

MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
3140 N STREET – LOWER LEVEL
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2016
1:00 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 November 23, 2016.

Commissioners present: Roma Amundson, Chair; Todd Wiltgen, Vice-Chair; Bill Avery, Larry Hudkins and Deb Schorr

Others present: Doug McDaniel, Lincoln-Lancaster County Human Resources Director; Kari Foote, Lincoln-Lancaster County Human Resources Coordinator; Todd Duncan, Chief Deputy Sheriff; Brian Jackson, Assistant Chief, Lincoln Police Department; Kim Etherton, Community Corrections Director; Brittany Behrens and Mike Thew, former Deputy County Attorneys; Jennifer Brinkman, Commissioner Elect; Nick Bergin, Lincoln Journal Star and Cori Beattie, Deputy County Clerk

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and announced the location of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

1) DISCUSSION ON COUNTY CORRECTIONS FINALISTS

Prior to the meeting, the following candidates were interviewed by two panels: Mark Chamberlain of Hot Springs, Arkansas, Chief Deputy of Corrections for the Garland County Sheriff's Office; Barry DeJong of Omaha, Vice President of Child and Family Programs for Heartland Family Service; and Brad Johnson, Interim Lancaster County Corrections Director. Following the interviews, each panel had 30 minutes to debrief.

The breakdown of interview panelists was as follows:

Panel A – Doug McDaniel, Lincoln-Lancaster County Human Resources Director (Facilitator); Roma Amundson and Bill Avery, County Commissioners; Todd Duncan, Chief Deputy Sheriff; Mike Thew, former Deputy County Attorney; and Jennifer Brinkman, Commissioner Elect.

Panel B - Kari Foote, Lincoln-Lancaster County Human Resources Coordinator (Facilitator); Deb Schorr and Todd Wiltgen, County Commissioners; Kim Etherton, Community Corrections Director; Brittany Behrens, former Deputy County Attorney; and Brian Jackson, Assistant Chief, Lincoln Police Department.

McDaniel and Foote provided feedback from their respective panels with regard to each candidate's perceived strengths and weaknesses.

McDaniel noted that he also reached out to numerous community stakeholders, including current Corrections staff, for feedback on the position. Some felt there needed to be greater collaboration especially with regard to inmate release. Staff also indicated that stability and trust were important moving forward.

Panelists discussed desirable qualities needed in order to be a successful Corrections Director. In addition to job experience, they emphasized the person needs to be willing to collaborate (internally and externally), be innovative and possess strong communication and budgeting skills.

Many panelists pointed out that Brad Johnson was best prepared and referenced materials he distributed during the interview which outlined various short-term and long-term goals for the Department. There was a strong consensus to support Johnson for the position of Lancaster County Corrections Director.

While Avery agreed that Johnson was a very strong candidate, he said the County Board needs to keep an open mind about bringing in new people with fresh ideas and perspectives. He added the Board would also need to be prepared to make a strong case for an internal hire so that the public does not think other candidates were not legitimately considered.

With regard to the overall hiring process, McDaniel said a national search was performed and 32 applications were received. Phone interviews were conducted by McDaniel, Foote, Etherton, Sheriff Terry Wagner and Sheli Schindler, Youth Services Center Director, with the top ten candidates and from there the field was narrowed to four. One candidate withdrew prior to personal interviews. McDaniel stressed that Johnson proved to be a very marketable candidate through the process.

MOTION: Schorr moved and Hudkins seconded to authorize the Human Resources Director to begin salary negotiations with Brad Johnson for the position of Corrections Director. Hudkins, Wiltgen, Schorr, Avery and Amundson voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.

Avery requested that McDaniel take the lead on discussing the selection and interview process with the media. He also felt it was important to offer the candidates feedback on their interviews.

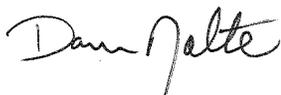
Schorr reiterated how well prepared Johnson was for the interview and referenced his six-month goals for the Department which included reducing the jail population, increasing the use of technology and having an inclusive communications style.

Hudkins, who chose not to run for re-election and did not sit in on the interviews, encouraged Commissioners to continue conducting six-month reviews with new department directors and asked McDaniel if he could assist in this effort. McDaniel said he would be happy to help set benchmarks. He also said he would need some feedback from the Board with regard to salary parameters.

Amundson thanked the Human Resources Department for a well-organized and well-researched interview process. She also thanked the panelists for their participation.

2) ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Wiltgen moved and Hudkins seconded to adjourn the meeting at 1:50 p.m. Schorr, Wiltgen, Hudkins, Avery and Amundson voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.



Dan Nolte, County Clerk

