

**AT AN ORGANIZATIONAL WORKSHOP OF THE BOARD
OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON JUNE 5, 2023 AT 4:00
PM, THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

Present: **Kimblin NeSmith, Chair, District 3**
 Eric Hinson, Vice-Chair, District 1
 Alonzetta Simpkins, District 2
 Brenda Holt, District 4
 Ronterious “Ron” Green, District 5
 Edward J. Dixon, County Administrator
 Clayton Knowles, County Attorney
 Adriana Quijada, Assistant Clerk

**** DUE TO TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES, THERE IS NO RECORDING FOR THIS WORKSHOP. PLEASE REFER TO THE GADSDEN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FACEBOOK PAGE FOR A RECORDING. ****

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair NeSmith started the workshop at 4 pm. Commissioner Green provided Invocation and Chair NeSmith led into the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag.

CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

The Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners welcomes and encourages public participation at all meetings of the Board. Citizens are free to speak for up to three (3) minutes on non-agenda items. Public comments and participation are also encouraged for items on the agenda. Additionally, if you are unable to attend a meeting in person, comments from the Public can also be submitted via email to CitizensToBeHeard@gadsdencountyfl.org until noon on the date of the meeting. Comments submitted after the deadline, but prior to the meeting, will be added to the official record, but the County cannot guarantee that Commissioners and staff will have adequate time to review comments prior to the meeting. Citizens are further encouraged to participate via Zoom using the credentials on the County’s website. The Board’s meetings are also broadcast live on the Board’s Facebook page. Chair NeSmith read aloud the above statement.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Discussion of Gadsden County’s Organizational Chart

Mr. Dixon stated they have the Organizational Chart to present to them.

Chair NeSmith asked the County Administrator when the Administrator is not here, who runs the County? Mr. Dixon stated the Assistant County Administrator.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she wanted the actual job descriptions to see what that job entailed. Ms. Maas stated the job descriptions was emailed to them. Commissioner Green asked if it came from her office? Ms. Maas stated yes.

Commissioner Simpkins asked about timeframe to look at salaries. Ms. Maas stated it was being reviewed and it would be about 3 months. Mr. Dixon stated they were hoping to have more understanding on that data.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she noticed in some of the positions, with the same title, there was a different pay. She asked if the County has given any raises since 2019. Mr. Dixon stated no.

Commissioner Hinson stated there were raises given prior to raising the minimum to \$15. There were certain people given raises. Commissioner Green asked if there was any documentation as it relates to the previous raises. He also asked how did they go about the determination factor for the raise increases. Commissioner Hinson stated from what he could recall, it was not the BOCC, it was the previous Administrators. Commissioner Hinson stated they could call the Clerk to know about raises in the last 2 years.

Commissioner Green asked if there should have been some kind of documentation from the HR department showing who got the raises. He said they could maybe have that in the future.

Ms. Maas stated she was not familiar with employees receiving 3 or 4 pay increases within one year.

Mr. Dixon stated the reason they asked for the compensation study was because they have been unable to bring people in. What they were requesting was more money than what their people were making.

Commissioner Hinson stated if they really wanted to know the truth about who got raises in the last 2 years, the Clerk can let them know.

Commissioner Simpkins asked how did they handle individuals who are being promoted to a position and were promised an increase. What timeframes were they giving these individuals? She asked what are they having them to sign and what are they promising them. Ms. Maas stated employees do not have contracts. She stated the employees were not promised or guaranteed.

Commissioner Green stated he would like to assume when people get promotions, the whole purpose is a pay increase. He stated when someone does get a promotion, there is some type of information that states the job description and pay increase. He asked what was the timeframe if someone does get promoted to a position. Ms. Maas stated upon promotion. Mr. Dixon stated one of the things experienced was that employees did not have promotional opportunities.

Commissioner Simpkins stated if a position requires more work with no raise, then she would not take that position. She stated she wanted to make sure they were not taking advantage of those who do not understand. She stated people are under the impression that they have taken a new position, and there was an increase in this. They need to make sure they understand what they are signing. Ms. Maas stated during the interview process, that was all explained. She agreed, no one was looking to take advantage. Commissioner Simpkins stated she found it ironic multiple people saying the same thing. She hoped this really was the case and promises were kept.

Commissioner Holt stated they need to provide these questions early.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she wanted to make sure they were not paying out any money as it relates to a lawsuit.

Commissioner Hinson stated he could ask any employee anything, not going against his position as long as he does not tell them what to do.

Commissioner Green stated they all have concerns and care for their employees. If there are issues, they do want to hear them.

Chair NeSmith asked Ms. Maas how many employees do they have. Ms. Maas stated 185-200.

Ms. Daniels stated the Administrative Assistant was under procurement. Chair NeSmith asked if they were department heads. Ms. Daniels stated some are. Commissioner Hinson stated it was important to have a director.

Commissioner Simpkins returned at 5:11 pm

Commissioner Green asked how close knit does the Department work with the Attorney as it relates to Procurement? Ms. Daniels stated everything was reviewed by the Attorney before they move forward with it.

Attorney Knowles stated some of the contracts go to DEO and DEP. Some RFP have specific requirements. He was not really involved in small procurement things.

Commissioner Green asked if all the vacant positions have already been budgeted for and are being advertised? Mr. Dixon stated yes.

Commissioner Hinson asked how long has the position for Building Inspector been vacant? Mr. Dixon stated just a little while. Ms. Maas stated around 3 or 4 weeks.

Chair NeSmith asked under the EMS Chart, if Chief Hood was the Department head and there are 2 divisions under him? Mr. Dixon stated correct.

Commissioner Simpkins asked if they were current vacancies under EMS? Mr. Dixon stated yes.

Mr. Dixon clarified with Chief Hood if those vacant positions were recent. Chief Hood stated one of them was vacant for 2 months and the others 6 months.

Chair NeSmith asked if salaries were competitive in their region. Mr. Dixon stated they were competitive.

Chair NeSmith asked what does Shift A mean? Chief Hood stated there was a total of 3 shifts, each 24 hours.

Commissioner Simpkins asked if the Facilities Manager has to be approved by the Board. Commissioner Holt stated the Manager did come before them.

Chair NeSmith asked if the Senior Housing Specialist vacant position was currently being advertised. Mr. Dixon stated yes.

Commissioner Holt stated vacant positions are important; there were 38 vacant positions.

Commissioner Green asked what tactics were they using to get the word out on the vacant positions and also asked about job fairs. Mr. Dixon stated they needed to know what they needed to pay people and they needed to get numbers and job descriptions straight.

Commissioner Simpkins asked if the positions being advertised have updated job descriptions? Ms. Maas stated most of them. She asked if the County Administrator receives input from other departments knowing what was needed from that position. She asked if departments were able to take a look at all applications. Ms. Maas stated they either work with the Department to develop an advertisement for a position or they develop that for them. It includes minimal qualifications based on job descriptions that establishes pre-screening criteria, which is the baseline. If candidates do not meet that baseline, they do not move forward.

Commissioner Simpkins asked if a person meets minimum qualifications, then it would make it to the Department head? Ms. Maas stated yes, unless additional pre-screening criteria has been put in place with that hiring supervisor.

Commissioner Hinson stated if they could get all the resumes and applications together to send to the Commissioners. Also wanted to see the person who denied the job.

Ms. Maas stated to be clear, that position was not offered and declined. The second interview was offered and that was declined. The first interview was with her.

Commissioner Holt stated she has not talked to anyone that has said they wanted a position and then went through the process and asked to meet with them. She stated to include the job descriptions of the aides as well.

Commissioner Green stepped out at 5:59 pm.

Commissioner Green returned at 6:02 pm.

Mr. Dixon stated Fleet services and Administration answer directly to Mr. Young under the Public Works Department. Parks & Recreation answers to Mr. Braswell.

Commissioner Green asked if the Recreation Specialist position is the person that comes up with programs like health or activities? He asked how had the application process has been going.

Mr. Dixon stated they had asked them to stop because if they were going to re-profile the section, they need to re-profile the position as well.

Commissioner Green asked about Operations Manager and if they had more power than the Administration that was at the top. Mr. Dixon stated they were in discussions now about how to re-arrange the section. It does not compete with Administration for any positions.

Commissioner Green asked if it was in the same pay bracket as the Administration? Mr. Dixon stated no. Ms. Maas stated it was slightly higher.

Commissioner Holt stated they need someone that could go after grants for parks.

Commissioner Hinson asked if could have job description for those new positions so they could see it.

Chair NeSmith asked the County Administrator regarding under Parks & Recreation, if there was a coordinator position? Mr. Dixon stated that was the only one that was there.

Chair NeSmith asked if they currently do not have someone under Parks & Rec that could focus on going after grants? Mr. Dixon stated right, they designed it as just maintenance.

Chair NeSmith stated they would like that position for Recreation Specialist to have the opportunity to go after dollars. So, whatever that job description was, they need that person to go after money.

Commissioner Simpkins stated they need to keep the Specialist because the Director would need assistance. She wanted to make sure that person has experience with Recreation and programming within the County.

Commissioner Hinson mentioned having sports in the Youth Program.

Motion to Adjourn

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR NESMITH DECLARED THE WORKSHOP ADJOURNED AT 6:23 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

**KIMBLIN NESMITH, Chair
Board of County Commissioners**

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk