 2:38 p.m., seconded by Angie Kaiser; roll call motion passed 10 ayes, 0 nays.