

Minutes of Meeting
Merit Raise Allocations
October 29, 2013
3:00 p.m.

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Todd Tondee, Commissioner Dan Green and Commissioner Jai Nelson met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were Finance Director David McDowell, Chief Deputy Clerk Pat Raffee, Human Resources Director Skye Reynolds, and Deputy Clerk Nancy Jones.

A. Call to Order: Chairman Tondee called the meeting to order at 3:09 p.m.

B. Introductions: There were no introductions made.

C. Changes to the Agenda: There were no changes made to the agenda.

D. Old Business: There was no old business discussed.

E. New Business:

Finance Director David McDowell presented the Board with the Schedule of Wage Adjustment Funds Report for Fiscal Year (FY) 2014, including the average, County-wide hourly wage amount and fund allocations (which were categorized by both department and by Elected Official). Mr. McDowell explained how the merit pool totals were calculated and answered questions about funding allocations for the Kootenai County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) matrix. The group discussed the unique aspects of the KCSO matrix (including the percentage of staff who are at the top of their pay scale), and Chief Deputy Clerk Pat Raffee noted that KCSO wage adjustments are correlated with employee hire dates, not in accordance with the fiscal year. Separate totals were provided for the Solid Waste department, due to the fact that it is an Enterprise Fund.

The Board asked specific questions regarding the distribution of KCSO bonuses and wage adjustments, options for addressing pay scale compression issues, and considerations for establishing a long-term County pay philosophy. Human Resources Director Skye Reynolds stressed the importance of crafting an enduring cost model for wages, which not only address compression but also help maintain market value wages within the County. Ms. Raffee suggested that a portion of the FY2014 merit pool could be delineated for wage adjustments for tenured employees who will not be eligible for pay scale adjustments, and that this could be accomplished without impacting the FY2015 budget. Mr. McDowell and Ms. Reynolds explained how compa-ratio calculations could be used to address pay scale compression concerns. Ms. Raffee asked that the Board consider ways to continue incorporating bonus allowances into their pay philosophy, stating that they are a particularly effective way to acknowledge employee efforts and boost morale. Chairman Tondee expressed support for allowing bonus pool allotments; however, he shared that he would not support the use of recaptured 'A' budget funds for that purpose. Commissioner Green agreed with this assessment. The Board noted and commended the Clerk's Division practice of reserving bonus funds for disbursement throughout the fiscal year.

Chairman Tondee noted that the pay scale and wage adjustments that are being implemented are meant to serve as the first step of an extended process to ensure competitive wages and, ultimately, to encourage employee retention. The attendees agreed that this goal should be shared with the employees, and Ms. Reynolds agreed to draft a memorandum that could be distributed in December, when the wage adjustments go into effect.

Mr. McDowell inquired how the allotted one percent (1%) pool for KCSO adjustments should be reflected within the final report, suggesting that the Sheriff's opinion should be sought before making a final determination on the distribution of funds. The Board agreed with this assessment. The attendees went on to discuss creation of a separate fund for Department Head wage increases. Further, the Board agreed that the final report should be presented to the Elected Officials, in order to provide a forum for questions and information to be shared before they submit their bonus allocation requests.

Mr. McDowell stated that the final report would be ready by Friday, November 1, 2013. The Board agreed to provide staff direction to schedule a presentation meeting with the Elected Officials.

- F. Staff Reports:** There were no staff reports.
- G. Public Comment:** This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

CLIFFORD T. HAYES, CLERK

BY: _____
Nancy A. Jones, Deputy Clerk