

AD HOC COMMITTEE
For the Study of
Richland County Administration
March 12, 2019

The Ad Hoc Committee met on Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at 1:00 p.m., in the County Board Room, located on the Third Floor of the Courthouse, 181 West Seminary Street, Richland Center, Wisconsin.

Committee members present included: Melissa Luck, Marty Brewer, Linda Gentes, Buford Marshall, Shaun Murphy-Lopez, Larry Sebranek, Kerry Severson, Darin Gudgeon, Tom Rislow, Barb Scott, and Jo Ann Krulatz. James Bindl and Chris Storer were absent.

Others present included: Victor Vlasak, County Clerk; Tracy Thorsen, Health and Human Services Director; and Supervisor Don Seep.

Chair Luck called the meeting to order.

Motion by Marshall, second by Sebranek that the printed copies of the minutes for the February 15th meeting be approved. Motion carried.

Murphy-Lopez announced that he would be recording the meeting.

Todd Romenesko, County Administrator for Calumet County, addressed the Committee. Calumet County was the first County to implement an Administrative Coordinator in 1983. Mr. Romenesko was the Health and Human Services Director for Calumet County and served under both an Administrative Coordinator and a County Administrator before he became the County Administrator. The position of Administrative Coordinator existed in Calumet County from 1983 to 2000 with the County Clerk serving as Administrative Coordinator. The County Clerk left the Clerk's position to become the Administrative Coordinator. In 2000 that same individual became the County Administrator. A copy of a memorandum from the Calumet County Corporation Counsel to the County Board Supervisors was distributed. The memorandum provided a brief history of the Administrative Coordinator designation and duties and explained that the creation of the County Administrator position would allow for better operations of County departments and staff on a day to day basis and centralize the authority necessary to operate the budget. Creation of the position would also relieve committees of the day-to-day operations of departments. Committees would set policy and the County Administrator would make sure that the policies were carried out. Roll clarification for County Board members was done through development of the County Board Rules. The County policy book identified the authority of the County Administrator and department heads. Calumet County's decision to change from Administrative Coordinator to County Administrator was because the day to day operations did not have an individual leader and decision maker for the organization.

Mr. Romenesko distributed copies of the position description for the Calumet County Administrator and reviewed duties of the position.

Gentes left the meeting at this point.

Mr. Romenesko explained that in Calumet County, he hires and fires the Corporation Counsel. The position of Corporation Counsel is full-time and does not have a private practice. Mr. Romenesko meets with the County Board Chair weekly. He also has monthly meetings with the constitutional officers.

Marshall left the meeting at this point.

Copies of an organization chart for Richland County were distributed. Chair Luck distributed copies of organizational charts from other counties. A decision was made by the Committee that their focus would not be on the organizational structure.

Chair Luck reviewed the current administrative structures in Wisconsin Counties. The three options are county executive, county administrator and administrative coordinator. Nine of the 72 counties have full-time Administrative Coordinators. Of the 24 counties with part-time Administrative Coordinators, 18 of them have either and/or a finance department and a human resources department. Only five counties have the part-time Administrative Coordinators with no finance and human resources departments. The counties are Crawford, Forest, Iron, Richland and Marquette. Marquette County has finance and human resources staff under the Administrative Coordinator's office. A sub-option would be to stay with our current form of administration and, once the current problems are identified whether it is human resources or finance, we could have a finance director and a human resources director to address our current problems without changing things at the administrative level. Most of the counties with full time Administrative Coordinators have a finance department and human resources department.

Motion by Scott, second by Krulatz that the Committee no longer consider the County Executive type of administration. Motion carried. Discussed was the creation of finance and personnel positions to support the administrative structure. The Committee will next hear from Administrative Coordinators.

Brewer left the meeting at this point.

Chair Luck reported on dates available for an appearance on WRCO's morning show to provide the public with information on the Committee's progress. The Committee would make its final recommendation to the County Board at the June 18th meeting.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 27th at 1:00 p.m.

Motion by Krulatz, second by Gudgeon to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 2:46 p.m.

Victor V. Vlasak
Richland County Clerk