

CUMBERLAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
AUGUST 17, 2009, 5:30 PM
SPECIAL MEETING
ROOM 564

PRESENT: Chairman Jeannette Council
Vice Chairman Billy R. King
Commissioner Breeden Blackwell
Commissioner Kenneth Edge
Commissioner Marshall Faircloth
Commissioner Jimmy Keefe
Commissioner Ed Melvin
James Martin, County Manager
Juanita Pilgrim, Deputy County Manager
Harvey Raynor, Interim County Attorney
Phyllis Jones, Assistant County Attorney
James Lawson, Human Resources Manager
Laura Blackley, Human Resources Analyst
Sally Shutt, Communications Manager
Marie Colgan, Clerk to the Board
Candice H. White, Deputy Clerk to the Board

Chairman Council called the special meeting to order to discuss recruitment plans for the County Attorney vacancy.

A copy of the hiring plan for the County Attorney position was distributed to attendees. Mr. Lawson stated the objective of the hiring plan was to implement a hiring process that would facilitate the selection and retention of the best-qualified candidate for the County Attorney position by November 30, 2009.

Mr. Lawson stated the presentation of the hiring plan and the candidate profile were the initial steps in the hiring plan. Mr. Lawson directed attention to item 1.A. – Review of Candidate Profile stating that samples gathered from other cities, counties and the job description for the County Attorney position were taken into account and incorporated into the profile. A review of the candidate profile followed. Mr. Lawson advised the profile and position duties included municipal or county experience and responsibility for managing a legal department.

Mr. Lawson directed attention to item 1.B. – Position Description and stated the required qualifications as listed would be used in screening applications to determine which candidates were qualified. A brief overview of the description of duties followed.

Mr. Lawson directed attention to Step 2. – Advertise Job Vacancy Announcement to Public and stated staff were prepared to advertise the vacancy on August 18th with the Commissioners approval. Mr. Lawson stated an announcement had already been submitted to The County Lines because of their publication deadline, and would appear in the Monday, August 24th issue. Mr. Lawson noted the vacancy closing date was September 18th. Mr. Lawson reviewed

recruitment sources that would best reach the candidate profile. Mr. Lawson explained the ad published in The County Lines would be very similar to the ad provided to the other recruitment sources.

Mr. Lawson called attention to Step 3. – Assessment/Selection and stated applications would be screened as they came in. Mr. Lawson briefly reviewed the Assessment Center format and stated it would basically make candidates simulate their performance in realistic situations that relate to the job as well as challenge them to demonstrate their professional knowledge, management skills and style.

Mr. Lawson stated Human Resources had recently worked with a consultant and, depending on the Commissioners' position, the consultant could provide a presentation to the Commissioners later in the week. Mr. Lawson spoke briefly to the consultant's experience and benefits associated with utilizing the consultant. Commissioner King asked whether an attorney would be involved in the assessment process. Mr. Lawson stated one of the benefits of the Assessment Center process was the diverse composition of the panel. Mr. Lawson followed with a brief review of the Assessment Center format and the elements contained therein. Mr. Lawson stated if for no other reason, it would be beneficial for the consultant to explain how the process works. Laura Blackley, Human Resource Analyst, explained part of the Assessment Center process would be to decide who would participate in the assessment and selection process and it would be beneficial for the Commissioners to give their input into the process as soon as possible.

A brief discussion followed as to whether to implement the hiring process using only the Human Resources Department or whether to incorporate the consultant into the process. Consensus was to utilize the consultant. Mr. Martin stated the Commissioners could at the same meeting commission the consultant to begin work on the actual process prior to the September 18th vacancy closing date. Consensus was to meet with the consultant on Monday, August 24th at 8:30 a.m. in Room 564.

Mr. Lawson stated as the applications are received and screened, they would also be categorized as qualified, preferred or not qualified. Mr. Lawson stated those placed in the preferred category would likely have county legal experience. Mr. Lawson further stated after the applications were qualified, the Human Resources Department would select candidates for initial interviews. Mr. Lawson stated the Commissioners would then review and approve selected candidates for the Assessment Center interviews. Mr. Martin stated the standard notification for candidates selected for the Assessment Center process would be two weeks. Consensus was to review and approve candidates for interviews on Monday, September 21st at 4:00 p.m. in Room 564. Commissioner Keefe asked whether there would be a set number of candidates selected for initial Assessment Center interviews. Mr. Lawson responded it would depend entirely upon the pool. Mr. Lawson explained after the candidates completed all the panels within the Assessment Center, the Commissioners would be debriefed.

A brief discussion followed regarding the week of October 5th and the selection of final candidates for interviews. Consensus was to select a date at a later time for the debriefing.

Mr. Lawson stated the criminal background and reference checks would be completed by the time the Commissioners were debriefed so they could take those results into consideration before going into the final interviews. Mr. Lawson further stated that having the consultant present during the debriefing and the EQI results would give him an opportunity to sort out potential areas of concern and areas that may need follow up as well as design interview questions for the Commissioners as they prepare to go into the final interviews. Mr. Lawson stated there would be flexibility with regard to the final interviews as they could be conducted either by question/answer or through role playing. Consensus was to begin final interviews on November 2, 2009.

Mr. Lawson called attention to Step 7. – Make Offer. Mr. Lawson advised the candidates' applications would include their salary history. Commissioner Keefe asked how the start date would be determined. Mr. Lawson advised the question could be posed during the final interview. Commissioner Faircloth asked if County staff would go through the same process were they to apply. Mr. Lawson advised that all applicants would go through the same process. Commissioner Blackwell requested that the dates involved in the process be locked in as soon as possible.

There being no further business, Chairman Council recessed the meeting until August 24 at 8:30 AM in Room 564.