

## PA Update

January 21, 2020

2:03 p.m.

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Fund, Commissioner Jackson, County Manager Erik Martin, Jonathan Meyer, Eric Eisenberg, Kevin McDowell, Steve Wohld, Cullen Gatten, Shane O'Rourke, Janelle Kambich, Natalie Dunlap, Becky Butler, Daleyn Coleman, Steve Walton, Will Halstead

Guest: Dr. Lindsey Pollock

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Jonathan Meyer said 33 employees have left since he took office. He outlined the following reasons for their departures:

- 18 left for money, 13 of whom were attorneys in his office
- 3 retired
- 1 passed away
- 7 were terminated or resigned
- 4 left for other reasons

Shane O'Rourke said he left in 2013 after six years with Lewis County. Shane said his starting wage was \$50,000 and he was at \$65,000 when he left six years later. Shane discussed the union negotiation process as well as his own requests for additional compensation.

Jonathan said roughly all but three of the prosecutors still have student debt. He said there is a federal loan forgiveness program that requires a 10-year commitment to public service.

Jonathan renewed his request for a review of the salary grid.

Jonathan said the attorneys' representatives have not received a response to their counteroffer. Erik Martin said the BOCC has given HR direction about negotiations and that HR would be presenting it to the union in a future meeting.

Erik said the BOCC has directed him to review the salary grid. He said he would seek outside help and that the study likely would be complete by summer 2020.

Will Halstead and Shane left at 2:24 p.m.

Jonathan discussed staffing.

Eric Eisenberg discussed the Civil department's ability to respond to recent organizational changes.

Eric said he is continuing to reach out to neighboring tribes, fire chiefs, etc., to gauge their thoughts on including burn ban language in a potential fireworks ordinance.

Eric said he has drafted a WSU contract that includes language about a transition period. The commissioners approved the draft for presentation during their Jan. 29 meeting with WSU.

Eric said Water / Sewer District 5 has a special meeting Jan. 9 and tentatively approved the county's takeover offer. Eric said the district has paid its bill to Water District 2.

Erik discussed privately-owned land included in the Water District 5 takeover.

Eric said Amber fielded a call from someone possibly interested in serving on the Dikage Drainage District 1 (Davis Lake) board.

Steve Wohld left at 2:46 p.m.

Kevin McDowell discussed the new Paid Family Medical Leave under state law. He said one option is that the employer may designate accrued leave balances as "supplemental." He said the benefits default to not being supplemental.

Kevin outlined possible pros and cons of designating accrued leave balances as supplemental:

- May save the county money for higher-wage employees
- Employees may draw down sick leave less rapidly

Kevin discussed how other counties are responding, noting that most are not designating the accrued leave as supplemental.

Commissioner Jackson left at 2:55 p.m.

Daleyn Coleman said employees will have the option to apply for benefits or use their compensable time.

Commissioner Jackson returned at 2:57 p.m.

Daleyn said the state benefits must be accessed in full-day increments.

Jonathan said his concern is that higher-earning employees would be capped at \$1,000 per week.

Kevin said the determination to designate the balances as supplemental can be done at any time. He said it may be something to discuss during the next round of union negotiations.

Cullen Gatten said the PA's Office recommends that the county not allow back a WSU volunteer who had been under investigation.

Commissioner Stamper said the State Auditor's Office has contacted the BOCC about an audit of Cemetery District 5.

At 3:08 p.m., Commissioner Stamper announced that the Board was going into Executive Session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) for 5 minutes to discuss pending or potential litigation related to the Hampton Lumber Mills lawsuit.

At 3:13 p.m., the Board extended Executive Session for 5 minutes.

At 3:18 p.m., the Board extended Executive Session for 2 minutes.

Executive Session ended at 3:20 p.m. Commissioner Stamper noted that no decisions had been made.

Commissioner Fund made a motion to delegate the county manager to be involved in the process regarding the Hampton Lumber Mills tax lawsuit.

Commissioner Jackson seconded.

Motion passed 3-0.

Meeting ended at 3:25 p.m.