

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Finance Committee

The Finance Committee of the McLean County Board met in a Special Meeting at 8:40 a.m. on Tuesday, August 20, 2002, in Room 703, Law and Justice Center, 104 West Front Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Sorensen, Members Berglund, Renner, Arnold, Kinzinger and Rodman

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator; Mr. Terry Lindberg, Assistant County Administrator; Ms. Lucretia A. Wherry, Administrator's Office

Department Heads/
Elected Officials

Present: Sheriff David Owens

Chairman Sorensen called the meeting to order at 8:41 a.m. Chairman Sorensen advised that the Committee needs to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters.

Motion by Renner/Rodman to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters. The following staff members are to remain present during the Executive Session: Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator; Mr. Terry Lindberg, Assistant County Administrator; Ms. Lucretia Wherry, County Administrator Office. Motion carried.

The Committee went into Executive Session at 8:42 a.m.

The Committee returned to Open Session at 8:45 a.m.

Motion by Arnold/Rodman to recommend approval of the proposed contract agreement for consulting services between Mr. Sammy Ferrara and McLean County, on behalf of the Veteran's Assistance Commission. Motion carried.

Chairman Sorensen advised the Committee that the next item for consideration is a request from the Sheriff's Department to hire a replacement Correctional Officer. Sheriff Owens informed the Committee that there are a number of open Correctional Officer positions due to approved leaves for active military duty, FMLA leave, administrative leave and budgetary concerns. In addition, the Sheriff's Department has received a letter of resignation effective August 29, 2002.

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Sheriff Owens advised the Committee that there are six open positions. There are two open positions on the 7:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. shift due to a resignation and an officer on Administrative Leave. The 3:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. shift has two open positions due to a resignation and an officer in the Army Reserves. The 11:00 p.m.-7:00 a.m. shift has an officer on light duty, who will be going on FMLA for an undetermined amount of time. The sixth open position is due to the resignation effective August 29, 2002.

This staffing is causing correctional officers to work at least one double shift or more per week. The average daily jail population continues to remain high. The number of open positions is causing additional stress for the staff. The Department is hopeful that the officer in the Army Reserves and the officer going on FMLA will return in the fall. The Department would like to begin training the replacement officer so that the staff shortages can be alleviated as soon as possible. However, it takes 4 to 5 months to fully train a new officer.

Mr. Rodman asked if working double shifts poses a safety issue for the staff. Sheriff Owens replied that working double shifts could cause safety problems.

Sheriff Owens stated that it is hard to fill the Correctional Officer positions. Last fall, the Department was short eight Correctional Officers. The positions are hard to fill because many applicants cannot pass the polygraph test. One applicant was arrested because an outstanding out of state warrant was discovered during the background check.

Mr. Arnold noted that deputies were manning the security screening in the lobby. He suggested that the County hire retired law enforcement personnel for security screening so that the deputies could be assigned elsewhere. Sheriff Owens explained that those deputies are assigned to Court Security and their primary responsibility is security on the court floors and the movement of inmates to and from the courtrooms. There are seven deputies assigned to Court Security for twelve courtrooms. Since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the deputies are also assigned to the lobby security screening post in the morning and over the lunch hour. Ms. Berglund noted that the deputies are not always at the lobby security screening post when she arrives at the Law and Justice Center.

Sheriff Owens stated that the Department is not looking to add an additional position to the budget, but to fill an existing budgeted position.

Motion by Renner/Berglund to recommend approval to the Executive Committee of the request received from the Sheriff's Department to fill an existing Correctional Officer position. Motion carried.

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There being nothing further to come before the Committee at this time, Chairman Sorensen adjourned the meeting at 8:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucretia A. Wherry
Recording Secretary

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