

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS'
SALARY BOARD**

**July 6, 2015 – 2:00 PM
COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM
COURTHOUSE, CARLISLE, PA**

Board of Commissioners Present: Commissioners Hertzler and Eichelberger.

Staff Present: Larry Thomas, Chief Clerk; Sandy Moyle, Deputy Chief Clerk/Meetings Manager; Barbara Sue Hershey, Recording Secretary; Keith Brenneman, Solicitor.

Departments: Controller Al Whitcomb; Christ Sechrist, Communications; Liz Bouch, Human Resources.

Outside Agencies: Rebecca Yearick, Cumberland County Housing & Redevelopment Authorities (CCHRA).

Citizens: George Geisler, Jr., Tom Braithwaite.

Media: Joshua Vaughn, The Sentinel; Steve Marroni, The Patriot News.

Call to Order: Commissioner Hertzler called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call: Commissioner Cross (*Absent*), Commissioners Hertzler, Eichelberger, and Controller Whitcomb were present.

Public Comment:

- Tom Braithwaite addressed the board stating he has been a resident of the County for 63 years, and he is here today to ask some questions regarding the salary increases.
 - Mr. Braithwaite asked if these increases being done by the authority of the Commissioners alone.
 - Commissioner Hertzler stated that it is being done by the Salary Board which includes all three Commissioners and Controller, Al Whitcomb.
 - TB asked if Salary Board officials are elected.
 - Commissioner Hertzler stated that all are elected, Controller, Al Whitcomb is in an elected position as well as all 3 Commissioners.
 - Mr. Braithwaite asked if everyone agreed to this.
 - Commissioner Hertzler stated he is opposed the salary increases.
 - Mr. Braithwaite stated that he understands that the 2.2 million dollars is going to be coming from staff reductions and efficiency increases is that correct?
 - Commissioner Eichelberger stated a range of savings have been realized.
 - Mr. Braithwaite interrupted and asked if Commissioner Eichelberger could guarantee that he would not receive a tax increase as a result of this.
 - Commissioner Eichelberger stated as a result of this specifically; no, although, it is up to the Board to stay the course in terms of fiscal vigilance. However all organizations face rising costs. There cannot be an exact yes or no answer.

- Mr. Braithwaite asked, won't this additional salary increase have an impact on retirement funding?
 - Commissioner Eichelberger answered yes, higher salaries does involve a higher pay of retirement funding.
- Mr. Braithwaite stated the 2.2 million dollars that you found to give people arbitrarily salary raises.
 - Commissioner Eichelberger interrupted declaring it's not found and it's not arbitrarily.
- Mr. Braithwaite stated you have 300 people who are going to get salary increases.
- Mr. Braithwaite asked if the County employees are slaves.
 - Commissioner Eichelberger answered they are certainly not slaves.
 - TB asked if County employees have the right to go to another job if they are not happy where they are employed.
 - Commissioner Eichelberger answered yes, and many of them have and that is precisely why we've had certain turnover problems in certain areas which have cost us additional dollars as well. There was a significant study done here at the County by professionals in a compensation field.
- Mr. Braithwaite asked Commissioner Eichelberger if he works for the taxpayers or the employees of this county.
 - Commissioner Eichelberger answered "we work for the taxpayers of this county."
- Mr. Braithwaite recounted several years ago the Wolfe bridge road was closed, a year before that there was an accident on that bridge in which that bridge sustained damage. There was well over \$100,000.00 put back into that bridge, less than a year later it was closed for deficiency. My final comment is "you people are not being good stewards of taxpayer's money."
 - Commissioner Eichelberger stated fundamentally when a bridge is damaged we have a responsibility to bring it back to useable condition. There was continued discussion on damage versus deterioration.
 - Commissioner Hertzler intervened and stated that we are here to take public information not to get into a public debate and thanked Mr. Braithwaite for coming.
 - Commissioner Eichelberger stated public comment means he gets to comment as well, when people say things and they have questions on then we have the opportunity if not the obligation to answer them. He addressed Mr. Braithwaite and declared that we are going to reset on the compensation scales for the county in the anticipation of moving into a more private sector like situation. We're going to get away from automatic raises, were going to get away from political protected overtime that has marred this budget for a long time, we're setting this compensation plan in a position where we can avoid turnover, excessive overtime and automatic increases. Commissioner Eichelberger stated this is the only way this county government, just like the private business can be solvent, sustainable and competitive in the market place.
- Commissioner Hertzler stated that he personally felt that the new compensation plan needed more work, that it is flawed. He stated that he has asked his colleagues and will ask them again today if they would rescind this and essentially put this on hold. The new raises will go into effect July 12 unless there's action taken, however he is not hearing any support for that.

- George Geisler, Jr. addressed the board stating he has been a resident of the county for 32 years. He understands what Commissioner Eichelberger is saying, however, he believes what the issue is here and he also represents 5 voters.
- Mr. Geisler doesn't think that handing out \$10,000.00 or \$20,000.00 upfront is the right way to go about it. He recommends doing a performance evaluation on someone who is doing a meritorious job or service to the county; then certainly they may deserve that.
 - Commissioner Eichelberger stated essentially each position has been quantified and compared to what market rates are for similar responsibilities (that's the first step). The point you made about performance evaluations is built into the system as an ongoing feature. The individual is paid based not only on what the market demands but how well they perform every single year. It provides us with ongoing accountability for every single person that works for the taxpayers.
 - Mr. Geisler stated if that's the case, there should be some vehicle put into place that when we have outstanding performance that we see by our county employees. There is something in place that if we see a county employee doing a great job we can send something in that goes into that persons personnel file because.....
 - Mr. Geisler stated he is here to talk about the 911 center debacle that he experienced Thursday night relative to his 86-year old mother laying in the street in Camp Hill.
- Commissioner Hertzler commented in terms of what this part of the compensation plan was supposed to be about. It was supposed to bring our wages in Cumberland County for civil positions up to what the market demands in terms of when we compete to both attract and attain in looking for qualified employees, which he fully supported. However, in looking at this plan in the time that we were allotted he came to the conclusion that it wasn't ready.
- Mr. Geisler respectfully requested that this be put on hold and studied further, at least to give if for no other reason the perception that we're trying to do the right thing and doing it the right way.

Approval of Minutes: Controller Whitcomb moved to approve the minutes of June 22nd, 2015. Commissioner Eichelberger seconded the motion and it unanimously carried.

Approval of Salary Board Actions: Controller Whitcomb asked that the corrections to the Compensation Plan be voted on separately.

Controller Whitcomb moved to approve the Corrections to the Compensation Plan. Commissioner Eichelberger seconded the motion to approve the corrections to the Compensation Plan. Commissioner Hertzler commented on the motion in terms of the corrections to the new compensation plan stating this is something that he believes is another example of why this wasn't ready for final consideration when asked to approve it on June 22nd. The motion carried with Commissioner Hertzler voting no.

Controller Whitcomb moved to approve the Salary Board Actions of July 2, 2015 with the exceptions of the corrections to the Compensation Plan. Commissioner Eichelberger seconded the motion to approve the Compensation Plan minus the corrections. The motion carried with Commissioner Hertzler voting no.

Keith Brenneman, Solicitor verified that the first vote was for the corrections to the Compensation Plan and the second vote was for everything except the corrections to the Compensation Plan.

Other Business: None

Commissioner Hertzler made a motion to reconsider the new compensation plan, asking that it be rescinded and put on hold for further study before it is implemented. Hearing no second, the motion died for lack of a second.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

BarbaraSue Hershey
Administrative Coordinator