

INFORMAL WORK SESSION MINUTES

March 17, 2011 9:30 a.m.

Oval Office

PRESENT: Commissioners Mary P. Stern, Leslie Lewis, and Kathy George.

Staff: Laura Tschabold, Chuck Vesper, Rick Sanai, Pat Anderson, and John Phelan.

Guests: Hannah Hoffman and Alex Slater, News-Register.

Subject: Step 2 grievance regarding Public Works Saturday work hours

Mary called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

Pat stated that YCEA has requested that Public Works cease scheduling employees on Saturdays and pay overtime to those who have worked on Saturdays. She said that YCEA is using Article 3, paragraph 4, of the collective bargaining agreement to support its position that the established work week is Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. She said that the county's normal work week is Monday through Friday, but Articles 2 and 4 allow changes to that schedule for reasons such as business necessity, as long the work week is five consecutive days. She stated that Tammy Garvey and Gordon Tjaden do not want to work on Saturdays, but no information was presented at the meeting with YCEA to change the county's belief that it has the right to change the work schedule to maximize efficiency and safety.

She noted that Gordon wants his name removed from the grievance letter, as he did not file the grievance. Mary stated that the Board needs to have that request in writing. Rick said that he would ask YCEA's attorney for clarification on who the grievant is.

John explained that the expanded schedule allows the department to improve utilization of equipment, diversify the group with cross-training, increase employee safety, and improve management efficiency. He stated that the 2011 Maintenance Improvement Projects List is the most ambitious list the county has seen in a long time, and will require a lot of hours to get the work done. He said that the Road Improvement Advisory Committee submitted a letter of support for the six-day week. He added that he would like the flexibility to schedule work on Sundays as well, but hasn't done that yet. He said that he is willing to take into consideration employees' worship schedules and family time, and to rotate the schedule so the same employees don't always have to work on the weekend.

Kathy stated that the current under-utilization of equipment is not a responsible use of taxpayer dollars and she appreciates John's efforts to improve that.

Laura stated that the county already has other departments working employees on Saturdays, and overtime pay is only required if an employee exceeds 40 hours per week. John agreed, stating that the collective bargaining agreement is for all YCEA employees and the union is singling out Public Works. Pat stated that past practice shows that Public Works has been

rotating the work schedule for winter and summer months and is no different than other YCEA departments.

Because the grievance does not concern an economic discipline, the county has the opportunity to go to mediation (by mutual agreement with the union) or to the Board of Adjustment. Pat said that the Board's letter of response should clearly state that the county is open to sitting down and talking with the union about the issue. The Board agreed to make a formal motion on the matter at the formal session immediately following this work session.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Anne Britt
Secretary