

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED
PRIOR TO THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' SESSION
ON
THURSDAY, June 23, 2022
AT
10:00 A.M.

Questions, concerns or comments about these items can be directed
to staff or the Commissioners by contacting the Commissioners' office at

(503) 434-7501

OR

BOCINFO@co.yamhill.or.us

Carolina Rook

From: Lindsay Berschauer
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 3:54 PM
To: BOC Info
Subject: Fwd: Salary and Term Limits

Public comment

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Chris Chenoweth <CChenoweth70@outlook.com>
Date: June 16, 2022 at 4:47:12 PM MDT
To: Lindsay Berschauer <berschauerl@co.yamhill.or.us>, Casey Kulla <kullac@co.yamhill.or.us>, Mary Starrett <starrettm@co.yamhill.or.us>
Subject: Salary and Term Limits

[This email originated outside of Yamhill County]

Commissioners,

I apologize for sending this in late. I intended to actually come in person and share these thoughts with you. If a decision has already been reached on these topics then please put them in your back pocket for future discussion. If discussions are still taking place please add them to the dialogue.

First, I would like to discuss your pay structure. I believe the Commission made a mistake in not re-evaluating your pay and bringing it into alignment with the employees the Commissioners are tasked to oversee. Well I am a fiscal conservative I also believe that the worker is worthy of his/her hire. I believe the pay for staff underneath you is fair but in many cases it is more than you, who are tasked to oversee them, are paid. That is unjust and is akin to being weighed with an uneven balance.

I would like to recommend that the Commission put together a committee tasked to bring back to you a recommendation on what the current pay for commissioners should be as well as some process to ensure that we maintain payment equity between Commissioners and those they oversee. We need to take this decision out of the hands of the commissioners so that politics and fear of political repercussions does not play into this decision.

Second, I would like to address term limits. The loss of Brian Van Bergen mid-term is a big one. It didn't have to happen. It happened for two reasons one of which you have no control over. The first was a flurry of unnecessary politically based recalls pushed by our friends at Progressive Yamhill and the stress created by the workload, complaints to the Clerk's office and the SOS, and all around nasty behavior associated with them. My hope is we have moved past this unfortunate time in Yamhill County politics to one in which the cudgel will be abandoned as a political tool. The second reason we are losing Brian is because of term limits.

I understand that our county residents are largely in favor of term limits and I also understand our State Supreme Court has found them to be unconstitutional. This puts you, as Commissioners, in a uniquely difficult position in addressing this topic. It also means we must be very careful that our changes aligns with the intent of the term limits our neighbors put in place many years ago. It is my conviction that the angst that led to term limits was aimed at politicians thus the primary target was the Commissioners.

The consequences of term limits on the positions of sheriff, clerk, treasurer or assessor I do not believe were fully understood. These are not and should not be subject to arbitrary end points. There is a big difference between a career that requires training and skills that only fit that specific job and political office. The four positions I already listed are those types of careers.

The experience we are currently experiencing with the clerk's office should teach us all that having term limits on those four positions is not in the residents best interest. Mr. Van Bergen, in order to be able to provide for his family, took a job in neighboring county when it came open in the middle of his final term to ensure he had income for his family when the term ended. We may not like that decision or we may think that it was a very wise decision but in either case it left our county scrambling. I think it logical that many faced with a similar choice would have done the exact same thing. However it leaves Yamhill County going into a general election with an interim clerk and that is a formula for disaster. Some might argue that we already have that transition and associated issues when these positions change due to an election or due to term limits however those changes take place on January 1 in an election off year which gives at least a full year for an incoming clerk to familiarize themselves with policy and procedure before having to face a general election.

I would urge that the Commission find a way to end term limits for at a minimum the assessor, the clerk, the sheriff and the treasurer.

Let me add one more thought. While it may open up the "home rule" debate I also think we as citizens should not be voting on the assessor, clerk or treasure. Instead the County should be hiring them. They should be immunized from the body politic as much as is possible.

Thank you for your attention to these matters,

Chris Chenoweth

Carolina Rook

From: Mary Starrett
Sent: Friday, June 17, 2022 9:53 AM
To: BOC Info
Subject: Fwd: Salary and Term Limits

Mary Starrett
Yamhill County Commissioner

Begin forwarded message:

From: Chris Chenoweth <CChenoweth70@outlook.com>
Date: June 16, 2022 at 3:47:11 PM PDT
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Chris Chenoweth