



COMMISSIONERS' COURT AGENDA ITEM

Meeting Date: 05/03/2010

Prepared by: Betsy Keller, HR Director

Description:

Discuss and take appropriate action regarding the vacancy of the Facilities Manager position.

Background:

Facilities Manager Saul Nanez gave notice last Thursday, April 22, 2010.

Staff would like direction from the Court regarding the appointment of an interim department director and whether the Court wants to begin the process of filling the position now or wait until the beginning of the fiscal year.

If the Court would like to begin filling the position now, Human Resources Staff recommendation is that a review and update of the job description be completed prior to beginning advertising for accepting applications. The job description and classification could be brought to Commissioners Court at the next meeting, 05/10/2010, for approval. The position could be advertised from 05/10/2010 to 06/11/2010 if the Court only wants to advertise in the local region. If the Court wants to cast a larger national outreach for candidates, staff would recommend a longer advertising period at least through 06/30/2010. Should the Court want the position advertised in sources targeted to attract industry specific qualified applicants, funds would need to be allocated for this purpose.

To ensure a fair and open process, HR Staff further recommends the following type of procedure be used in the selection process:

1. The Court have HR develop an initial assessment for the candidates to determine the top qualified candidates.
2. A committee be formed to conduct a formal structured interview with the top 8 candidates once the assessment is conducted. We would suggest the committee include a diverse mix of 5 individuals, including department heads or representatives from at least some of the following departments: Commissioners Court, Auditors, Family & Community Services, County Attorney's Office, Juvenile Probation Department, Purchasing, Roads & Bridges, and Sheriff's Office.
3. We would ask that Human Resources be responsible for establishing and implementing the formal scored interview process to be used by the committee. This would include soliciting input from Commissioners Court, the department staff, and other departments who work with and are customers of this internal service department.
4. The top 3 highest scoring candidates would be referred to all of Commissioners Court for an interview and final selection.

Regarding appointing someone to serve as the interim department head, there are unusual circumstances which create greater difficulty in this particular case. The Assistant Facilities

Manager position has been vacant due to budget cuts. The Maintenance Superintendent, Ruben Lopez, had notified the County of his intent to retire at the end of June. Mr. Lopez possesses the technical knowledge and skills for the maintenance responsibilities of the department. HR Staff did speak with Mr. Lopez who said he would be agreeable to remaining in his current position and postponing his retirement until September 30, 2010 while the County fulfills longer term plans for department leadership. The Executive Assistant, Monique Aguilar, possesses the experience to manage administrative duties for the department such as budgeting, purchasing, reporting, presenting information to Commissioners Court, etc. Ms. Aguilar has indicated she would be agreeable to being appointed as an Office Administrator/Support Manager, including the responsibilities of representing the department at meetings regarding department operations and making relevant decisions. She would request that a support system be established by assigning another department head or someone to be her contact for assistance with issues she is not yet familiar in handling.

Another option the Court may consider is speaking with another department head about temporarily assigning the responsibilities to his or her department. A concern would be that most departments are short staffed due to the hiring freeze or are only staffed to handle the current workload. The additional responsibilities may be unusually burdensome during this time. This could contribute to the department not getting the attention it needs. It is for reasons like this that it is recommended the Court speak with the department head prior to assigning the functions to his or her department.