

**Minutes of Meeting
Elected Officials
September 23, 2015
9:00 a.m.**

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Dan Green, Commissioner Marc Eberlein, and Commissioner David Stewart met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were Clerk Jim Brannon, Chief Deputy Clerk Pat Raffee, Sheriff Ben Wolfinger, Assessor Mike McDowell, Chief Deputy Assessor Richard Houser, and Deputy Clerks Theresa Atchley and Alicia Lynch.

- A. **Call to Order:** Chairman Dan Green called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.
- B. **Introductions:** There were no introductions.
- C. **Changes to the Agenda:** There were no changes to the agenda.
- D. **New Business:**

Tuition Reimbursement Policy, Procedure, and Funding

Clerk Jim Brannon opened the tuition reimbursement discussion. He said each Elected Official had different requirements for tuition reimbursement. He added that he felt tuition reimbursement decisions properly rest with the Elected Official, not the BOCC.

Chairman Green explained that the tuition reimbursement was removed from the individual Elected Officials' budgets and placed in the BOCC budget a few years ago. He said the tuition reimbursement FY16 amount budgeted was \$12,000. Chairman Green said he supported employees improving skills needed for their job, but did not support the County paying for college degrees.

The group discussed the difference between continuing education as required for job specific certifications, such as GIS certification, and elective college courses. They discussed recovering costs after paying for classes for an employee who subsequently separates from the County.

Green said the current policy was fine, but the application of the policy needed to be reviewed.

Treasure Steve Matheson joined the meeting at 9:37 a.m.

Chief Deputy Clerk Pat Raffee stated that tuition reimbursement could be used as a recruitment tool, but if the BOCC made the final decisions regarding reimbursement, it could send a mixed message.

Commissioner Stewart said he supported returning tuition reimbursement to the individual Elected Official's budget and if an Elected Official had said they would reimburse tuition then the Board should follow through on the promise.

Commissioner Eberlein said he wanted data about how much the County had spent on tuition reimbursement and how many employees were interested in pursuing education. He said he preferred that the decision regarding tuition reimbursement be made by each Elected Official for their staff.

Sheriff Wolfinger said if the Board was considering a change in how the tuition reimbursement would be budgeted for FY2017, he wanted to know in January 2016 so that he would have time to determine how it could affect the KCSO budget.

Ms. Raffee said the Clerk's office currently had openings and were interviewing applicants and she wanted to be clear about how the policy was described in order to keep potential employees' expectations in line with what the County could deliver. She summarized the Board's philosophy to share with potential new hires by stating that the County does support professional growth, that it does have a tuition reimbursement policy, although the policy was not likely to apply to all of the classes required for a degree. The Board agreed that this was an accurate re-statement.

The Board determined that they wanted more data to make a decision about how the policy would be applied and requested emails from Elected Officials on the topic.

Internal Control Survey Responses

Ms. Raffee reported the Internal Audit Team was pleased with the survey response rate of 92% and she thanked the Elected Officials for encouraging their staff to participate. She said each Elected Official would receive detailed response information next month. Clerk Brannon reminded the group that this survey was an important risk assessment tool.

Chairman Green shared information from Marc Stewart regarding Sponsored Content in the *Coeur d'Alene Press*.

- E. 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 Green adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

DANIEL H. GREEN, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Theresa Atchley, Deputy Clerk
