

Stephen D. Hambley called the special meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. with Colleen M. Swedyk and William F. Hutson present. The meeting was held in the commissioners' conference room and virtually via Zoom. Mr. Hambley stated that the purpose of the special meeting was to discuss the compensation plan.

County Administrator Scott Miller explained that the wage study was developed a couple of years ago; a wage scale and point system was established to determine whether our employees' wages were competitive. This scale was implemented last year and we have been applying that scale to our employees. Since this information was collected, a couple of issues have arisen such as significant inflation and the job market has changed making it difficult to find qualified employees. There has been some question as to the type of adjustments that need to be made and how the wage scale is implemented and applied. He stated that Clemans Nelson is in attendance to provide the commissioners the opportunity to ask questions about the wage scale and how other government entities apply the scale, what best practices might be and how adjustments should be made. Mr. Miller stated that we are looking to adjust three years which are typically done between three and five years.

Robin Bell explained the difference between cost of living increases and merit increases noting that general wage increases were a combination of both during low inflation. With inflation over 7% last quarter of 2021, Wayne County made fairly large adjustments to their wage scale (approximately 3-4%) to deal with the economic issues. She is unsure what other employers have done. Kevin Sebesta added that Lorain County is having the same situation as Medina County; the big question is how to handle things when there is large inflation. They are still working through this. Many of the bargaining units are settling at 2.5-3% for general wage increases even though inflation is much higher right now. He stated that many employers are looking at the high inflation as temporary which will hopefully come down sooner rather than later. Mrs. Bell stated that Wayne County's main concern were their lower paying positions and made adjustments there. As far as labor negotiations, she is starting to see some bigger settlements and increases, but it depends on where they are to begin with. The bargaining units such as police and fire are getting more due to the shortage of people going into that job market. This is also going to be seen in other areas such as those with wastewater treatment licenses.

Mr. Shebesta reviewed the process of obtaining the wage surveys, creating the wage scales and the assignment of point factors. He then reviewed suggestions of how departments may implement the wage scales noting an option of an employee with at least 15 years of service should be at least at the mid-range and someone with 30 years of service should be at the top of the range while moving employees through the wage scale on a percentage basis; this is one way to do it.

Mrs. Swedyk stated that it's not the majority of Clemans Nelson's clients that have steps in their wage scales; Mr. Shebesta confirmed. She stated that the ranges are a management tool to ensure the positions are in the range, and should be reviewed every three to five years for consideration of adjustments; Mr. Shebesta agreed. Mr. Hambley stated that we are entering the third year since the survey was done and it's almost time to redo it.

Discussion occurred regarding the appropriate time to redo the survey, when to make adjustments, and how to bring in new employees at an appropriate level. Mrs. Swedyk stated that the department heads need to understand that it's not about getting employees through the range in a certain amount of time – it's a management tool rather than expectations of individual employees are where they fall in the scale. Mr. Miller explained the issues of hiring new employees and how hiring new employees at a higher rate effects current longstanding employees. Mr. Hutson suggested looking at the overall ranges of certain positions to determine if they are reflective of the current market; Mr. Hambley and Mrs. Swedyk agreed. Mr. Miller expressed concern about the current inability to fill positions based on the pay rates. Mrs. Swedyk suggested working through this and looking at it next year; Mr. Hutson disagreed stating that he doesn't think it can wait. He suggested either making an adjustment to the ranges in the scale similar to what Wayne County did due to the market conditions that have come into play. Mr. Hambley stated that they should be more strategic and also look at the implications are for collective bargaining discussions as this also drives some other wage considerations; he suggested discussing collective bargaining in executive session next week. Robin Bell noted that a wage survey on benchmark positions typically takes about six weeks.

Mrs. Swedyk moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Hutson seconded the motion. Roll call showed all commissioners voting AYE; the motion carried. The special commissioners meeting adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

All deliberations concerning official business and formal actions by this Board of Commissioners were conducted in an open public meeting this second day of March, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,	COMMISSIONERS	_____ Colleen M. Swedyk
	OF	_____ William F. Hutson
_____ Rhonda J. Beck Clerk to the Commissioners	MEDINA COUNTY	_____ Stephen D. Hambley