

**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Elected Officials Meeting**  
**April 15, 2015**  
**9:00 a.m.**

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman David Stewart, Commissioner Dan Green and Commissioner Marc Eberlein met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were Chief Deputy Prosecutor Barry Black, Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Darrin Murphey, Treasurer Steve Matheson, Chief Deputy Treasurer Laurie Thomas, Clerk Jim Brannon, Chief Deputy Clerk Pat Raffee, Assessor Mike McDowell, Chief Deputy Assessor Richard Houser, Undersheriff Daniel Mattos, Human Resources Director Skye Reynolds, Information Systems Director James Martin, Network Administrator Grant Kinsey and Application Systems Manager Matt Snow, and Deputy Clerk Meshell Missler.

- A. **Call to Order:** Chairman David Stewart called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.
- B. **Changes to the Agenda:** There were no changes made to the agenda.
- C. **New Business:**

**Proposal for Managed Print Services**

Information Systems Network Administrator Grant Kinsey gave a power point presentation on some managed print services research. Mr. Kinsey said he had contacted multiple vendors and found alternatives to the current County contract which is ending soon, which could save the County \$30,000 every year. He recommended a new managed service contract with Hewlett Packard (HP) that will service all the laser printers throughout the County.

County Coroner Warren Keene joined the meeting at 9:09 a.m.

Mr. Kinsey said benefits of the new contract will be separate department billings and premium OEM toner. He also reminded the elected officials that the Reprographics department will print 250,000 black and white pages per month for free and encouraged each department to utilize this benefit.

**“At Will” vs. “For Cause” Discussion**

Human Resources Director Skye Reynolds presented two sample policies concerning “At Will” and “For Cause” employment. She said currently most of the County has an “At Will” policy, except for the Sheriff’s Office and the Treasurer; and that there have been some discussions about the entire County changing back to a “For Cause” policy. Ms. Reynolds said the samples she presented can be modified and she encouraged feedback from all the elected officials so she could draft a policy specifically meeting the elected official’s requests.

Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Darrin Murphey said the policy will need to be artfully drafted as the County has politically-appointed positions (e.g. all the Chief Deputies) so that wording will need to be carefully addressed. He said the “At Will” policy is the least liability for the County, and if the County adopts a “For Cause” policy, the managers and elected officials will need to follow all procedures and every one of the steps set forth in that policy, or risk liability.

Commissioner Green said his main concern is protecting the County from liability.

Clerk Jim Brannon asked why the County was considering changing policies at this time. Chairman Stewart said he had directed Ms. Reynolds to research the options, and that supports changing to a "For Cause" policy due to his concern about the County employee morale evident in the 2013 employee survey results. He said he has always treated his private sector employees as "For Cause".

Ms. Reynolds pointed out that "At Will" policies do not preclude employees being treated fairly, and that with fair treatment plus due process if any corrective action was needed, morale wasn't negatively impacted. Assessor Mike McDowell said he had not experienced any liability in the Assessor's office because he feels he has treated everyone fairly; coached employees, listened to grievances, documented if there was a problem and then taken corrective action when needed.

Undersheriff Daniel Mattos said the Sheriff's office supports the "For Cause" policy but he had experienced times where leadership had not followed the policy exactly, and he agreed that created liability.

Mr. Murphey said if the County adopts a "For Cause" policy the supervisors will need to follow the procedures set forth in the policy exactly, and that it does require more work. Ms. Reynolds said each elected official and manager will need training on how to follow the policy to the letter.

Commissioner Eberlein said the County holds a lot of liability already, and that any adopted policy must be adhered to.

Mr. Murphey said the Board of Commissioners can adopt a For Cause policy, but if they do, the elected officials need to agree for it to work properly.

Commissioner Green said there is no recourse to the elected official if his managers do not follow the policy; it is the Board of County Commissioners that carries all the liability.

Treasurer Steve Matheson inquired how many examples of lawsuit against counties in Idaho and what the typical or maximum payouts were for not following personnel policies exactly. Mr. Murphey described six figure payouts, up to one for \$4 million.

Chief Deputy Prosecutor Barry Black said when you add layers to a policy you are adding liability. He suggested finding standards that all the elected officials could agree on.

Commissioner Green said any time a policy states a process must be followed it creates liability. If the process is not followed exactly, the County is in trouble. He said a properly followed policy is the best defense.

Ms. Reynolds said she would like the County to display a core value of respect. Mr. McDowell said an "At Will" policy in place, while treating employees as if they were "For Cause" is best, because it ensures fair treatment.

Undersheriff Mattos said a "For Cause" policy may relieve some anxiety from those employees that have an elected official that is changing from year to year and may give some stability.

Chief Deputy Clerk Pat Raffee suggested redoing an employee survey to gain current feedback, because the group seemed to be trying to address a two-year-old problem. All attendees agreed that current information would be useful.

The elected officials were divided on this issue and the Board made no decision.

Chairman Stewart paused the meeting for a break at 10:49 a.m.

Chairman Stewart reopened the meeting at 10:58 a.m.

**Timesheet Uniformity**

Mr. Brannon said the County has 18 different timesheets and encouraged the use of one uniform timesheet and requested the timesheet be signed each employee and their manager.

**Internal Audit Presentation**

Mr. Brannon said Internal Audit is a service offered by the Auditor’s department, and that it allows a fresh perspective, offers suggestions and assesses the risk involved. Ms. Raffee described a previous Internal Audit, what circumstances triggered it, what the findings were, and the resulting increases to reimbursements and legally-mandated improvements. Mr. Brannon summarized how internal audits give process improvement ideas and reduce both expenses and liability. He briefly described some other audit examples and told attendees how to get more information.

**HR Conference Room Reminder**

Ms. Reynolds reminded attendees of a new conference room available in the HR department which holds 8 – 10 people and is available for anyone’s use upon reservation.

- D. Public Comment:** This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. Idaho Law prohibits Board action on items brought under this section except in an emergency circumstance. Comments related to future public hearings should be held for that public hearing. There were no public comments.

Chairman Stewart adjourned the meeting at 11:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

DAVID STEWART, CHAIRMAN

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Meshell Missler, Deputy Clerk

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