

January 17, 2017

APPROVED on 1/24/17

Proceedings of a Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners in and for the County of Menominee and the State of Michigan were held in Courtroom B, Courthouse, Menominee, Michigan.

Chairman Meintz called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

A call of the roll indicated that the following Commissioners were present/absent:

**Present:** Com. Cech, Gromala, Lang, Meintz, Nelson, Phelps, Piche, and Schei.

**Absent:** Com. Hafeman (excused).

Chairman Meintz called for public comment.

**Public Comment:** None.

Moved by Com. Piche, seconded by Com. Nelson to approve the agenda. Motion was approved 8-0.

**Discussion Items:**

The board is meeting to discuss the seven applicants for the position of Menominee County Administrator. All commissioners present at the meeting were given the seven application/resumes with the names of the candidates removed and replaced with a number. This was done to avoid having a candidate's name discussed if they were eventually removed as a candidate for the position. Com. Lang commented that he does not feel comfortable reviewing the applicants without having their names. Com. Nelson commented that we are hiring based on a resume and their qualifications, not a name. Administrative Assistant Sherry DuPont has a listing of all applicants and the number they were assigned. She passed out a sheet with the names and numbers to all commissioners. Com. Gromala stated that the board would still refer to applicants by their number and not their name. Com. Cech asked if the board would be moving forward tonight with applicants to interview? Com. Lang questioned whether the board should conduct background checks on the applicants before moving them forward for interviews to make sure that they meet the qualifications. Com. Nelson feels that the board should not move forward with this too quickly. He commented that the county has been without an administrator for three and a half months now and we are getting along just fine. We should not rush into this and make sure that we get it right the first time. Com. Meintz commented that he read through the applications on Friday and there are some applicants that do not meet the qualifications. Com. Phelps has drafted a guide for the board to use in the process of hiring an administrator if the board was interested in reviewing it. Com. Meintz stated that it was ok for Com. Phelps to pass his plan along to the rest of the board. Com. Schei commented on the process the airport used when it was looking to hire a manager. He stated that the board could adopt a process similar to that. Com. Schei also commented that he feels any candidate should meet the qualifications that are set forth in the job description for County Administrator. Com. Gromala stated that we have some very good candidates. Most if not all of them lack the experience on county or city level. It is good to have candidates with good qualifications that you can mold into this position. The

board will be most likely looking at two typed of candidates applying for this position. The first would be someone looking to step up in their careers or someone looking to coast into retirement. The county is limited with what they can offer salary wise and this limits the board from getting candidates with more experience. He also went on to comment that he has three candidates he would like to see moved forward for an interview. Com. Meintz stated that he had four candidates that he would move forward. He has them numbered in order of his preference. He also agreed that the county has a limited budget to spend. Com. Nelson commented that he has broken his applicants down into five categories. He has found four candidates that fall under at least four of the five categories. Com. Gromala commented that he could come up with a fourth candidate if that is what the other commissioners are doing. Com. Gromala also commented that the last time he was involved with hiring a County Administrator two of his top three candidates weren't even on the list for interviews. Com. Lang commented that one of the applicants is applying for the Administrator/Equalization position. He would like to know if something has changed and is the board hiring under a new job description. Com. Nelson again brought up his concerns over whether or not the county even needs a full-time administrator or not. He stated that we have shown in the past 3 ½ months that we may not need a full-time administrator. Com. Meintz agreed that the board has not decided exactly what we need or what we are going to pay. Right now we are educating ourselves on our options. Com. Piche stated that we have vast differences that we need to look into. He feels that there are four candidates on paper that he likes. He would like to see the actual person in order to really decide. Com. Nelson commented that he did some research on combining the administrator position with another position. Com. Lang commented that if we are paying for a full-time administrator and a full-time Equalization Director then we are paying too much somewhere. Com. Nelson also has some questions regarding the requirements listed in the job description. He feels that some of those requirements might be a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Com. Phelps commented that is why he feels the board should hire an outside professional source to help with hiring. They would be more likely to catch some of those types of things. Com. Meintz commented that we are never going to find a candidate that meets all of our bullet points. He reiterated that he has four candidates to move forward for interviews, but he still doesn't know if anyone of them is really good enough. We should not feel that we just need to pick someone just to pick. Com. Phelps asked what the next step is. Com. Meintz asked if everyone has had time to review and have broken down the applications. Com. Schei commented that he thinks everyone is all wet. He feels we need someone who is better than what we just had. We have no one in this group that has previous county administrator experience. He would like to see a candidate that has prior county administrator experience. He also commented regarding the minimum education requirements. These requirements are not met by all candidates. He also wants to be careful that we don't insult someone that currently works for the county. He does not feel that there are four candidates that meet our requirements. He is not prepared to interview anyone at this point. Com. Nelson commented on some of the items in the job description. He said items like the budget and bill paying has been done through Sherry DuPont and not the County Administrator. He continued to discuss the fact that the previous administrator was attending meetings and other things that probably weren't truly required. He does not think we need someone with county administrator experience per se. If Sherry were not still in the office and the board were looking at hiring two people then that would be a different discussion. Com. Piche commented that if we throw out those who do not have experience as a county administrator that would not necessarily be a good thing. Com. Nelson commented that Dickinson County hired an administrator that met all of those requirements and then they left after one year. Com. Meintz commented that most administrators do not last a lifetime in one location. Com. Gromala commented that most administrators last on average three to five years. Com. Nelson does not see this as a position we need to hire a head hunter for. Com. Nelson commented on how things have gone over the past three months. He does not feel this is a complex job. He compared the position to the work he

did as Regional Director for DHS. Com. Gromala commented that dealing with nine individuals on the board of commissioners is complex. He also commented that he previously was not in favor of a full-time administrator when he was on the board before. That was until he had to handle a lot of the county issues in the absence of an administrator. That gave him a new understanding that the county needs a full-time administrator. Com. Meintz talked about Com. Schei wanting to hire a perfect administrator so the board can just sit back. He stated that boards change and the molds change. He discussed managerial skills that are needed. Com. Schei commented that he is looking for a perfect administrator and this is his feelings. Com. Phelps asked Sherry if she can handle doing any additional work. Sherry stated that she cannot handle any additional work. She is already swamped and getting behind on what she needs to have done. Com. Meintz has some concerns with some of the things that Sherry is taking the time to handle. He also feels that some of the departments are passing work down to the administrator's office that should be done in their own offices. We should also be looking at why that work isn't being done in those other offices. Com. Cech commented about the County Clerk and County Treasurer helping to run the county in other counties. He also discussed that it seems like we always run into a difficult time trying to get Sherry extra help. He is not in a rush to hire an administrator. Presently it is working, but we need to continue to look at this. Com. Phelps commented that we have some applicants here, but if we get to interviewing we need to follow a process. We need to have someone responsible for the county because that shouldn't be put on Sherry. Com. Cech wants to do a background check on applicants for sure. Com. Piche commented that he doesn't want to get off track, but he feels there are too many bodies hanging around in Sherry's office and slowing Sherry down from getting her work done. He stated that he doesn't want to point fingers, but Com. Schei seems to be in Sherry's office a lot. Com. Piche commented that maybe he isn't doing his job correct, but he tries to only take up a little of Sherry's time when he has a question and moves on. Com. Schei commented that Com. Piche is out of line and being disrespectful. He stated that if he feels that way then he is done working on the airport and he is not voting for any of these candidates for administrator. Com. Phelps commented that as a new commissioner he is looking at this from a different perspective than others who have been on the board for a while. He discussed that at the last meeting Com. Nelson complimented Com. Schei on all the work he has done at the airport. He does not want to see that stop. He also commented that Com. Nelson is doing an excellent job with the finances and he doesn't want to see that stop either. He would like to see everyone calm down. Com. Cech commented that Com. Schei is doing an excellent job with the airport. Com. Nelson and Com. Lang commented that we need to get back on track with what we are here for. Com. Lang also commented that one of the problems is the board goes to Sherry for things that should go to an administrator.

The board decided to go district by district and state who the candidates were that they would like to see interviewed for the position of County Administrator. The candidates would be listed by their number and not their name.

-Com. Gromala – 4, 1, 5 & 2

-Com. Lang – 2, 4, 3 & 5

-Com. Phelps – 1, 2, 4 & 5

-Com. Schei – 3, 2 & 6

-Com. Cech – 1, 2, 4 & 6

-Com. Meintz – 2, 6, 1 & 4

-Com. Piche – 1, 2, 4 & 6

-Com. Hafeman – Absent

-Com. Nelson – 1, 2, 4 & 6

The four candidates receiving the most votes were 2, 4, 1 & 6.

**Action Items:**

Moved by Com. Piche, seconded by Com. Nelson to move candidates 1, 2, 4 & 6 forward to be interviewed for the position of Menominee County Administrator. Motion was approved 6-2. Com. Lang and Schei voted nay.

Discussion ensued regarding how and when the board would like to conduct the interviews. It is the consensus of the board that they would like more time to think about these issues.

Moved by Com. Nelson, seconded by Com. Gromala to table the motion to set the date and time for the interview process until the next regular meeting on January 24, 2017. Motion was approved 8-0.

Chairman Meintz called for public comment.

**Public Comment:** None.

Moved by Com. Nelson, seconded by Com. Cech to adjourn at 7:18 p.m. Motion was approved 8-0.

---

Charlie Meintz, Chairman

---

Marc Kleiman, County Clerk