



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
November 29, 2017

1. ROLL CALL:

Present: Chair Kathy Kleczek, Commissioner's Pamela Alegria, Tracy MacDonald, Kevin Widener, Carol Gearin and Lylla Gaebel.

Executive Director Jeff Hazen, Human Resources Officer, Tammy Carlson, Executive Assistant Mary Parker

2. CHANGES TO AGENDA- None.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT- None

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AGREEMENT- Chair Kleczek explained that the Board has received the updated Executive Director Agreement with changes made by legal counsel to bring it up to current date concerning past requirements. Chair Kleczek also stated that the agreement had been pending however Executive Director Hazen will explain the current urgency of the agreement. Chair Kleczek also said the Employment Agreement Committee had met several times but there are now current circumstances today. Executive Director Hazen clarified that the negotiations today had to be done in an open session.

Executive Director Hazen thanked the Board for the meeting. He stated that he loved his job and that the past 3 years have been awesome, It has been great to be part of the organization and to see what we have all accomplished with the District and the employees. Executive Director Hazen said he had not actively been looking for other employment, however an opportunity came along in the mail for Twin Transit. The salary range was similar to what it is here but they did not receive any quality applicants so Twin Transit increased the salary and went out again. Executive Director Hazen said when he saw the new salary range he thought it was significant and applied. He went through the interview process and ended up becoming one of the 3 finalists that will be interviewed tomorrow. Executive Director Hazen said he could not discount the salary, the benefit package and several other aspects that intrigued him. Executive Director Hazen said that Chair Kleczek wanted to have this meeting prior to him attending the interview.

Executive Director Hazen stressed that he did not want the Board to feel that they are hostages and that this organization is bigger than one person and don't feel compelled to keep me if you don't feel you can.

Chair Kleczek stated this is why we are having a Special Meeting and asked the Board to look at the wage comparison study that Tami had completed for the Employment Agreement Committee. Chair Kleczek said she would like to have the Board make a proposal that does not come from the committee. Chair Kleczek added the majority of the committee in conversation does believe this proposal is a realistic and good one, and that based on our evaluation we all believe that Jeff is doing a good job and like what he has been doing for SETD and believe it would be for the benefit of the District to retain Jeff as our Executive Director.

Chair Kleczek said it has been 3 years since we searched for a new Director and another search was done less than a year previous to that and then another, 2 years before that. Chair Kleczek said it does not look good for the District if they are looking for a new director every 2-3 years as it could reflect badly on us as a workplace. Chair Kleczek added that it would be very challenging if we were to put out a proposal for a new Executive Director and thought it very worthwhile to make an offer to our current Executive Director that would hopefully convince him to turn down the new position and not go up to Centralia tomorrow.

Chair Kleczek proposed making an offer on the 2 things in the agreement that were left blank but are what motivate people to look for a job. The first is a base annual salary of \$90,000 and the second a \$800 monthly contribution to retirement and she clarified that based on the numbers she had been given the budget would support this. Chair Kleczek said she believed this would be a good offer and that if accepted a phone call would

be made to turn down the other offer. Executive Director Hazen asked if the Board wanted him to leave the room during their discussion but all Commissioners agreed it was not necessary.

Commissioner Alegria asked if the proposal was accepted and Jeff left after a year would the next Executive Director's starting salary be \$90,000. Chair Kleczek said this proposal is based on Jeff being here and there is nothing preventing him from deciding to give us notice at any time. Commissioner Alegria also asked about the challenges that Jeff had mentioned and how much did that effect his decision. Executive Director Hazen said he really looked at that but, we are going to have our own challenges here with new technology coming in and with the new transportation funding and implementation of our Long Range Transportation Plan.

Commissioner Widener asked what the increase to wages at Twin Transit would be after starting. Executive Director Hazen said their wage range is \$101,000 to \$115,000 Commissioner Widener asked if they had a policy on wage increases. Executive Director Hazen said he did not know.

Commissioner Gearin noted that the word "any" needed to be changed to "at" on page 3. Chair Kleczek explained that this paragraph clarifies that the Executive Director is an "at will" employee. There was discussion and clarification of the termination process as written in agreement.

Commissioner Alegria asked how many hours of vacation and sick time Executive Director Hazen has acquired. Chair Kleczek reported that currently he has 100 hours of vacation and 144 hours of sick pay which will be added to the agreement upon end of employment. Executive Director Hazen noted that employee policy states that you can only carry over 80 hours per fiscal year and can only be paid for 80 hours upon end or employment and that this also needs to be added to the agreement.

Executive Director Hazen noted a correction on page 1 that under employment time changing it from 4 to 3 years and on page 2 item G., the American Transportation Association should be changed to the Community Transportation Association of America here and on page 3 under section 5 item B.

Executive Director Hazen stated if the Board passes this that he will make the call and stay, making this an official commitment.

Commissioner Gaebel moved that the necessary corrections be made to the agreement and the Board offer Executive Director Hazen \$90,000 per year salary and \$800 a month in retirement benefits.

Commissioner MacDonald seconded the motion.

Discussion- Commissioner Widener said he was concerned about us getting involved in a bidding war and that this could escalate to other levels. Commissioner Widener said he was perfectly happy with doing this but that this sets precedence here and to what end is this going to happen. Commissioner Gaebel said in response to that, we have had very low pay for our director for obvious reasons, we have had lots and lots of debt, we have tried to keep ourselves low just because of that but we want to have quality people and keep quality people here and as Kathy previously pointed out, we do not want a revolving door for our Director's and stated she believes this actually brings us in line to where the position should be. Commissioner Gearin said she agreed with Commissioner Gaebel but she also agrees that we have a lot facing us and a lot of different pools that are going on and Jeff knows what they are and to bring somebody else on board means we have to go back and start again so she stated that she is supporting this agreement. Commissioner MacDonald said that he understood the concerns. He said we have a proposed expansion to another area and Executive Director Hazen has the experience and the history and having someone qualified to do that is like dropping a stone in water and the ripples start going out and we are in the ripples so why start over and drop another rock. Commissioner Widener said this was not the point he was attempting to make. He said he absolutely supports this but he is wondering what the next step in the line is? Commissioner Gearin said she thought what he meant was we could be looking at this going down the line, and we may but we are looking at a lot of things and we will just have to attack things as they come along. We are going to look at our salaries and we have been doing that on the budget committee. Tami Carlson said it is devastating emotionally when employees have to go from one thing to another and we have been through several directors and it is very tough to keep a good attitude. Executive Director Hazen has done an excellent job of pulling us out of a negative culture. Tami also said that on the Operations side we are on a good track and employees have a great attitude and it would be devastating and a shock to lose Executive Director Hazen. Chair Kleczek said we are doing a wage study for all our employees right now so we will be implementing wage

changes based on our studies for all positions not just for the Executive Director. But to bring our Executive Director's wages in line with what is being offered reasonably and comparably in the area only makes sense and it saves the District money in the long run because embarking on a recruitment right now would cost us a lot of money. Then to offer the same amount of money to a new person when we could have retained the excellent Executive Director we have now by offering him that amount?

Commissioner Alegria said she agreed with everyone's concerns including Kevin's. She said she would be concerned if it were a higher salary and that Executive Director Hazen's work has been excellent. Commissioner Alegria also said that in her past experience she has never been so well informed and taking all the comments together that we should accept this. Commissioner Gaebel said that she recognized the need to look at the salaries of the rest of the employees but today is not the time to have that discussion. She added that there is wage study ongoing and this will be discussed during the next Budget Meeting. Commissioner MacDonald added that he had been involved with the District for some time and Executive Director Hazen's positive team building does make a difference.

Commissioner MacDonald moved to allow Chair Kleczek sign the Executive Director Employment Agreement

Commissioner Gearin seconded the motion

Discussion-None

Motion passed unanimously

An audio recording of the Sunset Empire Transportation District's Board Meeting is available at: www.ridethebus.org-Board of Commissioners- Monthly Meeting Minutes- November 29, 2017

Meeting was adjourned at 9:50 AM

Mary Parker, Recording Secretary



Secretary/Treasurer Lylla Gaebel

Date 7.26.18

Mission Statement

Provide safe, reliable, relevant and sustainable transportation services to Clatsop County with professionalism, integrity and courtesy.