

Work Session

July 23, 1999

The Board of County Commissioners, in and for the County of Otero, State of New Mexico, met in a Work Session at the Otero County Courthouse in Alamogordo, County and State aforesaid. Meeting called to order by the Vice-Chairman at 8:00 a.m., July 23, 1999; and he announced that reasonable public notice was given to the Alamogordo Daily News, Mountain Monthly, Holloman Sunburst, El Paso Times, and to Radio Stations, KPSA, KINN, and KYEE.

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Present were:

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| Richard Zierlein | Vice-Chairman |
| Tim McGinn | Member |
| Ruth Hooser | County Manager |
| Virginia Fletcher | Secretary |
| Robyn Silva | Deputy Clerk |

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The Commission began discussion on the wage and compensation plan for the 1999/2000 fiscal year. The Commission is all in agreement that a change must be made to the current scale because the County cannot continue increasing salaries at the current rate or they will go broke. Commissioner Zierlein suggested that we raise the amount that the County pays an additional 5 percent for all insurances, a 2 percent increase for employees (which would be one half of a percent for the Sheriff's Office) plus a \$500 bonus to be paid on December 1, 1999. Commissioner Zierlein stated that all of the insurance premiums are increasing, some as much as twenty percent. Commissioner McGinn stated that some of the Counties in New Mexico pay 100 percent of the employees' insurance and questioned why we don't. Commissioner Zierlein stated that we could do that if we raised the deductible to \$1,500.

Donna Brandon representing Data Processing was present to discuss with the Commission the scale that she put together as the new wage scale. She stated that she would not have a problem with the \$500 on December 1, 1999 as long as the 2 percent increase does not go into effect until January 9, 2000. The new scale that Ms Brandon presented decreased the steps to \$250 between promotions. The Commissioners stated that by implementing this scale it would be using some of the suggestions that the employee committee had proposed. The other suggestions were either against the law or unworkable. Discussion was held on the current minimum wage. Commissioner Zierlein stated that although we don't have anyone at that low of a salary, when that wage is raised, the County should adjust their figures accordingly. Commissioner Zierlein suggested that there be no end of probation raise.

Commissioner Zierlein stated that he felt like the County should approve \$1,500 for the promotions that will go into effect on July 1, 1999. That a \$500 bonus to be given to all employees on December 1, 1999. And on January 9, 2000, all employees will be given a 2 percent raise. Commissioner Zierlein stated that he felt that we should keep the present scale but change the probationary raises and change the longevity raise.

Donna Brandon stated that the Commission needs to realize that every change that is made has to be put in the computer. And when one change is made to one area it has to be changed in all areas which is very time consuming.

Discussion continued on different wage scale ideas. The Commission felt that there were still other changes that should be made to the scale but that will not be able to be implemented at this time. Ms Hooser reminded the Commission that the budget must be in Santa Fe next week with the wage scale in place. She explained that because of the time frame that they are currently working under there would be no way to work out another wage scale this week.

The Commissioners stated that at the Regular Meeting on Monday they will direct Data Processing to give \$1500 to the people that have been previously approved for promotions. Also the pay scale will stay the same other than no more longevity raises and \$750.00 will be paid to each employee on December 1, 1999. There will be no 2 percent raise in January. The Commission will also raise the County's portion of payment for all insurances by 5 percent.

ATTEST:

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CHAIRMAN

OTERO COUNTY CLERK

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