

MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2014
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING, BILL LUXFORD STUDIO (ROOM 113)
12:30 P.M.

Advance public notice of the Board of Commissioners meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board and the Lancaster County, Nebraska, web site and emailed to the media on June 20, 2014.

Commissioners present: Larry Hudkins, Chair
 Brent Smoyer, Vice Chair
 Roma Amundson
 Jane Raybould
 Deb Schorr

Others present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer
 Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
 Cori Beattie, Deputy County Clerk

The location announcement of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was given and the meeting was called to order at 12:35 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting was to interview candidates for the position of Emergency Management Director. Eagan distributed a list of interview questions (**Exhibit A**). Commissioner Hudkins requested to ask the lead question, as well as provide closing remarks. The remaining seven questions were divided as follows: #2 and #8 - Amundson; #3 and # 5 - Raybould; #4 and #7 - Schorr; and # 6 - Smoyer.

Amundson stressed the need to ask the questions consistently with no prompting from Board Members. She also pointed out that one candidate (Keith Krueger) claimed veteran's preference.

Eagan said he felt question #6 (see Exhibit A) was very important, as the person filling this position must be someone able to build strong relationships with many public and private agencies. Raybould thought question #4g was also an important component. Amundson countered that question #4f is even more critical. With regard to grant management functions for the department, it was noted that this is under control now that staff in the Budget & Fiscal Office are more involved.

After further review of the interview questions, Schorr recommended that #4b be reworded to say, "With government purchasing laws..." instead of referencing the County Purchasing Act. Schorr also voiced concerns with the lead sentence of question #8. It was decided to reword it as follows, "In the last several years we have faced severe budget challenges while, at the same time, we are a growing community."

Raybould noted that candidates would likely inquire about the process following the interviews. It was decided that the Chair would indicate to the applicants that there might be a second interview with the top two to three candidates with the goal of making a final decision within 30 days.

Interviews commenced with the following applicants: Don Brazie (1:00 p.m.); Mark Hosking (1:30 p.m.); Keith Krueger (2:00 p.m.); James Davidsaver (2:30 p.m.); Pat Gerdes (3:00 p.m.) and James Rogers (3:30 p.m.). Gerdes distributed a list of references (**Exhibit B**).

Following the interviews, the Board discussed how to proceed. Raybould said the Board should feel fortunate that so many talented individuals applied. Schorr voiced concerns with some of their current salary levels which are considerably higher than the previous Emergency Management Director who had been in that position for many years. Amundson and Raybould felt that oftentimes the salary is not the deciding factor when making a job change.

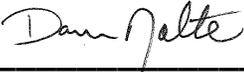
Amundson added that having emergency management experience and training at the national level would be advantageous.

With regard to the salary, Schorr suggested it be discussed publicly. The former Director was paid roughly \$87,515. Raybould felt \$87,000 was high for a starting salary and was confident the County could hire the right candidate for less. A majority of the other Board Members agreed.

Commissioners then forwarded lists of their top three candidates, in priority order, to Eagan for ranking and reference checks. It was noted that changes could be made to the lists between now and Thursday.

It was suggested to schedule further discussion on the Emergency Management Director position on Tuesday, July 1, 2014, following the regular Board of Commissioners meeting.

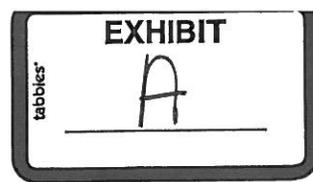
MOTION: Raybould moved and Amundson seconded to adjourn the meeting at 4:14 p.m. Amundson, Raybould, Schorr, Smoyer and Hudkins voted aye. Motion carried 5-0.



Dan Nolte
Lancaster County Clerk



Emergency Management Director Interview Questions
June 24, 2013



1. Please tell us about yourself, including your educational and professional experiences. Why are you applying for this position at this point in your career?
2. The Lancaster County Emergency Management Director is responsible for planning, directing and coordinating a comprehensive program which includes all phases of disaster preparedness as outlined in federal and state law and regulations. In your opinion, what are the essential components of a comprehensive county emergency management program?
3. Describe your management style. Please give specific examples of how you have applied your management style in several different challenging situations.
4. Do you have experience in the following areas:
 - a. Managing employees under a government merit system
 - b. Working with the County Purchasing Act, or preparing requests for proposals in a competitive bidding process
 - c. Governmental budget preparation and monitoring
 - d. Maintaining an outdoor warning system
 - e. Activation of an emergency operations center
 - f. Creating, drafting or working with emergency management policies and procedures
 - g. Obtaining and managing state and federal grants
5. In this position you will often be called upon to deal with angry, difficult, or demanding persons. Describe your approach in dealing with these types of personalities, and describe a specific situation where you have applied your approach and what was the outcome.
6. An effective local emergency management program requires the development of partnerships with numerous governmental and private entities. What are some of the important entities with which partnerships should be developed, and what would be your strategy in developing these partnerships?
7. Base on your knowledge of how the Lancaster County Emergency Management Department is now being operated, is there anything you would change immediately if appointed to this position? What changes to the office would you like to see in the next three to five years?
8. In the last several years property tax revenues have been reduced sharply. If called upon to produce a budget based on 97% of the previous budget year, what priorities would guide you in meeting this challenge.

PATRICK D. GERDES

REFERENCES

Al Berndt, Assistant Director

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
2433 NW 24th Street
Lincoln, NE 68524

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