

FEBRUARY 19, 2010

On the above date at 11:30 A.M. the Luzerne County Board of Commissioners convened a Salary Board Meeting with the following present: Maryanne Petrilla, Chairman; Thomas P. Cooney, Commissioner; Stephen A. Urban, Commissioner; Walter Griffith, Controller; Douglas Pape, County Manager for Legislation/Chief Clerk; Stephen Menn, County Solicitor; Charles Guarnieri, Sheriff; Carolee Medico Olenginski, Prothonotary; Andrew Reilly, Community Development; James Spagnola, Veterans Affairs; Joseph Gibbons, Engineers Office/Road & Bridge

CALL TO ORDER:..... Maryanne C. Petrilla, Chairman

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Doug Pape, County Manager/Chief Clerk

There was a comment made that employees are going to be getting raises. What you have to keep in mind is there is going to be Row Officers and Department Heads that are going to propose creations/eliminations of positions. Each one is going to tell you that each department is going to see a reduction in their overall budget from these moves. They will be able to tell the dollar amount. I think that needs to be presented because overall we are going to be saving the taxpayers money.

Walter Griffith, Controller

The perception is we are going to reduce spending if we do it by department and it goes through their budget. But the fact of the matter is they are still raising salaries. I don't care if you are eliminating a position someone is still getting a pay raise.

Commissioner Petrilla

But if they are moving into a job with higher responsibilities they deserve a pay raise. If two jobs are combined into one and it's going to save money, clearly that's a more efficient way to operate. More with less.

Walter Griffith, Controller

But if you are moving into the same position with a pay raise, that's a pay raise.

Commissioner Petrilla

Certainly that is true if that would be the case. I'm sure anyone proposing a salary board agenda item will explain two jobs may be combined into one, or job responsibilities may have changed. One job on the agenda involves a change in federal guidelines which creates a tremendous amount of responsibilities. I think we need to allow those proposing these changes to speak and you can vote accordingly to how you feel.

Walter Griffith, Controller

I received a request for a pay increase from Michael Vecchio. Why is this already in the budget when the change is dated February 22, 2010?

Commissioner Petrilla

That is not a salary board issue.

Walter Griffith, Controller

It is if we are increasing their pay.

Commissioner Petrilla

That is an administrative action. It is not on the Salary Board agenda. I think you are misrepresenting that to be an employee/personnel action.

Commissioner Urban

The Salary Board has a position listed as \$49,272. The courts cannot give a pay raise because the salary is fixed at \$49, 272.00 and that should be rejected.

Commissioner Petrilla

I agree. But it is not on the Salary Board agenda.

Commissioner Urban

The Salary Board fixed the salary at \$49, 272. 00 and that’s all the salary the person should get. If you see anything like that I recommend you work with the personnel officer and make sure it gets rejected.

Walter Griffith, Controller

But it is already in the budget at the new salary.

Commissioner Urban

It doesn’t matter if it’s in the budget, the Salary Board did not approve an increase.

Walter Griffith, Controller

I’ll check the payroll.

Doug Pape

What would be the protocol if there was a salary range on the position and the President Judge signed a court order?

Walter Griffith, Controller

This isn’t a range. I’m concerned why it’s in the budget.

Commissioner Petrilla

They may have put it in the budget hoping there would be a 3% salary increase across the board or something would get approved by the Salary Board. The fact remains it would have to be approved by the Salary Board before any changes could go into effect. Since it’s not on the agenda you can deny the request.

Tom Pribula, Budget Director

The process of budgeting is done prior to Salary Board. If you wanted that to be the case you would have to reset all salaries prior to the budget process and that would dictate what they are putting in the budget the following year. If it’s in the budget and the Salary Board does not approve it that would be a favorable variance as we go forward.

COMMUNICATIONSDouglas A. Pape, County Mgr/Chief Clerk

REQUEST A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE SALARY BOARD MEETING ON JANUARY 20, 2010.

It was moved by Commissioner Urban, seconded by Commissioner Cooney
“AYES” PETRILLA, COONEY, URBAN, GRIFFITH

REQUEST A MOTION TO AFFIRM THE FOLLOWING SALARY BOARD ACTIONS FOR:

COMMISSIONERS OFFICE:

Create the following position effective February 19, 2010:

One (1) Administrative Assistant/Open Records Officer at a salary range of \$25,000 to \$40,000.

Eliminate the following position effective February 19, 2010:

One (1) Executive Secretary at a salary range of \$25,000 to \$40,000.

Commissioner Urban

Can you explain?

Doug Pape

The state requires we have someone appointed as the Public Records Official. We informally gave that title to the Solicitor's Secretary, Sandy Zurek so we need to adopt the informal title. There is no increase in her salary. That is the range of her current position.

Commissioner Cooney

There is no increase in salary?

Doug Pape

No Sir

Walter Griffith, Controller

Why is there a range now when originally it was a \$30,000 position/salary voted on in January?

Doug Pape

If we did that and Sandy left we would have to bring that person in at \$30,000.

Walter Griffith, Controller

Why are we making it a range when in January we voted on a straight salary of \$30,000?

Commissioner Petrilla

The ranges were set on these positions years ago. If it was on the January agenda listed otherwise, then that was an error on the January meeting.

Walter Griffith, Controller

That's what we voted on.

Commissioner Petrilla

The fact remains this creation of the Open Records Officer position has no reflection of salary changes. As Doug mentioned, should she resign a new person would have to come in at \$30,000 versus \$25,000. That's why we set the ranges, so we can bring people in according to their qualifications and experience rather than the salary that is set.

Walter Griffith, Controller

We are eliminating an Executive Secretary at a range of \$25,000 - \$40,000. That is not what we are eliminating. We are eliminating a salary of \$30,000 and now we are instituting a range.

It was moved by Commissioner Urban, seconded by Commissioner Petrilla
“AYES” PETRILLA, COONEY, URBAN “NAY” GRIFFITH

REQUEST A MOTION TO AFFIRM THE FOLLOWING SALARY BOARD ACTIONS FOR:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICE:

Create the following positions effective February 19, 2010.

One (1) Municipal Projects Manager at an annual salary of \$44,500.
One (1) Environmental Specialist at an annual salary of \$32,500 effective February 19, 2010.

Eliminate the following positions effective February 19, 2010:

One (1) Municipal Projects Manager at an annual salary of \$41,000.
One (1) Environmental Specialist at an annual salary of \$28,500.

Eliminate the following position effective April 1, 2010:

One (1) Municipal Coordinator position at an annual salary of \$40,250.

Commissioner Urban

You are eliminating three positions and creating two?

Andy Reilly, Director of Community Development

Yes. The Environmental Specialist position has grown in importance in our office since there are frequent changes in Federal and State Environmental Regulations. Yesterday I attended the Penns Northeast Board Meeting and one of the main topics of conversation was how unfriendly PA is becoming to economic developers because of their stringent environmental regulations. Projects are being held up from 1 to 2 years because of the regulations. This individual will have to carry out those regulations in a very timely manner or those projects will be held up. Not to mention in the last two years we lost an employee due to this. This forced us to rely heavily on our consultant. The amount of money we paid our consultant can go towards the increase in this position.

Commissioner Urban

So you will be eliminating \$109, 750 in salaries plus health benefits and creating \$67,000 in salaries.

Andy Reilly

We will be saving over \$50,000.

It was moved by Commissioner Urban, seconded by Commissioner Cooney
“AYES” PETRILLA, COONEY, URBAN “NAY” GRIFFITH

REQUEST A MOTION TO AFFIRM THE FOLLOWING SALARY BOARD ACTIONS FOR:

PROTHONOTARY'S:

Create the following position effective February 19, 2010

One (1) Clerk III at an annual base salary of \$22,500

Eliminate the following position effective February 19, 2010:

One (1) Clerk Typist I at an annual salary of \$28,950.

Commissioner Urban

The savings will be \$6,000.00

Walter Griffith, Controller

Is there anyone in that Clerk Typist position now?

Carolee Medico Olenginski, Prothonotary

We are reorganizing the office.

Max BlaBlaskiewicz, Collective Bargaining Officer

I believe there is a person in that position but because of the process that will take place because of the union bargaining agreement, when the Clerk Typist III is created a person will move up. Everyone will move up according to the bid process. The person in the Clerk Typist I will have the opportunity to go to a Clerk Typist II.

Walter Griffith, Controller

What does the Clerk II make?

Max BlaBlaskiewicz, Collective Bargaining Officer

I don't have an exact figure; it may be \$19,500 for entry level.

It was moved by Prothonotary Medico Olenginski, seconded by Commissioner Cooney
"AYES" PETRILLA, COONEY, URBAN, GRIFFITH, MEDICO OLENGINSKI

REQUEST A MOTION TO AFFIRM THE FOLLOWING SALARY BOARD ACTIONS FOR:

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICE:

Create the following positions effective February 19, 2010:

- One (1) Bookkeeper at an annual salary of \$21,500.
- One (1) Clerk II at an annual salary of \$19,500.

Eliminate the following positions effective February 19, 2010:

- One (1) Veteran Benefits Specialist at an annual salary of \$33,475
- One (1) Clerk I at an annual salary of \$18,500

James Spagnola, Director of Veterans Affairs

We are recommending the elimination of the Veterans Affairs Specialist and shifting those duties to existing union members.

Commissioner Urban

This will be an \$11, 975 reduction in salaries. The state last year during the budget process eliminated support for veterans of this county and I know the workload has increased on your department.

James Spagnola, Director of Veterans Affairs

We are ranked 6th in the state for veterans benefits.

It was moved by Commissioner Cooney, seconded by Commissioner Urban
"AYES" PETRILLA, COONEY, URBAN, GRIFFITH

REQUEST A MOTION TO AFFIRM THE FOLLOWING SALARY BOARD ACTIONS FOR:

LUZERNE COUNTY 911:

Create the following positions effective February 19, 2010:

One (1) Luzerne County 911 Director at an annual salary range of \$50,000 to \$70,000

Eliminate the following position effective February 19, 2010:

One (1) Public Safety/911 Director at a salary range of \$60,000 to \$85,000

Doug Pape, County Manager/Chief Clerk

In the past we had an overall Public Safety Director. I believe he made over \$80,000. He was in charge of 911, EMA, and Security. PEMA has since reached out to us and stated that because this position is funded mainly through state funds, they would only fund the position if it is strictly the 911 Director position. This person couldn't oversee EMA and Security and receive that funding. We have to create the 911 Director position and we will put the job on the street and allow people to apply in-house. We will then fill the position as just the 911 Director. EMA and Security would then become their own separate offices under the chain of command on the organizational chart in place.

Walter Griffith, Controller

I strongly disagree with salary ranges. I don't think salary ranges are appropriate with the Salary Board. It takes the power away from the Salary Board.

Commissioner Urban

I don't care for salary ranges. How about we fix the salary once the person is hired so it can't fluctuate up or down?

It was moved by Commissioner Urban, seconded by Commissioner Petrilla
"AYES" PETRILLA, COONEY, URBAN "NAY" GRIFFITH

REQUEST A MOTION TO AFFIRM THE FOLLOWING SALARY BOARD ACTIONS FOR:

ROAD & BRIDGE:

Create the following positions effective February 19, 2010:

Three (3) Mechanics at an annual base salary of \$24,500.
One (1) Diesel Mechanic at an annual base salary of \$27,500.

Eliminate the following position effective February 19, 2010:

Three (3) Mechanics at an annual base salary of \$22,500.
One (1) Diesel Mechanic at an annual base salary of \$23,500
One (1) Truck Driver at an annual base salary of \$20,500.

Joe Gibbons, Engineer/Road & Bridge Department

Since the retirements of 2008 we are loosing our mechanic staff in the Road & Bridge. We are having extreme difficulty in filling those positions due to the salary that mechanics are paid. I have researched what comparable municipal salaries are on government levels in local governments and PennDot. The starting salary that we are proposing as the existing starting salary plus the difference in this reorganization puts us competitive with other municipal governments. We are funding this by eliminating a vacant truck driver position.

Commissioner Urban

This is a saving of \$14,500 plus health insurance and benefits, which would be approximately \$30,000.

It was moved by Commissioner Cooney, seconded by Commissioner Urban
“AYES” PETRILLA, COONEY, URBAN, GRIFFITH

REQUEST A MOTION TO AFFIRM THE FOLLOWING SALARY BOARD ACTIONS FOR:

SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT:

Create the following positions effective January 1, 2010:

- One (1) Sheriff at an annual salary of \$36,562
- One (1) Chief Deputy at an annual salary of \$35,900
- One (1) Solicitor at an annual salary of \$22,629.10
- One (1) Real Estate Deputy at an annual salary of \$35,866

Eliminate the following positions effective February 19, 2010:

- One (1) Sheriff at an annual salary of \$35,207.85
- One (1) Chief Deputy at an annual salary of \$44,649
- One (1) Solicitor at an annual salary of \$23,308
- One (1) Real Estate Deputy at an annual salary of \$36,942

Charles Guarnieri, Acting Sheriff

The salaries are to be reduced for the Chief Deputy, Solicitor, and Real Estate Deputy. I disagree with that reduction. As far as raises go I have copies of the minutes from the January 10th meeting giving the 3% raise.

Commissioner Petrilla

What year are you looking at?

Charles Guarnieri, Acting Sheriff

2008

Commissioner Petrilla

That was for management employees. Elected officials do not get an increase.

Charles Guarnieri, Acting Sheriff

There is a decrease in pay for the Chief Deputy, Solicitor, and Real Estate Deputy.

Commissioner Urban

The Sheriff’s salary is being corrected to \$36, 562. That salary was set by law in 1982 and hasn’t changed since then. That is the same salary all other elected officials receive.

It was moved by Commissioner Urban, seconded by Controller Griffith
“AYES” URBAN, GRIFFITH “NAY” PETRILLA, COONEY, GUARNIERI

Commissioner Petrilla

I think we need to do more research on this. The Sheriff’s salary is set by law. I don’t want to vote on this until we research Charlie’s issue further.

Commissioner Cooney

Let's move this item to the next Salary Board Meeting.

REQUEST A MOTION TO TABLE UNTIL THE NEXT SALARY BOARD MEETING.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

It was moved by Commissioner Cooney, seconded by Commissioner Guarnieri
"AYES" PETRILLA, COONEY, URBAN, GRIFFITH, GUARNIERI

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

It was moved by Commissioner Cooney, seconded by Commissioner Petrilla
"AYES" PETRILLA, COONEY, URBAN, GRIFFITH

Respectfully submitted,



Recording Secretary

