

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Personnel Review Committee
CHAIRPERSON: LaDon Trost
DATE/TIME: December 29, 2022 @ 10:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

☒ Tina Brandel	☒ Nicole Hermesen	☐ Craig Ketelsen
☒ Steve Endress	☒ Melisa Hammer	☒ Angie Kaiser
☒ John Lang	☒ Steve Keeffer	☒ Kathy Phillips
☒ LaDon Trost	☐ Vacant	☒ Laura Edmonds
☒ Scott Toot	☒ Joe Kratcha	☐ Vacant

Others:

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

1. Approval of Minutes –

- a) Minutes of the September 25, 2020 Personnel Review Committee meeting. **John Lang made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2020 Personnel Review Committee meeting. Seconded by Tina Brandel and motion carried following a voice vote.**
- b) Minutes of the May 20, 2021 Personnel Review Committee meeting. **Angie Kaiser made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2021 Personnel Review Committee meeting. Seconded by Laura Edmonds and motion carried following a voice vote.**

2. Citizens' Comments – None.

3. Unfinished Business – None.

4. New Business -

- a) Discussion and possible action regarding promoting IT Technician to IT Manager position Joe Kratcha, Director of IT/GIS, would like to promote Ryan Afflerbaugh. Afflerbaugh is now doing the same type of work as Zach Schieltz in the back end of IT, and he wants to get him up to where he needs to be. Within the first 30-45 days of his employment start back in 2021, Kratcha said he could tell that Afflerbaugh was very talented and he was a really good fit. He started working on more of the back-end type of projects and he took those in stride. Kratcha described many examples of why Afflerbaugh is deserving of this promotion. He explained that the County Board did approve the salary for this position in the 2023 Budget, anticipating for this promotion. Kratcha said at the time, he is not looking to fill the IT Technician position that Afflerbaugh will be promoted from. The Committee wanted to confirm that Afflerbaugh had the educational requirements as stated in the Position Description, which Kratcha confirmed. **John Lang made a motion to promote Ryan Afflerbaugh the IT Manager Position with a salary of \$58,087.00, with retroactive pay to December 1, 2022. Seconded by Melisa Hammer and motion passed following a voice vote resulting in all Ayes.**
- b) Compensation Study Update – Discussion and possible action Trost started out by explaining that he hasn't been impressed with the Archer Company's work they've done thus far for the County. He spoke about his past employment and how the company he worked for figured up raises for each Fiscal Year. Trost believes that each Department Head should be responsible for the figuring up and administering of raises for their employees, and not the County Board. He said that it shouldn't be up to the County Board to give permission and each employee a raise. Each Department Head knows their

employees and knows who is and isn't deserving of raises each year. Hammer agreed with Trost and said this is something she has been saying for years. Department Heads are the ones who work with the employees in their offices, and know them and their work ethic best. They know what the job actually is and what it requires. Hermsen said the 5% raises that were given out this year as a 'blanket', she did not agree with. She stated that she has some underperformers and it reinforces their lack of work ethic when a raise like this is given, and also sends a very negative message to her employees that work above and beyond to get the same amount as the employees who do not as hard. Edmonds stated that she also agrees, but that the 5% was to get everyone up to where they need to be, and then the new compensation plan will take over in the future. She said then it is up to the Department Head whether they want to give the employee a full raise or only a partial raise because of their review and performance. She believes it's a good guideline because it gives us a foundation for the review process, but also said that we need a salary range to go off of for these positions. Lang said he remembers years ago when departments got a lot of money when they were politically connected, and some got barely anything to cover employee costs. Kaiser said she agrees with everyone that has spoken today on this, but doesn't think that's the case today. She said the Sheriff has the biggest budget because he has the most employees. We have to have the jobs' starting wages. From the starting wage on, she believes the department head should be determining what their employees make. She said she has problems with the positioning on this new plan and that it also needs to be a starting point that everyone is comfortable with. She said the plan with Carlson-Dettmann got so stretched out of bounds because there wasn't enough money in it. People starting changing job descriptions to get people more money. She said the old plan had Department Heads all at a Grade 12. With this new plan, those same people range from a 10 to an 18. She thinks we have to figure out what that initial grading is going to be and then the County Board could decide what the starting wage is. Hammer said she thought our purpose for hiring Archer was to get a market analysis and then it would set up our grades and levels and we go from there. She doesn't feel that is what they did. Hammer feels they haven't met their RFP or anywhere near what their contract states. We have to send everything back to them or just tell them to forget it. Before we can move forward and do anything, we have to figure out how we're going to do it. They didn't even start with job descriptions. Toot stated that he didn't even know he was going to do job descriptions. When Toot and Battigaglia spoke on the phone the other day, he said he hadn't even seen the contract and didn't sign it, so he didn't know what he was supposed to be doing. That is a major problem. Kaiser said that is the biggest issue here. They took all the info from us that we already had. They just slapped 3% on every starting wage. The Committee continued to discuss the matter at hand. John Lang stated that it sounds like we made a mistake, and we should possibly just cut our losses and find another firm. Maybe we can give them a small settlement amount and close this door. Kaiser said the market analysis that should've been done was supposed to be based on what their jobs entail. This market mid-point could've been taken right off the UCCI salary survey. They have not done an analysis of these jobs. They were supposed to look at each job, do an analysis on it, and from there we were supposed to have the market analysis study. We didn't get that. Hermsen stated that her position wasn't on the study and that several of her positions weren't included. Hammer said she feels we need to get the opinion of our State's Attorney on that contract that we have with Archer, what they've provided, the RFP, and have them legally look at what they're supposed to be giving us, and we should discuss with Archer whether they are or are not, and decide whether to continue services or not with them. Kaiser stated that we have a lot of really smart people running our departments and we are all always going to feel that our departments are going above and beyond, but we need to put that aside and do

what is best for the County. She said she agreed with half of what Lang said and that we need to cut our losses and end this contract with Archer, but that she doesn't believe going out to another firm is going to solve the problem and give us an answer. We just have to grade these positions and with the County Board approval, come up with a starting wage. Then we could do what LaDon said and each Department Head can use their discretion on what they want to give each of their employees for raises. Trost agreed and said that he doesn't think everything that Archer provided us is useless, but this analysis is not useful, in his opinion. He has always fought for good, fair and equitable wages for employees. Some of this analysis is totally out of line and doesn't make any sense to him. He welcomed some comments from other members of the Committee. Keeffer said he also agrees that Archer, and Carlson-Dettmann for that matter, he is not a fan of. He thinks we should just cut our losses and scrap the whole Archer plan. At one point, he said they had a system where they'd give out a standard Cost of Living increase, and then a merit on top of that. There was a method to it, and he believes an annual Cost of Living increase would definitely help and we should consider that. He also feels giving the Department Heads some discretion with financial constraints would be beneficial. He said we do need to establish some sort of baseline. Where these positions should be at when we need to fill them. Keeffer said we're all capable of working together as a group and we don't need to hire an outside firm. Phillips said she agrees that we are best at being able to judge an increase for our employees and not just a blanket amount. Kratcha said he echoes what several others have already said. He doesn't think that Archer lived up to the agreement that was signed. The end products they delivered have been sub-par at best. It's best to walk away from it if we can. We know our departments and our positions the best and should be able to find comparables with other entities in the area. Toot said that one of the problems Kaiser had emphasized to him, was that fact that money wasn't added onto the scale in 2015 by Carlson-Dettmann, and in his opinion, that's when the root of everything had started, was with that. Kaiser said we as Department Heads need to figure out where this scale is deficient with the Grades, and find out where this scale should be graded. She thinks that in a group setting, the Committee needs to look at all of these positions and reassess what they are and where they're at on the scale in regards to the Grade they're set at. Some might be possibly higher or lower than they once were. Once the grading is done, we can work on the starting wage. Maybe some of the information we have here will help with that. Some things look to be somewhat leveled, but a lot of the information doesn't consider a lot of things like education requirements. It's whether or not Department Heads are willing. Hammer wanted to state that for many of the Department Heads that have been there for years, prior to Carlson-Dettmann, it was somewhat set up that they would determine these things, and it worked that way for years. There was a starting wage, and from there, it was up to the Department Head, until Carlson-Dettmann came along. Trost said his suggestion gives Department Heads more authority. Hammer said we must start with the Job Descriptions. Each department head does their Job Descriptions for this committee, and we will all go through them and agree on them. It's up to us to do that. Some may have an agenda and some may make the job look better than it is. By having to answer to our peers on this Committee, it would be much fairer. Trost said that we've heard from everyone here and he is speaking for the County Board. He asked what they felt. Endress said he isn't in favor of either one of them and that it's funny that we would pay money for another company to do these when the cost of what we're paying could be used to pay more to the employees. He said the \$20,000 this is costing the County could be put toward the employees and that the Department Heads know what their employees do better than anyone. Lang said from his experience, sometimes you need some professional guidance to get help on these things. He liked the fact that there was some sort of guidepost

and we need some sort of framework to work in. Archer is going to be all electronic back and forth, and we need someone to come in the room and sit down with us and do hands-on type of things. Toot mentioned that Phillips had asked Jim from Archer if he was going to come here and see for himself what the employees here do, and maybe follow them around, and he told her no. He had no intention to come here and sit for a day. Edmonds said she doesn't feel that a person could comprehend everything we do here in only a day. It's a good idea, but they still don't understand the Job Description. Brandel said she agrees with a little bit of what everyone has said here today. She said that she wasn't in the picture for the Archer contract and she's getting caught up on it, but legal should be contacted on the job Archer has done and she believes they're in breach of contract. She also agrees the Department Heads should have more say on what their employees get, and the Job Descriptions for the positions within their department. Without knowing anything, the numbers in the analysis mean nothing. It's basically garbage that they gave us. She reiterated what everyone else agreed on, that the Department Heads should have a say in this process. Lang feels that sometimes percentages are unfair. For someone making \$10.00 per hour, their raise based on a percentage is going to be tremendously less than someone that makes \$70,000 a year. He believes that whole dollar amounts make more of a difference. Toot gave an example of a prior job he held. He made \$6.50 per hour and the employer gave out 3% raises that year. The Executive Director made \$132,000 per year. He said he was not happy when he figured up what that meant for himself. Hermesen said that she agrees Department Heads should have that authority, but Transit has a larger budget and more money than other departments, so she could give all of her people 5% or 10 %, but she would not do that. There should be parameters and some sort of justification. She said that another thing she feels should be looked at are the employees that are Non-Exempt that maybe should be Exempt, in regards to overtime and looking at the total of what they make salary-wise. Transit has some employees that that affects greatly. Kaiser replied that if Hermesen was talking about the position she thought she was speaking about, it was supposed to be Exempt. Because of the propensity of this particular person to work overtime, they wanted to be able to give that person overtime – but, it was supposed to be exempt. Anybody in a supervisory position should be Exempt. You're more so going to get in trouble for having an Exempt employee that shouldn't be, as opposed to having someone Non-Exempt. Hermesen said that she is Exempt, and her job is 24/7, and she is constantly working, but she doesn't have an issue with that and she's used to being salaried. With some employees that have never been Exempt, there is a lot of pushback if they need to be on call and having to evaluate that. She knows that will come up with her team down the road. Edmonds asked what our next step is and if we should start doing the Job Descriptions. Toot said the first step would be to talk to Chris, the State's Attorney. Trost said the first thing we need to do in January, is make sure the Board is agreeable to this procedure and go from there. He has a good idea that the Board will honor this. He suggests that Department Heads start to work on Job Descriptions and we bring those forward once we know what the County Board decides. Lang said it would more than likely start with the Executive Committee and this go to the next agenda this coming Tuesday. **Melisa Hammer made a motion to have the State's Attorney review the Archer Company RFP and contract reviewed by our State's Attorney and to get legal advice on the fulfillment of the contract. Seconded by Tina Brandel and motion carried following a roll call vote resulting in all ayes. Ayes: 12 Nays: 0 Absent: 1**

Hammer asked if we need to make a motion to push forward to the Executive Committee that the Department Heads start working on the Position Description. The Committee decided that the Executive Committee will make the motion since LaDon will be mentioning it to the Committee.

5. **Committee Member Comments/Concerns** – None.
6. **Establish future meeting date** – Friday, January 27th, 2023 at 9 a.m.
7. **Citizens' Comments** – None.
8. **Adjournment** -
Laura Edmonds made a motion to adjourn at 11:10 a.m., seconded by Nicole Hermesen;
roll call motion passed 12 ayes, 0 nays.