

LRES (LABOR RELATIONS & EMPLOYEE SERVICES) COMMITTEE MINUTES
County Board Room, Oneida County Courthouse
June 10, 2020, 9:30 a.m.

LRES COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Ted Cushing/Chairman, Billy Fried/Vice-Chairman, Dave Hintz, and Sonny Paszak

LRES COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Scott Holewinski

ALSO PRESENT: Lisa Charbarneau, Jenni Lueneburg (LRES); Darcy Smith (Finance); Michael Schiek (District Attorney); Luann Brunette (Buildings & Grounds); Dan Hess, Terry Hook, Jill Butzlaff (Sheriff's Office); Bob Mott (County Board); Art Lersch (UW-Extension); Bill Freudenberg (public)

PRESENT VIA PHONE: Brian Desmond (Corporation Counsel)

CALL TO ORDER AND CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Cushing called the LRES Committee to order at 9:30 a.m. in the County Board Room of the Oneida County Courthouse. The meeting has been properly posted in accordance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Fried to approve the agenda for today's meeting. Second by Paszak. All Committee members present voting 'Aye'. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Fried to approve the minutes of March 12, May 21 and May 27. Second by Paszak. All Committee members present voting 'Aye'. Motion carried.

UW EXTENSION CONTRACT

Charbarneau discussed the UW-Extension contract due for renewal. Fried discussed his concerns with the upcoming budget year, given reduced revenues, and the need to consider cuts to expenses and programs in order to balance the budget. Fried feels that even though UW-Extension's move to Nicolet College is on hold, the Committee still needs to review the contract for the coming year. UW Extension Director Art Lersch notes that the move to Nicolet College is contingent on the campus reopening. Fried inquired and Lersch confirmed that a 60-day notice must be given prior to ending the UW-Extension contract with Oneida County. Lersch confirms that certain staff have been furloughed during the COVID-19 closures, and other staff have worked from home when possible. Currently staff are set to work from home through the end of June, but the plan for July on forward is uncertain. Lersch discussed being the Director for Area 3 and Interim Director for Area 4, which includes Oneida County. UW-Extension will be moving forward soon on hiring a new Director for Area 4. Smith states that no contract changes have occurred locally, even with the LTE position being furloughed. Fried inquired if the contract is still being paid during closures; Lersch states Oneida County will be credited for the closure months. Cushing states that the economy has taken a big hit during the COVID-19 crisis but Cushing doesn't want to have a "sky is falling" attitude at this time until more is known since it is very bad for moral. Mott discussed the need for the county to access all programs in determining what is best for the county, and not just cut programs low on the efficiency study. Mott realizes that about \$600,000 will need to be found in the 2021 budget, and asks that the County Board not grab low hanging fruit but rather consider what is best for the citizens of Oneida County. Fried feels there is a lot of uncertainty with the UW-Extension programs and this is the time to look at the future of UW-Extension in Oneida County before any further contracts are signed and any moves take place. Further discussion held. Mott feels that the move to Nicolet College has been reviewed extensively and will be advantageous for all involved. Discussion held on

UW EXTENSION CONTRACT (continued)

UW-Extension programs starting in the Three Lakes area. Lersch also feels that UW-Extension services are going to be even more in demand once the COVID-19 crisis slows down, especially for mental health and youth programs. Lersch provided a handout of UW-Extension programs in place during the COVID-19 closures. Fried asked if all programs listed are actively running; Lersch stated no. Fried feels the Committee needs to decide what to do moving forward or wait until the contract expires in the fall. Paszak voiced his opinion on the importance of UW-Extension programs for the community. Cushing feels if this list provided covers all the UW-Extension programs, then the list should be forwarded to Administration Committee and meetings should be held before budget hearings to access if the programs are needed in Oneida County, and if the contract can be afforded moving forward. Committee agrees.

CREATE FULLTIME VICTIM WITNESS COORDINATOR POSITION/MARCY'S LAW

Charbarneau says this request came before Administration Committee on Monday and some changes were made to the original proposed resolution, including removing the office having an additional full-time Victim Witness Coordinator and adding wording regarding the required services. Schiek discussed the new Marcy's Law which requires additional support for victims and witnesses. Currently his office has an employee completing the Victim Witness Coordinator duties about 40% of their time. He is requesting an additional position to fill the remaining added duties. Based on 2019 state funding, 47% of the current position was funded and the same funding is estimated for 2020. Schiek says based on discussions with Finance, he is reducing his request to add a 60% Victim Witness Coordinator position. Schiek provided further information on the job duties and gave examples of court cases where extra support to victims and witnesses would be very important. Schiek and the judges would like to see one additional full-time position dedicated to the duties, but if the Committee feels that sharing the duties between two positions is best, he is willing to try it. Charbarneau notes that this additional position would be social worker based and feels it would be nice to share this position with Social Services but there may be a conflict of interest if this is done. Discussion held regarding the wage difference between the current 40% position and the proposed 60% position; Charbarneau says the 60% position will be serving in a Social Worker capacity whereas the 40% current position would serve as the administrative support function of the position. Discussion held on the actions taken thus far regarding getting the request approved. Fried feels the request is not fine-tuned and hasn't been finalized by the COJ yet, therefore he asked if approving the position can wait. Schiek says the law went into effect on May 5th, and he feels it is important to get the position hired as soon as possible. Schiek noted that Oneida County has the lowest ratio of Victim Witness Coordinators to attorneys of any county in the state and feels this request is appropriate. Cushing feels the Committee should move forward on hiring the 60% position, noting that as needs change in the future, the position can always be reviewed. Motion by Cushing to approve the request at a .6 hire and forward the revised resolution and recommendation to the County Board. Second by Paszak. Further discussion held regarding wages. Charbarneau feels it may be difficult to hire a part-time Social Worker but is hoping to find a candidate that may be looking for such a position. Schiek notes that line 24 on the resolution needs to be changed to 1.0 full-time equivalent and the word "Marcy" should be changed to "Marsy" throughout the resolution. All Committee members present voting 'Aye'. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION: CREATE FULLTIME VICTIM WITNESS COORDINATOR POSITION

Charbarneau will update the resolution and forward to Committee members for signature.

2021 STAFFING REQUEST PROCEDURE AND WAGE SCHEDULE

Charbarneau discussed the 2021 Staffing Request process. In the past the COJ (Committee of Jurisdiction) approved requests before submitting them to LRES. Due to the importance of keeping with the 2021 budget schedule, Charbarneau recommends all annual requests and non-tax levy requests get a verbal approval from the COJ Chairman prior to submitting the request to LRES, to expedite the process. Charbarneau notes that the process will be looked at again next year to determine best practice, based on the status of the COVID-19 crisis at that time. Discussion held; Committee agrees to allow this change to the process. No motion needed.

LAW CLERK FOR BRANCH I AND II

Charbarneau reports that normally, a Law Clerk is hired on a 12-month contract, with no benefits except health insurance. and is shared with Vilas County. This position is shared with Vilas County, assisting the Circuit Judges, and greatly helps with the heavy workloads. The current Law Clerk was hired in 2018, than approved to stay a second year, and is now requesting to stay a third year. Normally an employee in this position is only allowed to stay one year due to the county needing to pay WI Retirement if employment goes over one year. Charbarneau notes that the position pays \$54,600 plus health insurance and now retirement for this employee. Charbarneau notes that Law Clerks are difficult to recruit and finding a great Law Clerk that wants to stay multiple years is valuable. Years back the judges would get multiple applications for the position and now the number of applications received is very low. Fried inquired why this request didn't first come through the Public Safety Committee and also feels this position was intended to be a one-year entry level position and is now turning into a longer term job with more costs, which wasn't the intentions. Fried feels each department needs to look at their positions, determine what is needed and try to find cost savings where possible. Discussion held on the history of the position and process for approving. Charbarneau notes that they can't ask for an increase since the contract already started June 1, 2020 but the increased retirement costs will need to be run by both Oneida and Vilas County for approval. Motion by Cushing to approve the Law Clerk contract extension for Branch I and II, based on the contract being expired. Second by Hintz. Fried inquired if this would be a good position to incorporate into Corporation Counsel; Charbarneau discussed conflict of interest concerns. Fried amended the motion to change the contract to a 7-month contract ending December 31, 2020 than to review the position during budget season. Second by Hintz on amended motion. Charbarneau notes that one contract exists for both counties so she will need to work with Vilas County regarding the proposed changes. All Committee members present voting 'Aye' on motion. Motion carried.

REOPENING PLAN UPDATE

Charbarneau notes that Phase 2 of the Onward Oneida County COVID-19 reopening plan went into effect yesterday at 5:00 p.m. which allows for bigger gatherings and opening of businesses previously required to be closed. Charbarneau says Public Health still recommends the wearing of facemasks and working from home when possible. Charbarneau reports that about 45% of staff continue to work from home.

FURLOUGHS – # OF STAFF, COST SAVINGS AND CONTINUATION OF BENEFITS

Charbarneau feels determining when furloughed employees should return will all depend on the needs of the individual departments. Charbarneau feels departments are doing a good job at assessing needs and furloughing accordingly. Charbarneau says about 45% of employees remain working from home. Smith reports in the last payroll, at least 30 employees furloughed for at least one day, for a total of 21 FTE (Full Time Equivalent), and a total cost savings to date of \$49,000 minus the portion of state unemployment that the county needs to pay. Charbarneau says currently, furloughed employees are required to pay their portion of benefits and the county continues to pay their portion, along with PTO continuing to accrue as if the employee was working normal hours. Charbarneau feels benefit costs should continue to be shared between the county and employee, but feels PTO accrual for weeks employees are furloughed should cease due to fairness. Charbarneau provided an example of an employee that is out on furlough for a few weeks than returns and has

FURLOUGHS – # OF STAFF, COST SAVINGS AND CONTINUATION OF BENEFITS (continued)

the same amount of PTO to still use as the person working next to them that worked the entire time the furloughed employee was out. Charbarneau says if an employee is on furlough for a week and their PTO accrual stopped, it would only be about 3-4 hours of PTO lost, which isn't bad considering the employee had the entire week off and was paid by unemployment. Charbarneau notes that most counties have continued benefits during furlough, which has encouraged the furloughing employees. Charbarneau requests that the Committee continue benefits for furloughed employees but agrees with suspending PTO accrual during furlough. Freudenberg provided comments regarding benefit requirements under Obamacare. Discussion held regarding Charbarneau's extensive research on layoff versus furlough and the differences between the two. Smith notes that if an employee is on long-term furlough and then comes back and doesn't use the PTO, this would lead to increased PTO payouts in the end. Fried voiced concerns about continuing benefits, based on the federal unemployment payment being paid. Charbarneau notes that the federal unemployment payment was to supplement lost wages, not to supplement loss of benefits. In-depth discussion held on department needs, determining furloughs, and the reduced ability to hold meetings with Committees to discuss needs. Motion by Cushing to stop furloughed employee PTO accrual effective next payroll. Second by Fried. All Committee members present voting 'Aye'. Motion carried.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Hintz, second by Paszak to go into closed session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes Sec. 19.85(1)(c) for considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which this body has jurisdiction or responsibility. (Topics: Telecommunicator Lieutenant Compensation) and Wisconsin Statutes Sec. 19.85 (1)(f) for considering financial, medical, social or personal histories or disciplinary data of specific persons, preliminary consideration of specific personnel problems or the investigation of specific charges, which, if discussed in public would likely have an adverse effect on the reputation of the person referred to in such data. (Topic: Americans With Disabilities Act requests) Roll call vote taken; all voting in the affirmative. Motion carried. Committee went into closed session at 10:51 a.m.

Staff present in closed session: Charbarneau, Lueneburg, Hess, Butzlaff

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Motion by Cushing, second by Hintz to return to open session. Roll call vote taken with all members voting in the affirmative. Motion carried. Committee returned to open session at 11:15 a.m.

No action was taken in closed session. Based on closed session discussion, the following motion was made:

Motion by Cushing to approve the Telecommunicator Lieutenant hire with 33 days of PTO at hire, start at Grade K1, Step 9 and put \$7,500 into an account to cover 2020 deductible amounts, with all costs to come from the Sheriff's Office budget. Second by Fried. Roll call vote taken with all voting in the affirmative. Motion carried.

Cushing notes that no action was taken on the Americans with Disabilities Act request

RESOLUTION: TELECOMMUNICATIONS LIEUTENANT COMPENSATION

Based on motion above, the Committee signed the resolution to be forwarded to the County Board.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE TOPICS

- **SOLICITATION FOR HEALTH INSURANCE:** Discussion held; Committee agrees to put an Ad Hoc Committee together to discuss ideas and cost savings for the 2021 employee health insurance plan. Hintz notes that this will need to go via resolution to County Board and the meetings would need to be open to the public.
- The remaining topics listed on the agenda were moved to the next meeting agenda.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

June 24, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.
July 8, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.
July 23, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

Funding Opportunities Committee

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Cushing announced the adjournment of the LRES Committee meeting at 11:25 a.m.

/s/Ted Cushing
Ted Cushing, Chairman

06-24-2020
Date

/s/Jenni Lueneburg
Jenni Lueneburg, Committee Secretary

06-24-2020
Date