



Minutes - February 20, 2023

Call to Order: Chair Bostwick called the hybrid meeting of the County Board Staff Committee meeting to order at 4:30 P.M. in Conference Rooms N1/N2.

Committee Members Present: Supervisor Bostwick, Peer, Sweeney, Leavy, Towns, Wilson, Podzilni, and Brien.

Committee Members Absent: Supervisor Beaver.

Staff Members Present: Josh Smith, County Administrator; Randy Terronez, Assistant to the Administrator; Dave Slusser, Human Resources Director; Amy Spoden, Assistant Human Resources Director; Keylee Fisher, Unit Clerk Coordinator; Lisa Matijevich, Human Services; Belem Regan, Mediation & Family Court Services Manager; Dara Mosely, Information Technology Deputy Director; Nick Elmer, Assistant Public Works Director; Chief Deputy Strouse; Bridget Laurent, Deputy Corporation Counsel; Greg Cullen, Airport Director; Sheriff Fell; Mike Southers, Information Technology Systems Analyst; Michelle Lynch, Materials & Environmental Services Manager; Karl Fenrick, Crew Leader; Janalyn Eisele, Public Health Nurse; Courtney Nathan, Public Health Strategist; Kate Luster, Human Services Director; Meghan Pulgarin, Support Services Supervisor; Vy Nguyen, Public Health Policy Specialist; Jodie Surber, Analyst; Pat Quirk, Highway Worker; Maria Delgado, Economic Support Division Manager; Jodi Timmerman, Court Commissioner; Laura Middleton, Economic Support Specialist; Josh Jones, Heavy Truck Driver; Shannon Colson, Administrative Assistant; Ashley Franke, Public Health Planner; Kathy Churchill, Interim Communications Center Assistant Director; Tasha Bell, Equity Manager; Andrew Baker, Director of Land Conservation, Planning and Development; Sarah Nelson, Human Services Professional; Steve Meyer, Court Commissioner; Tami Johnson, Child Support Reimbursement Specialist; Bud Strunz, Public Works Superintendent; Lynette Scharine, Economic Support Specialist; Kevin Stilen, Child Support Reimbursement Specialist; Cassie Kjendlie, Child Support Reimbursement Specialist; Bob Buchanan, Heavy Truck Driver; Henry Bunts, Highway Worker; Beth Burkheimer, Child Support Reimbursement Specialist; Gary Cerny, Heavy Truck Driver; Bob Walton, Heavy Equipment Operator; Richard Woods, Heavy Truck Driver; Paul Kutz, Highway Worker; Fredd Carr, Interim Communications Center Director; Francis Beggs, Highway Worker; Ethan Henning, Highway Worker; Alex Dolgner, Highway Worker; Tom Musso, Highway Worker; Carl Homan, Highway Worker.

Others Present: Supervisors Sutterlin, Farrell, Whitledge, Mawhinney, Richard, Knudson, Zoril; Sheila Williams.

Approve Agenda: Supervisor Wilson moved approval of the agenda as presented, second by Supervisor Podzilni.

Supervisor Bostwick asked to move items 6.F-H up to after item 6.B.

ADOPTED.

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: Several public comments were submitted via email prior to noon (attached). These comments were read aloud.

Lynette Scharine supports option 2 (4% COLA). She expressed that she is frustrated with McGrath's recommendations. She advocated for not rushing to implement wage grid.

Bob Buchanan supports a 4% wage increase for all employees. Bob expressed that he feels that Public Works employees are underappreciated in the proposed wage grid. He advocated for searching for a solution from within the county.

Henry Bunts supports a 4% wage increase. He expressed that this would improve moral. Henry also supported creating an ad hoc committee to hear employee concerns and make implementation benefit everyone.

Beth Burkheimer stated that she attended the February 6 meeting when more ideas were presented. She stated that this was a "breath of fresh air." She reminded attendees that this meeting is where the 2% increase resolution came from.

(Supervisor Sweeney left at 5:21 P.M)

Richard Woods asked how we got so far behind.

Approval of Minutes:

February 6, 2023 Minutes: Supervisor Brien moved approval of the February 6, 2023 minutes, second by Supervisor Wilson.

Supervisor Towns asked to take out the parenthesis on page 6.

ADOPTED.

Approval of Transfers: None.

Review and Approval of Resolutions:

Recognizing Tony Farrell, Sr. Contributions to Rock County: "NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Rock County Board of Supervisors in session this _____ day of _____, 2023, hereby recognizes Tony Farrell Sr for his over 50 years of volunteer service to Rock County and wish him and his wonderful wife good fortune in his future endeavors."

Supervisor Peer moved approval of the above resolution, second by Supervisor Podzilni. ADOPTED.

Recognizing Karen Woodworth's Service to Rock County: "NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED that the Rock County Board of Supervisors duly assembled this _____ day of _____, 2023, does hereby recognize Karen Woodworth for her 23 years of service and extend their best wishes to her in her future endeavors."

Supervisor Towns moved approval of the above resolution, second by Supervisor Brien. ADOPTED.

Reclassify Funding Source for Resolution No. R-2022-98: This item was considered after item 6.B.

Resolution failed for lack of a first.

Amending Rock County Board Rule IV-G: Resolution failed for lack of first.

Resolution to Improve Communication, Employee Engagement, Encourage Innovation, Enhance Managerial Accountability and Reward Innovation in Rock County: Supervisor Brien moved approval of the above resolution, second by Supervisor Towns.

Supervisor Zoril provided a handout (attached) addressing concerns with this resolution.

Supervisor Zoril explained that employees had contacted him with concerns related to this resolution. He stated that one of the reasons for turnover could be management.

Supervisor Zoril addressed concerns in the Admin note with his provided handout.

Supervisors Towns, Wilson, and Brien advocated for a more general policy. Supervisor Zoril advocated for his resolution.

YES - None.

NO - Supervisors Bostwick, Brien, Towns, Wilson, Podzilni, Leavy, and Peer.

Absent - Supervisors Beaver and Sweeney.

Motion failed.

Authorizing a 2% Wage Increase For All Non-Represented County Employees Effective January 1, 2023: Items 6.F-H. was moved to before this item. This item was considered after item 6.H.

Supervisor Towns moved approval of the above resolution, second by Supervisor Wilson.

Josh Smith reminded the committee that this was a recommendation from the last meeting. This leaves the remaining 2% to implement the wage study. This was requested by the County Board Staff Committee.

Supervisor Wilson stated that we got "here" by giving an across the board increase. He stated that a 2% increase will address issues that employees are seeing now and provide more time to work on other pieces.

Supervisor Towns echoed Supervisor Wilson's sentiments.

Supervisor Wilson provided calculations he had done regarding a cost of living increase. He found that by giving the same COLA across the board, the inequity between employees increases.

Supervisor Towns reminded the committee of the McGrath presentation, saying that the top priority is getting a grid in place.

Supervisor Richard stated that the study took much longer than expected, so employee input/discussions were unable to be obtained. He stated that communication with employees needs to be prioritized.

Supervisor Peer moved to amend the motion to increase the wage increase to 3%, second by Supervisor Wilson.

The committee asked if a 3% COLA is doable. Josh stated that it is, and that staff would need to come back with different options for the remaining 1%.

Vote on motion to amend:

YES - Supervisors Bostwick, Brien, Wilson, Peer, and Leavy.

NO - Supervisors Podzilni and Towns.

Absent - Supervisors Beaver and Sweeney.

Vote on new amended resolution:

YES - Supervisors Bostwick, Brien, Towns, Leavy, Wilson, and Peer.

NO - Supervisor Podzilni.

Absent - Supervisors Beaver and Sweeney.

ADOPTED.

Authorizing a 4% Pay Increase for All Rock County Employees: Resolution failed for lack of first.

Authorizing a 4% Wage Increase for All Rock Haven Employees: Resolution failed for lack of first.

Review, Discussion and Possible Action:

Discussion and Possible Action of Policy No: 5.31 Overtime, Flex, and After Hours Payments:

Supervisor Wilson moved approval of changes to Policy No. 5.31 Overtime, Flex, and After Hours Payments, second by Supervisor Brien.

Amy Spoden explained that this came out of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Future of Rock Haven (attached).

YES - Supervisors Bostwick, Brien, Towns, Peer, Leavy, and Wilson.

NO - Supervisor Podzilni.

Absent - Supervisor Sweeney and Beaver.

ADOPTED.

Next meeting date and time: March 6 at 4:30 P.M.

Adjournment: Supervisor Brien moved to adjourn at 6:28 P.M., second by Supervisor Towns.
ADOPTED.

Respectfully submitted,

Haley Thompson
Office Coordinator

NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY COMMITTEE.

Haley Thompson

From: Troy Christensen
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 8:16 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: wage study implementation question

To whom it may concern,

If the new wage study is not implemented until 2024, which I feel is a better option. I am at my 5 year pay step in March. Since there is no "2023" wage updates, would I still get the 5 year step, or only the 2 or 4 percent COLA being voted on? I would like to think I should get the 5 year step plus 2 or 4 percent.

Troy Christensen

Haley Thompson

From: Shannon Richmond
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 8:20 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: Resolutions

While I understand the situation and agree with the situation at Rock Haven, I believe that all staff are currently in need of a cost of living raise. The rise of costs of literally everything is hitting everyone. Thank you for letting us share our input.

Shannon Richmond
Vital Records
Register of Deeds Specialist
608.757.5657
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www.co.rock.wi.us

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Haley Thompson

From: SIMON SULLIVAN
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 8:26 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: wage grid

Hi Josh

My preference is the 4% COLA. When I see Dane county starts at 30 dollars a hr and we start at 20 we will never catch up to other bigger countie . This at least keeps us in line with some of the smaller counties.

Simon Sullivan
Youth Justice Worker
SIMON.SULLIVAN@co.rock.wi.us
608-728-6171

Haley Thompson

From: TAMMY PETERSEN
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 8:41 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: resolution -today's meeting

After 20+ years I felt that the new wage grid didn't do much to benefit employees with longevity. Personally it made me consider retirement earlier. Of the options listed I'd like to see #2

Tammy Petersen
Register of Deeds Specialist
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608-757-5659
www.co.rock.wi.us/registerofdeeds

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Haley Thompson

From: Daniel Fuerstenberg
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 8:52 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN

I would like to see number 2 voted in as I think it will take some time to get the rest figured out.
I also have a question my 5 year will be in May of this year so if 2 is voted in would I also get my step raise in May

Thanks

Dan Fuerstenberg
Rock County
Facilities Maintenance
608-295-6108

Haley Thompson

From: JENNIFER BORLICK
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 8:55 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: Comments about COLA resolutions

I am in support of the second resolution.

"The second resolution would provide a 4.0% COLA for all staff. This resolution is intended to provide all available budgeted funding for a COLA and put off implementation of a new wage grid until 2024. This resolution would also provide additional temporary wage increases for approximately four positions that have the highest recruitment and retention challenges, as identified by Human Resources, effective April 1, 2023."

The wage study was an excellent step in beginning to address the issues that Rock County has with employee retention and pay ranges, and the plan to place everyone on the grid equally seemed like a good solution. The plan to place everyone on the grid, however, did not address the issue that some positions were not in the correct place when the pay study was started. Unless a plan is in place to get those people where they should be, we should not consider putting anybody on the grid. We have budgeted money for pay increases, but from what I understand not enough to get everyone placed equitably. "Using" all of the budgeted money this year would incentivize employees to remain as it would show employees that the County Board is serious in its intention to address the situations detailed in the wage support. This *must* be coupled by open, transparent discussions and budget planning to get people who are undercompensated placed onto the grids equitably.

To be clear, this will not benefit me. The wage study and implementation put me exactly where I should be in terms of position and length of service to the County. The implementation undervalues long term employees and employees who were in a lower tier than they should have been in to begin with.

Jennifer Borlick

GIS Manager

Rock County Planning, Economic and Community Development

51 S Main St

Janesville WI 53545

Ph: 608.757.5592

She/Her/Hers

#WashYourHands #GetVaccinated #RockCountyStandsAgainstRacism

"To err on the side of kindness is seldom an error." —Liz Armbruster

Haley Thompson

From: KATHY KING
Sent: Friday, February 10, 2023 12:59 PM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Cc: KATHY KING
Subject: Lead Economic Support Specialist classification

Hello:

I am Kathy King, one of the three Lead Economic Support Specialists. I have been working as an Economic Support Specialist for 18 years. I have been a lead worker for the past 1 ½ years, before that I was in the Child Care team for a little over five years.

As Lead Economic Support Specialists, we have numerous duties such as maintaining a caseload of confidential cases that consist of Child Care Assistance, EBD (Elderly Blind Disabled), and Family programs. The leads are trained for and work proficiently in all programs. We answer questions and assist on-going Economic Support Specialist in all programs. We train new employees in programs such as Foodshare, BadgerCare+, Care Taker Supplement, and so forth. The leads assist with providing updates to policy and procedure for all programs during our bimonthly consortium meeting. The leads also assist the supervisors when needed either in the office or on the Southern Consortium Call Center for the seven counties we serve. We must stay up to date on the ever changing policies and procedures of all programs.

Being in a lead position is considered a promotion from being a specialty worker. Under the proposed wage grid the Lead Economic Support Specialist are placed as category G step 1 at \$23.52 an hour with a \$1.00 an hour stipend. The category G step 1 placement is for Family Team Economic Specialists. The category H step 1 placement is for specialty teams of Child Care, EBD and Bilingual with a starting wages at \$24.70 an hour. Meaning under the proposed wage grid the specialty teams will be earning \$24.70, which is more than the lead workers will earn at \$24.52 an hour. Respectfully, this is an injustice for our dedication, hard work, and persistence to excellence in this leadership role. There has been much discussion in the county about maintaining employees, I personally don't see how placing a lead worker under a specialty worker on the pay grid is a way to promote dedication and longevity of employment.

I ask that you consider the Lead Economic Support Specialist positions at the least in the category H position on the pay grid with the \$1.00 an hour stipend.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



Kathy King

Lead Economic Support Specialist
Rock County Human Services Dept.
Economic Support
1717 Center Ave, Ste 650
Janesville, WI 53546
(608) 741-3475 Desk
(608) 295-6240 Cell

kathy.king@co.rock.wi.us

Haley Thompson

From: MELISSA DYBAS
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2023 5:21 PM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Cc: MELISSA DYBAS
Subject: Wage Grid

Hello:

My name is Melissa Dybas, I have worked for the County for almost 10 years and as a Lead Economic Support Specialist for 5.5 years. You can imagine my surprise when my position as a Lead ES wasn't even recognized on the wage grid. After spending a great deal of time exploring the grid and asking questions it has come to my attention that according to what I've been told Leads in ES will be placed in the same category as ongoing staff with a \$1.00 stipend, while specialty teams will be earning a higher rate. Leads are at the bare minimum a specialty team. In order to get this position it was critical that I had come from a specialty team. Our specialty teams are Leads, Bilingual, Childcare and EBD. These teams are consider specialty because they are required to have a great deal more training, knowledge and ultimately do more work.

Where Leads differ from other specialties is that we are required to know all programs, so we are required to be trained in Childcare and EBD programs, as well as all of the other Family Team programs. We are not only required to know them but must be able to answer questions and explain them to ongoing staff. Additionally, as a Lead we are apart of the training team, which means we welcome new staff and train them in our Family Team programs such as BadgerCare, FoodShare, CTS etc. In order to train we have to have practical knowledge of our systems and also stay current on all federal and state policy. In addition to knowing the policy we also often have to present the new/changing policies and explain them at our Southern Consortium meetings. Leads also have Supervisory duties when other Supervisors are not available. These are just a few of the additional responsibilities that we as Leads are required to have.

It is my understanding that currently Leads are expected to be considered the same as ongoing staff and at Step#1 would have a rate of \$23.52 plus \$1.00 as opposed to specialty teams who will earn \$24.70 for their Step#1. So Leads will make less money than a specialty team member who is not required to have as much knowledge and have less responsibilities? At this point it would make sense for all of the Leads to go back to the specialty teams they came from because it would be more money and less responsibility. It would be very difficult to fill the Lead ES position if any of us left as having training in EBD or Child Care is critical to being able to get the position and it would be a pay cut for anyone already in a specialty position, so why would anyone want that position? Leads, in my humble opinion, should be in a category all of their own as we have to have training in all ES programs, we have to train the programs and we are the level between ongoing staff and Supervisors, this is a unique position with it's own unique requirements. While I understand that it may not be possible to have our own category, I would at the very minimum as that we be considered a specialty team at the higher rate of pay.

Thank you for your consideration,



Melissa Dybas

Lead Economic Support Specialist
Rock County Human Services Dept.
1717 Center Avenue, Ste 600
Janesville, WI 53548
(608) 741-3519
melissa.dybas@co.rock.wi.us

Haley Thompson

From: Misti Whittaker <Misti.Whittaker@WICOURTS.GOV>
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2023 1:46 PM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: Public comment

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I understand I have not submitted this in a timely manner for this afternoon's meeting, but do also realize another meeting will be held on February 20, 2023.

Thank you,
Misti Whittaker
Deputy Clerk of Court

I am writing today in regard to the recently completed employee wage study and ongoing discussions about the implementation of the study recommendations. I appreciate you pausing this process to give it appropriate consideration. Those responsible for this study within the County have provided little to no valuable communication to employees. While some limited information has been shared this has lacked any specificity that would allow for staff to even remotely begin to understand the implications.

I was unable to attend your January 23rd meeting, but it is my understanding that one of the concerns expressed at that meeting that you are considering is the issue of the equitable treatment of employees who have served the county for several years. Although the consultant specifically mentioned this in their report, this has been conspicuously absent from other county-generated materials.

The consultant report also indicates that approximately 60% of county employees have historically been compensated fairly. This is very positive. The report however goes on to say that approximately 40% of county staff are under-compensated. In some instances, it was found that some positions are paid at significantly below market value.

The consultant has defined the market value as Step 6 in the proposed compensation schedule. There are a number of examples where the compensation of current employees with 10-15 years of service fall below Step 1 (the bottom) of the proposed pay schedule. This is a strong indication that those positions have historically not been properly compensated.

Implementing the wage study recommendations by setting compensation for a long-term (10 or more years) county public servant and a new hire at the same level is simply inappropriate. To then have those two employees move forward from year to year at the same progression is even more inappropriate. I find it baffling that county staff would offer this as a proposal to the Board for consideration.

I would ask that you give strong consideration to placing any employees with 5 or more years of experience at Step 6 (market value). I would suggest that consideration then be given to making employees with 5 or more years of experience eligible for multiple progression Steps for each of the next two years. This would allow those long-standing county employees to reach a fair value based on their experience by 2025.

I recognize that there will be a cost to this approach. Perhaps not surprisingly, the majority of the underpaid positions are at the lower end of the pay scale. This will help limit the cost of implementing a plan that will address county pay inequities and specifically deal with those inequities for those employees where the need is the greatest. It should also be noted that the consultant found 60% of county staff to at a minimum be fairly compensated and yet the current proposal is for all staff to receive an increase. Perhaps a 1-2 year freeze on the compensation where the staff was found to be paid overcompensated should be considered in order to allow for more cost-effective implementation. I recognize that this will impact some percentage of higher wage earners but it seems to be the right thing to do for the taxpayers and the under-compensated employees. It is disappointing that the current county administration seems to give no consideration to this when providing information to the Board.

Misti Whittaker
Deputy Clerk of Court

Haley Thompson

From: Tina Russell
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 9:23 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Cc: Michelle Lynch
Subject: Resolution

To whom it may concern,

I feel that all RH staff should get the same amount of COLA (4%) as stated in resolution #3. Every department has been struggling short staff issues through the pandemic. Some departments more than others...my point is we are "all in this together".

Thanks,

Tina Russell
Central Supply Clerk
Rock Haven Nursing Home
tina.russell@co.rock.wi.us
608-757-5005

Haley Thompson

From: Jennifer Varela
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 9:30 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: Wage Grid Feedback

Hello,

I received the email regarding the three resolutions that will be discussed at today's meeting. I think it would be appropriate to approve the first resolution, which "would provide a 2.0% COLA for all staff. This resolution is intended to provide some funding to all staff while wage study implementation is considered for later in 2023." Rock County pays workers in child welfare significantly less than surrounding counties, making the turnover here higher for CPS workers. It's difficult to hire and retain good quality workers. There are currently only 4 staff of color in CPS and 1 of them is leaving next week. We desperately need to hire Spanish speaking and diverse workers to better serve the needs of our community. Working in CPS is difficult to begin with, so offering a competitive wage is important to hiring and keeping good workers.

I also want to advocate how important the equity manager positions are to this agency. They have provided important leadership and professional development to all staff. They help create a more equitable work environment. They are an integral part of creating a safe work environment, particularly with staff who identify as being part of diverse and marginalized communities. It is imperative that their positions continue to be part of our agency.

Respectfully,



Jennifer Varela

she/her/ella
Family Support and Preservation Specialist
Rock County Child Protective Services
P.O. Box 1649
Janesville, WI 53547
Work Cell: 608-728-6118
Fax: 608-757-8418
Jennifer.Varela@co.rock.wi.us

Haley Thompson

From: Crystal Gudenschwager <Crystal.Gudenschwager@WICOURTS.GOV>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 9:51 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: COLA

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Please select the second solution. I am already paid below a market value. Failing to provide a 4% increase to staff across the board sets a tone that we are not valued and my dedication to my employer is disregarded. ... LESS THAN A 4-HOUR NOTICE FOR FEEDBACK! ? ! ? ! ?

“Committed to improving the well-being of our community.”??

I was a state employee through ACT 10 changes. I worked for the State for 15 years. I became a Rock County employee in 2018. I took a \$3.00 pay cut not to travel. Rock County is working backwards. I have 20 years in with the Wisconsin pension. There is no encouragement to stay.

I predicted this would happen with the work study. As they stated during the presentation at the county board meeting, **everything with government takes long and Rock County-you are behind.** You gave us hope that we would be pushed to the market level and are dropping the ball. With a less than 4-hour notice to provide feedback. **WHAT IS GOING ON?**

I am a parent. My taxes go up on my mortgage every year. It is \$50 more per month since I purchased my home in 2017. That is \$600 more per year. My car insurance has gone up every 6 months, I pay \$275 per month for 2 vehicles! It is sad when we buy groceries that we have nothing extra after.

I have a demanding job. I do not use my allotted vacation. My teenage son works and contributes, because my government job doesn't suffice.

My significant other is also a county employee. He works overtime every pay period to try and make up the difference. He makes 13% below market value after the sad 7% increase... he'll still be 6% below after next year's increase. He saves lives and risks his own. This takes additional time from my family, in addition to overtime hours I work at the county. This is wrong!! I have worked a part time job due to the cost of living increases. Employees have a 40 hour work week for a reason. We are struggling to make ends meet on our basic needs. Money matters.

THIS IS EXTREMELY DISAPPOINTING. DO BETTER ROCK COUNTY.

Crystal Gudenschwager

Haley Thompson

From: Lanatasha Bell
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 9:52 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: feedback

Hello thank you for the opportunity to submit feedback.

The current resolutions only offer temporary fixes, whereas the wage grid that was presented by McGrath addresses long term plans.

I would like to the committee to please listen to and honor the recommendations of the Human Resources department. What would they recommend? Their expertise needs to be centered here, they are they experts. Feelings are not facts, so listening to the people who have the educational and professional background in this area are paramount.

As a department they are tasked with doing what is best for the county as a whole, not favoring individuals or certain departments. The advantage of having an outside agency complete the wage study is that the work is done and impartial. I worry that by ignoring that process, we allow the loudest voices to control the narrative.

The wage study and grid are about improving Rock County beyond right now. What does the current job market say? What are the trends? Can Rock County remain competitive if we do not accept the grid? The sad truth is that if we continue to ignore the Human Resources experts we will continue to feel the impact on the community we serve. We need to be able to hire the best and the brightest because our community deserves that!

Haley Thompson

From: Mary Kubiak
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 9:56 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: wage study

I feel #2 is more feasible out of the resolutions. #3 doesn't make sense and I think a lot of people would be upset. I'd rather have the wage grid be perfected this year so it's done right and not rushed through.

Thanks for your time,
Mary

Mary Kubiak
Clerk Typist III
Rock County Land Conservation Dept.
440 N US Hwy 14, Janesville WI 53546
608-754-6617 ext. 4757
mary.kubiak@co.rock.wi.us

Haley Thompson

From: Jennifer Behnke
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 9:59 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: FW: County Board Staff Committee to Consider COLA Resolutions at Today's Meeting (comments)

Good morning,
My feedback is in green below;

- 1) The first resolution would provide a 2.0% COLA for all staff. This resolution is intended to provide some funding to all staff while wage study implementation is considered for later in 2023. While this is a completely feasible option, it weighs greatly that a full agreement and implementation can be completed in 2023. I do hope that will happen, but it puts pressure on all the decision makers and that can be troublesome as we need the right decisions to be made and not just chosen to meet a deadline.
- 2) The second resolution would provide a 4.0% COLA for all staff. This resolution is intended to provide all available budgeted funding for a COLA and put off implementation of a new wage grid until 2024. This resolution would also provide additional temporary wage increases for approximately four positions that have the highest recruitment and retention challenges, as identified by Human Resources, effective April 1, 2023. Out of the 3, I feel this option is the best as it covers all employees and it provides the county as a whole more time to determine, organize and implement a strong wage grid that will help recruit and keep quality candidates.
- 3) The third resolution would provide a 4.0% COLA for all staff at Rock Haven. This resolution is intended to address high turnover among certain Rock Haven staff. This solution is great for Rock Haven, however the positions that are outside of Rock Haven that have recruitment and retention challenges get nothing. I feel that there will be some unhappy employees if that happens. They will get additional compensation/income now (with the rise in cost of everything, this is important to many of our daily lives) and the rest of the county will have to wait until an undetermined time to start to receive any additional compensation.

From: Josh Smith <Josh.Smith@co.rock.wi.us>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 8:06 AM
Subject: County Board Staff Committee to Consider COLA Resolutions at Today's Meeting

All County Staff—

As you know, the County Board Staff Committee has paused consideration of implementing a new wage grid while it seeks additional options to address concerns raised by employees.

In the meantime, the committee will consider three resolutions at its meeting at 4:30 p.m. today that would each provide a separate option for cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) for staff, effective January 1, 2023.

- 1) The first resolution would provide a 2.0% COLA for all staff. This resolution is intended to provide some funding to all staff while wage study implementation is considered for later in 2023.
- 2) The second resolution would provide a 4.0% COLA for all staff. This resolution is intended to provide all available budgeted funding for a COLA and put off implementation of a new wage grid until 2024. This resolution would

also provide additional temporary wage increases for approximately four positions that have the highest recruitment and retention challenges, as identified by Human Resources, effective April 1, 2023.

- 3) The third resolution would provide a 4.0% COLA for all staff at Rock Haven. This resolution is intended to address high turnover among certain Rock Haven staff.

If you would like to submit written comments on any of these resolutions, please do so sending them to countyadmin@co.rock.wi.us **by noon today**. You are also welcome to attend the meeting in person or via Zoom. The agenda can be found [here](#) or by visiting the County's website and clicking on "Government" and then "Rock County Board and Committee Agendas."

Josh Smith
Rock County Administrator
51 S. Main Street
Janesville, WI 53545
(608) 757-5510
josh.smith@co.rock.wi.us
Pronouns: he/him



Haley Thompson

From: John Baumgartner <John.Baumgartner@Wlcourts.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 10:05 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: Wage

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Good Morning,

I support #2 in the email.

Thank you,
John

Monday, Feb 20, 2023

Dear Staff Committee:

"In 2021 Rock County, Wisconsin reported 53 employees making more than \$100,000 per year; by comparison the average salary was \$57,906. The highest reported pay for the county was \$199.14/HR for Kenneth Robbins, Medical Director. Rock County, Wisconsin in 2021 ranked 155th in the nation among highest paying counties and 3,387th in the nation for overall highest paying employers" (source: Open payroll.com). This does not even factor in the Cadillac health benefit package that employees receive in addition to their pay. This information is contrary to what the current administration has presented to you. To continue to give annual percentage increases to all county employees will only drive up payroll costs higher and result in actual higher dollar increases to those who need it the least. This proposed COLA pay structure rewards poor performing employees and hinders the departments that are struggling most to recruit and retain employees.

In my professional opinion, I would suggest that you recommend that the administration give the 4% raises to those on the lower end of the payscale that have been hardest hit by inflation. For example -limit the 4% increase to those making under \$30 per hour, while freezing all higher income earners. Additional monies should be given to the departments, such as Rock Haven, that are struggling with retention and recruitment. This allows those department heads more flexibility to provide needed referral or retention bonuses, as well as, any pay adjustments that are needed to retain their human resources.

Sheila Williams
3611 Candlewood Dr.
Janesville, WI 53546

Haley Thompson

From: Ruth Tracy
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 10:06 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: Wage

Good morning,

I wanted to provide feedback from what I am hearing from staff in BH. I think staff would feel supported if #2 was implemented. I also think #1 would be supported with a timeline for implementation on the new wage grid. Staff are hopeful and being patient, and would like to see some type of wage increase due to the current state of affairs in our country.

Kind regards,



Ruth Tracy, LPC
Supervisor, Comprehensive Community Services
Rock County Human Services Department
64 Eclipse Blvd
Beloit, WI 53511
O: 608-363-6319 C: 608-751-5466
ruth.tracy@co.rock.wi.us
Work schedule: M-R 0700-1730
Jason Cliffgard/Friday coverage: 608-247-8091

"Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better." Maya Angelou

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Haley Thompson

From: Lori Bienema <Lori.Bienema@WICOURTS.GOV>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 10:08 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: County Board Staff Committee to Consider COLA Resolutions at Today's Meeting

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I believe #3 should be removed as an option as singling out one group of employees would cultivate resentment among all employees.

Regards,

Lori R Bienema

Haley Thompson

From: Turner Wentzien
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 9:16 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: Wage Study Question

Hello,

I am with the crisis and connections team through Integrated services (HSD). On the basis of resolution 2, Will there be additional consideration for understaffed and 24 hour departments such as Crisis Intervention? Crisis has been chronically understaffed and fails to attract workers. I recognize each department may feel their department is deserving of the wage increase this year. I was just hoping for an opportunity for other departments than just four positions to be considered for immediate support. Would departments that have been understaffed be considered for the increase as well to increase our attractiveness to potential employees? Thank you for any info you can provide.

Turner Wentzien



H. Turner Wentzien, LPC-IT

Crisis & Connections Resource Worker
Rock County Human Services Dept.
P.O. Box 1649
Janesville, WI 53547-1649
(608) 921-2762 Cell
(608) 757-5348 Desk
(608) 757-5025 Crisis
Turner.Wentzien@co.rock.wi.us

Haley Thompson

From: Teena Monk.Gerber
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 11:03 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: COLA resolutions

Hello and thank you for the transparency regarding the resolutions going before the county board today. I would like to express my opinion that the board support either #1 or #2. All staff are experiencing hardships during this time and need a COLA increase.

I completely understand the need to maintain and increase staffing at Rock Haven, but please consider everyone during this difficult economic time we're facing. There are many staff who need to work more than one job to maintain their housing and put food on the table. I feel the county needs to take care of their current staffing in general or more turnover will occur. Thank you for your consideration!



Teena Monk-Gerber, CSW, MSE

Family Caregiver Support Specialist

ADRC of Rock County-Aging Unit

Rock County Human Services Dept.

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 1649

Janesville, WI 53547-1649

(608) 758-8455 Office

Office Address:

1717 Center Ave.

Janesville, WI 53546

(608) 751-8689 Mobile

teena.monk.gerber@co.rock.wi.us

***Sometimes our light goes out but is blown into flame
by another human being.***

***Each of us owes deepest thanks to those who have
rekindled this light.***

~ Albert Schweitzer

Haley Thompson

From: DiAnne Riley <kotesma1@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 11:27 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: Wage Grid

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I work for Rock County Transit and I have a variety of comments and even more concerns with emails I've read about the proposed wage grid but I actually don't have the time to type it all out because we're always SO insanely busy and stressed and this was short notice as it's already almost noon now.

We all work our butts off daily, usually 11+ hour days, Mon-Sat, working with extremely difficult clientele, their families, traffic, driving conditions, driving buses with constant mechanical issues and usually never get breaks and often-times short lunches and sometimes no lunch at all.

We work short-handed daily!
We make \$15.00 an hour.

HOW IS THIS A LIVABLE WAGE??????

Prisoners in this county are getting an EXPENSIVE new jail but we may not get a substantial increase in our wage now?

Rock County prisoners get better treatment than EMPLOYEES do!!!

Haley Thompson

From: Michele Olson <Michele.Olson@Wlcourts.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 11:38 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: County Board Staff Committee to Consider COLA Resolutions at Today's Meeting

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After receiving the email from Josh Smith this morning regarding the wage study being pushed aside yet again, I am utterly disappointed in the County's concern for their staff. I am actually losing hope that anything will ever become of this wage study since it continues to be pushed off into the future as though it's not an important issue.

And giving staff a mere 4 hours to respond is absolutely ludicrous!! So for anyone who may have taken a vacation day today or is out sick, they don't get to share their opinions??

As the cost of living continues to rise, it has become increasingly difficult for me to make ends meet while raising two teenage children. I am actually considering getting a part-time job because of my low salary.

It is my opinion that the second resolution of 4% COLA you have offered makes the most sense for all staff and treats everyone fairly.

Please consider my opinion when making your decision on a fair resolution for all Rock County staff. All Rock County staff deserves a raise, not just employees who work at Rock Haven. I shouldn't be discriminated against simply because I work at the Courthouse.

Kind regards,

Michele Olson

Judicial Assistant to Judge Ashley J. Morse
Rock County Circuit Court, Branch 4
51 South Main Street | Janesville, WI 53545
p: 608.743.2242 | e: Michele.Olson@wicourts.gov

Haley Thompson

From: Sarah Tjoa <Sarah.Tjoa@WICOURTS.GOV>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 11:42 AM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: COLA resolution

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Good morning,

In response to the County Administrator's request for feedback re: COLA Resolutions, I respectfully request the County Board to implement Option 2. This is not solely for the 4% increase, but more importantly to give everyone more time to consider changes to the new wage grid. I feel strongly that everyone needs more time to carefully consider any changes/suggestions on the wage study.

Kind regards,

Sarah Tjoa

Judicial Assistant to Judge Karl R. Hanson

Rock County Circuit Court Branch 1

608-743-2261

Sarah.Tjoa@wicourts.gov

Haley Thompson

From: Kendra Schiffman
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 12:10 PM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: FW: County Board Staff Committee RE: Wage Grid

I accidentally sent my message below to the wrong email. I hope this will still be considered.

From: Kendra Schiffman
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 11:59 AM
To: countyamin@co.rock.wi.us
Subject: County Board Staff Committee RE: Wage Grid

Dear County Board Members

I would like to respond to the wage grid resolutions being considered.

The county has paid consultants a great deal of money to go through this process to get Rock County where it needs to be to stabilize staffing so that we can provide necessary services to the community. The consultants have made a recommendation that benefits Rock County as a whole in terms of providing a more rational and consistent compensation process that also allows for advancement over time in more consistent ways for all employees. By deciding to implement a plan that will get Rock County closer to employee compensation that is more consistent with the job market that exists today will dramatically improve recruitment and retention of staff overall and into the future. Just because the recommendation is imperfect and needs to be adjusted does not mean we should put off implementation for another year. This creates even greater uncertainty for staff and you will lose even more employees, which actually exacerbates the problems this process was trying to solve in the first place. By deciding to begin the implementation now, this will directly benefit all staff by better ensuring there are enough people to do the work and enough staff with accumulated knowledge to provide consistency and stability; constantly covering for unfilled positions or training too many new staff at a time is a drain on all staff, which also impacts services. If the budgeted resources for getting all staff compensation closer to market value is just put toward giving everyone the same COLA, you are reinforcing the existing problems that the consultants were paid to help us fix, and we have *wasted* a great deal of time and resources to be in the same place that the county was before this process began. Putting off implementation until next year only creates greater uncertainty to staff. None of the 3 resolutions offered address the overall problems that the new wage grid implementation is trying to solve—it just continues to put off the hard decisions and only provides short-term solutions. We need long-term solutions now or we will have even bigger staffing issues to solve in the near future.

Sincerely,
Dr. Kendra Schiffman



Kendra S. Schiffman, Ph.D.
Pronouns: She/her/hers - [Why pronouns?](#)
Analyst
Rock County Human Services Dept.
P.O. Box 1649
Janesville, WI 53547-1649
(608) 757-5247
Kendra.Schiffman@co.rock.wi.us

Haley Thompson

From: Erin Curtis
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 12:04 PM
To: COUNTYADMIN
Subject: wage grid comments

Good morning County Administrators,

I am a physician working for CCS writing with a comment about the wage grid.

Personally, I am not financially impacted by the wage grid so I am hoping that my comments can be seen as generally objective.

First, I must say that the impact of low starting pay on hiring does impact patient care. There are a lot of open positions that are difficult to fill and part of this is likely the low starting wages offered. Hiring in these positions is essential in terms of providing medical care. Full staffing in our program is crucial for even basic functions of my job. When service facilitators are overburdened with too many in their caseloads it becomes harder for patients to even attend their appointments with me. When no-show rates are higher it wastes doc time and county resources.

Second, as a physician double board certified in addiction psychiatry, I am trained in science. I understand that the wage study was expensive but deemed a good investment because they are experts with specialized training that allows them to give a scientifically based recommendation. I do believe that making decisions based on scientific data rather than popular opinion is ultimately the fairest and most effective way to go in terms of addressing the hiring problem.

Last, as a person who has studied hard for decades, paid a lot of money, and lost a lot of sleep for my education, I do think that training matters. Those who have devoted years to study need to be compensated accordingly. Advancing your education means taking on student loans and losing potential wages d/t being in classes instead of working those hours. Furthermore, a well-trained workforce will provide better services and likely lower liability in other ways. It would also let me and our program leaders to spend less of our work hours teaching and training staff on basic information. Some of this information is basic stuff about how to save lives through harm reduction. Cost savings come in a lot of hidden forms.

Thank you for reaching out to gather staff feedback about this challenging issue. I appreciate the spirit of fairness that appears to underlie this conversation on all sides.

Very Best Regards,

Erin M. Curtis, MD

Haley Thompson

From: Josh Smith
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 2:00 PM
To: Haley Thompson
Subject: FW: County Board Staff Committee to Consider COLA Resolutions at Today's Meeting

Haley—

Please include Judge Morse's comments at the CBS meeting today. Thanks.

From: Ashley Morse <Ashley.Morse@Wlcourts.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 11:44 AM
To: Josh Smith <Josh.Smith@co.rock.wi.us>
Subject: RE: County Board Staff Committee to Consider COLA Resolutions at Today's Meeting

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While I myself am not a county employee I am writing in support of resolution two after consultation with core staff. So many county employees are absolutely essential to keeping our courts open and the wheels of justice turning. It is disappointing to hear that the wage study is being postponed again. Like spokes on a wheel when one group is underfunded and underappreciated it can quickly affect the entire system. I am aware of the staffing issues at Rock Haven but I fear by not addressing the needs of ALL county employees we may end up just shifting the problem. Our county employees work hard, and have continued to do so through a pandemic. They deserve a living wage without having to work second or third jobs just to make ends meet.
Thank you for your consideration.

Judge Ashley J. Morse
Rock County Circuit Court

From: Josh Smith <Josh.Smith@co.rock.wi.us>
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 8:06 AM
Subject: [E] County Board Staff Committee to Consider COLA Resolutions at Today's Meeting

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All County Staff—

As you know, the County Board Staff Committee has paused consideration of implementing a new wage grid while it seeks additional options to address concerns raised by employees.

In the meantime, the committee will consider three resolutions at its meeting at 4:30 p.m. today that would each provide a separate option for cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) for staff, effective January 1, 2023.

- 1) The first resolution would provide a 2.0% COLA for all staff. This resolution is intended to provide some funding to all staff while wage study implementation is considered for later in 2023.
- 2) The second resolution would provide a 4.0% COLA for all staff. This resolution is intended to provide all available budgeted funding for a COLA and put off implementation of a new wage grid until 2024. This resolution would also provide additional temporary wage increases for approximately four positions that have the highest recruitment and retention challenges, as identified by Human Resources, effective April 1, 2023.
- 3) The third resolution would provide a 4.0% COLA for all staff at Rock Haven. This resolution is intended to address high turnover among certain Rock Haven staff.

If you would like to submit written comments on any of these resolutions, please do so sending them to countyadmin@co.rock.wi.us **by noon today**. You are also welcome to attend the meeting in person or via Zoom. The agenda can be found [here](#) or by visiting the County's website and clicking on "Government" and then "Rock County Board and Committee Agendas."

Josh Smith
Rock County Administrator
51 S. Main Street
Janesville, WI 53545
(608) 757-5510
josh.smith@co.rock.wi.us
Pronouns: he/him



OBJECTION: Developing a Reverse 180 Degree evaluation program for all managers would take significant effort from an HR department that is already understaffed (per the HueLife report) and in the midst of implementing the new HR/payroll system. Further, the new HR/payroll system includes a performance evaluation module that may make implementing such evaluations more automated. It may be best to consider such a program after this new module has been implemented.

RESPONSE: Regarding the Reverse 180 Degree evaluation program, while it is true that it may take some effort to develop and implement, the potential benefits of such a program should not be overlooked. A program like this can provide valuable feedback to managers, and can help to improve the overall management culture within the county. While the new HR/payroll system may include a performance evaluation module, it is not clear if this will be sufficient to capture the kind of feedback that a Reverse 180 Degree evaluation program can provide. Furthermore, waiting until the new module has been implemented may delay the implementation of this important program.

OBJECTION: Another example of a program that would take some resources to implement would be the anonymous Employee Suggestion Box Online Platform. This would require the purchase of software to allow management to be able to communicate back to staff who have submitted anonymous input, which is not possible via email.

RESPONSE: Regarding the Employee Suggestion Box Online Platform, while it is true that it may require the purchase of software to allow management to communicate back to staff who have submitted anonymous input, this cost should be considered in the context of the potential benefits of the program. An anonymous suggestion box can help to create a more open and transparent communication culture, which can lead to a more engaged and motivated workforce. In addition, there may be low-cost or free options for software that can be used for this purpose. Examples include:

- IdeaScale
- ideanote.io (under \$15k per year which is about \$10 per employee per year)
- SurveyMonkey (\$300 per year gets us up to 50,000 responses)
- This is not an exhaustive list

OBJECTION: The Board should also take into consideration the time and cost of scheduling at least one County Board meeting annually for a town-hall style meeting between the County Administrator and staff. If the Board is truly interested in creating an opportunity for staff to feel like they can share input, there would likely need to be multiple County Board meetings for the County's 1,400 staff to feel like they have had the opportunity to share their ideas through this forum.

RESPONSE: The town-hall meeting is done at the direction of the County Board but it is between the staff and County Administrator. County Supervisors are not required to attend. As a result, no county board meetings are required.

It is true that scheduling a town-hall style meeting can be time-consuming and may require additional resources, such as venue rental and staff time to coordinate the event. However, the potential benefits of such a meeting, including increased communication, employee engagement, and the opportunity for staff to share their ideas and concerns, may outweigh the costs. The meeting can be designed to be efficient and effective, and can be held at a time and location that is convenient for staff.

While it is true that a single meeting may not be sufficient to allow all 1,400 staff members to share their ideas and concerns, the resolution does not require that all staff members participate in a single meeting – or even participate at all. The resolution proposes at least one meeting annually, which can serve as a starting point for creating a more open and transparent communication culture within the organization. Additional meetings can be scheduled as needed, and other communication channels can be used to allow staff to share their ideas and concerns.

OBJECTION: The Board should also consider whether a public meeting is most likely to create the open and safe environment the resolution intends to create.

RESPONSE: The concern about whether a public meeting is most likely to create the open and safe environment intended by the resolution is a valid one. However, there are ways to create a safe and open environment for staff to share their ideas and concerns in a public meeting. For example, the meeting can be moderated by a neutral party to ensure that all voices are heard and that the discussion remains focused and respectful. The meeting can also be designed to allow staff to submit their questions or feedback anonymously, if desired.

It is important to note that the resolution proposes a town-hall style meeting as one of several actions to improve communication, engagement, and innovation within the organization. While the meeting is an important component of the resolution, it should be considered in the context of the other proposed actions, such as the Employee Suggestion Box Online Platform and the Reverse 180 Degree evaluation program. The combination of these actions can help to create a more open and transparent communication culture, which can lead to a more engaged and motivated workforce.

OBJECTION: Offering one paid vacation day as the prize for an Employee Incentive Program would require a change to the Personnel Ordinance on how vacation days are awarded.

RESPONSE: It is true that offering a paid vacation day as an incentive for the program would require a change to the Personnel Ordinance. However, such a change can be relatively straightforward and can be achieved through the usual channels for updating personnel policies. In the context of the potential benefits of the incentive program, the time and effort required to make this change may be worthwhile.

While it is true that the program proposes offering one paid vacation day as the prize for the best idea submitted each quarter, this should be seen as a starting point. The program can be revised over time to include other incentives or rewards, based on the feedback of staff and the experience of implementing the program. The point of the program is to recognize and reward employee innovation, and the specific incentive offered can be adjusted as needed to achieve this goal.

It is also worth noting that the proposed incentive program has the potential to generate cost savings and efficiency gains for the county, as it encourages employees to share their ideas for improving operations and services. The cost of offering a paid vacation day as an incentive may be outweighed by the potential benefits of implementing the ideas submitted by staff.

OBJECTION: The County and its departments already undertake efforts to communicate with, engage, and recognize employees. In addition to various departmental efforts, between 2016 and 2019 Rock County conducted employee engagement surveys to help identify areas of strength and for improvement. In 2020, the County Board decided to end these internal surveys and instead established the Blue Ribbon Commission on Organizational Excellence and contracted with the HueLife organization “to conduct an organizational review for ensuring that Rock County remains an organization of excellence and enhances its reputation in the community as an employer.” This report is available on the County’s website. The County has implemented a number of the changes recommended in this report and is pursuing others. Further feedback from the County Board on the suggestions made in this report would be welcome.

RESPONSE: It is true that the County and its departments may already undertake efforts to communicate with, engage, and recognize employees. However, the proposed resolution is not meant to negate or replace these efforts, but rather to supplement them. The proposed actions in the resolution, such as the Employee Suggestion Box Online Platform and the Reverse 180 Degree evaluation program, can help to enhance and improve the existing efforts by providing additional channels for employee input and feedback.

While it is true that the County has conducted employee engagement surveys in the past and has established the Blue Ribbon Commission on Organizational Excellence, these efforts may not address all of the specific concerns raised in the proposed resolution. The Employee

Suggestion Box Online Platform, for example, can provide a more immediate and direct channel for employee input, rather than waiting for the next round of employee engagement surveys. The Reverse 180 Degree evaluation program can also help to address concerns about managerial accountability in a more targeted and immediate way.

It is worth noting that the proposed resolution is a proactive approach to employee engagement and innovation, rather than a reactive approach. While the County may already be undertaking efforts to engage and recognize employees, the proposed resolution can help to institutionalize and enhance these efforts, which can lead to more sustained and impactful results.

It is important to note that the programs proposed in the resolution have been designed to be implemented over a period of time, with a focus on progress and continuous improvement. The County Administrator's concerns about staff time and possible expense should be weighed against the potential benefits of these programs, which include increased employee engagement, better communication, and cost-effective solutions to improve the county. The programs can be implemented in stages, starting with the ones that require less resources and building on them over time.

It is also important to note that the resolution has been developed in consultation with employees and other stakeholders, and reflects a shared desire to improve communication, engagement, and innovation within Rock County.

Finally, it is important to note that the proposed resolution has the potential to generate cost savings and efficiency gains for the County, as it encourages employees to share their ideas for improving operations and services. The cost of implementing the proposed actions may be outweighed by the potential benefits of implementing the ideas submitted by staff, which can lead to improved service delivery and reduced costs for taxpayers.

Reclassify Funding Resolution:

Objection: "This project does not "increase public access" as noted in the Final Rule since it is directed for use by stakeholder agencies only and not the general public. Based on the excerpt from the Final Rule quoted above, increasing public access is a required element of such ARPA-funded technology infrastructure projects."

1. **Increased accessibility for those charged with a crime:** Court videoconferencing technology increases public access for those who are charged with a crime, as it enables them to attend court proceedings remotely and efficiently, regardless of their location. By reducing the need for in-person appearances and transfers between the jail and courthouse, the technology can improve the speed and accessibility of the court system for *all members of the public*.
2. **Increased use of AV technology:** The increased use of AV technology for court proceedings, as evidenced by the recent increase in postage costs for Zoom conferencing, suggests that *many members of the public* are utilizing these technologies. By providing access to court proceedings through videoconferencing, the technology *can increase public access* to the court system and improve the delivery of justice.
3. **Compliance with ARPA Final Rule:** The expenditures are compliant with the ARPA Final Rule, which allows for technology infrastructure resources to improve access to and the user experience of government information technology systems, including those in the judicial branch. By improving the efficiency and accessibility of the court system, the expenditures can *increase public access* and meet the criteria for ARPA-funded projects.

Objection: "This project began before COVID, and therefore is not in response to COVID, nor does it respond to the negative economic impacts of COVID."

1. **Relevance to COVID-19 pandemic:** The COVID-19 pandemic has created a pressing need for remote court appearances, as in-person appearances can increase the risk of virus transmission and pose a threat to public health and safety. By providing access to court proceedings through videoconferencing, the technology *can respond to the negative economic impacts of COVID* and enhance public health and safety.

2. **Timing of project initiation:** While I acknowledge that the project may have been initiated before the COVID-19 pandemic, however, *the pandemic has heightened the importance and relevance* of the project, as the need for remote court appearances has increased significantly. By providing timely and efficient access to court proceedings, the technology *can respond to the negative economic impacts of COVID* and improve the delivery of justice.
3. **Compliance with ARPA Final Rule:** The expenditures are compliant with the ARPA Final Rule, which allows for technology infrastructure resources to improve access to and the user experience of government information technology systems, including those in the judicial branch. By improving the efficiency and accessibility of the court system, the expenditures *can respond to the negative economic impacts of COVID* and meet the criteria for ARPA-funded projects.

Objection: "The resolution notes a similar-sounding project from North Carolina, which appears to be justified based on "encouraging social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic," which is not applicable to the Rock County project."

1. **Similarity in purpose:** The purpose of the North Carolina project and the Rock County project are similar, as both aim to improve the efficiency and accessibility of the court system and respond to the negative economic impacts of COVID. By providing remote access to court proceedings, the technology *can encourage social distancing* and improve public health and safety.
2. **Relevance to COVID-19 pandemic:** The COVID-19 pandemic has created a pressing need for remote court appearances, as in-person appearances can increase the risk of virus transmission and pose a threat to public health and safety. By providing access to court proceedings through videoconferencing, the technology can respond to the negative economic impacts of COVID and enhance public health and safety.
3. **Compliance with ARPA Final Rule:** The expenditures are compliant with the ARPA Final Rule, which allows for technology infrastructure resources to improve access to and the user-experience of government information technology systems, including those in the judicial branch. By improving the efficiency and accessibility of the court system, the expenditures can

respond to the negative economic impacts of COVID and meet the criteria for ARPA-funded projects.

Objection: "ARPA funds can be used for providing premium pay for essential workers. While justifying and reporting on the use of ARPA funds for this purpose can be complicated, if the Board is interested in temporarily augmenting wages for certain staff, I would recommend a narrowly tailored program using ARPA funds."

1. This is a good recommendation. We should use ARPA funds to provide premium pay for essential workers.
2. However, a very large number of County Employees will not qualify for premium pay under ARPA rules – perhaps most of them – because the rules are restrictive:

Eligible employees must perform essential work during the pandemic. Essential work is defined by the Final Rule as work that:

(1) Is not performed while teleworking from a residence (remote workers);

AND

(2) Involves:

(i) Regular in-person interactions with patients, the public, or coworkers of the individual that is performing the work; or

(ii) Regular physical handling of items that were handled by, or are to be handled by patients, the public, or coworkers of the individual that is performing the work.

Does not apply to employees: Who work in person, but the nature of their work does not involve regular in-person interactions with others or regular physical handling of items that are handled by others.

Must Target Low- and Moderate-Income Workers:

- An employee who is NOT EXEMPT from the Fair Labor and Standards Act (FLSA) overtime provisions is deemed to be a low- or moderate-income worker.
- An employee whose total wages and remuneration (including premium pay) is less than or equal to 150 percent of the State's average annual wage for all occupations or the county's average annual wage, whichever is higher, is deemed to be a low- or moderate-income worker. Rock County's benefits package is very generous which might disqualify many employees from this program.

Each regular full-time employee shall receive time and one-half their hourly wage or time and one half compensatory time off for all hours worked in excess of eight and one-half hours per day for a 5-2/5-3 schedule; time and one-half compensatory time off shall be taken within the calendar year in which it was earned.

(M) Unilateral Employees in the classification of Director of Nursing, Assistant Director of Nursing, and Nurse Manager, at Rock Haven, shall be eligible for overtime compensation on a straight time basis for hours worked as a floor Registered Nurse outside of their primary role scheduled shift. This pilot project will be subject to the terms and conditions as listed below and will expire on April 20, 2023. Rock Haven will establish an administrative procedure to administer and track this pilot project. Terms and conditions will be as follows:

- Pilot project will be reviewed after 30 and 60 days
- This is a voluntary program. The job titles covered by this pilot project would not be required to participate outside of any established Rock Haven policies and procedures.
- Staff in the four job titles will not complete any duties of their primary role during the floor Registered Nurse shift.
- No one staff member can pick up more than 16 hours of floor registered nurse shifts per week.
- Hours covering for other nurse managers or shift supervisors will not be included in this pilot project.

The following language only applies to employees who are in job classes that were covered by the following collective bargaining agreements on December 31, 2011:

The following are exceptions to the County Ordinance, which provides for overtime compensation on a time and a one-half basis over forty hours per week. Comp time used will not be considered as hours worked for the purpose of computing overtime.

For employees in the following job classes, an employee and the employee's supervisor may agree, on occasion, to a flexible schedule within a one (1) week period, which causes the employee to work in excess of eight (8) hours per day. Upon such agreement, the overtime provisions below shall not apply, until the employee works more than 40 hours in a week.

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(Public Works) Employees shall be expected to respond to a call and report to work outside their respective regular and normal schedule of daily work hours. When an Employee is off duty and directed to report to work outside of their regular and normal schedule of daily work hours, they shall receive time and one-half of their hourly rate of pay for all hours actually worked, provided that in the event they work less than two hours, they shall, nevertheless receive time and one-half their hourly rate of pay for a two hour period of time; further provided, that the aforesaid two hour minimum call-in provision of this section shall apply only if the Employee called into work is sent home prior to the commencement of their next regular and normal schedule of daily work