

**CAMDEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION REGARDING
STAFFS RESPONSES TO THE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS
TUESDAY AUGUST 19, 2003 5:00 PM
WOODBINE, GEORGIA**

The Camden County Board of Commissioners held a work session on Tuesday, August 19, 2003, at 5:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Meeting Room, Camden County Courthouse, Woodbine, Georgia.

Present: Commissioner David L. Rainer; Commissioner E.B. Herrin, Jr.; Commissioner Sanford S. Feller; Commissioner Stephen L. Berry; Commissioner Preston Rhodes; County Manager Charles D. Akridge; and County Attorney Brent Green.

Chairman Rainer called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Chairman Rainer stated that the purpose of this meeting was to allow the staff to respond to the Citizens Advisory Committee's recommendations.

Health Care Plans and Costs Recommendations.

- The Committee recommended that a complete utilization audit be performed.

Penny Woodard advised the Board of Commissioners that CBCA performs internal audits twice a year. An external audit could be performed on 150 claims at the cost of \$30,000.00 to \$35,000.00.

- Revert to 80/60% in/out of network reimbursement.
- Change employee deductible to \$300/\$500 in/out of network.

Penny Woodard stated that in November 7, 2002 the Board gave the staff permission to change the deductible as of January 1, 2003. Additionally, the Commissioners previously granted staff a full plan year to review any changes that needed to be made.

- Increase Stop Loss to \$60,000 from \$50,000.00

Mrs. Woodard advised this recommendation was implemented January 1, 2003.

- Implement a "disease management program".

Mrs. Woodard stated the Commissioners have previously reviewed this recommendation, and it was decided it was not feasible at the time. Although Mrs. Woodard agreed with this recommendation, she suggested looking at it again at a later date.

- Conduct review of all high cost responsibility centers to determine whether any abuse exists.

Mrs. Woodard advised that this is looked at each month.

- Require all spouse/dependents' employer plans to be the primary plan for them.

Mrs. Woodard stated the Board of Commissioners has previously reviewed such a suggestion, and this recommendation could be implemented at the Board direction.

Human Resources and Employee Benefits Recommendations

- The cost of benefits is out of line with comparable schemes elsewhere and must be reigned in. In addition the salary adjustments and benefit increase have not stemmed the turnover. Younger staffers leave for more money with little consideration of the full value of benefits.

Mr. Akridge stated the County has no control over this matter.

- Actions should include;
 1. sharing the cost of the LTD plan
 2. For new employees starting with 2 weeks vacation and earning the 5 weeks after 25 years.

With regard to the cost sharing of the LTD plan, Mrs. Woodard agreed with the recommendation, even possibly eliminating the plan, and that could be done at the direction of the Board. Mr. Akridge stated he would be interested in changing the vacation policy, and Mrs. Woodard advised it could be done at the direction of the Board.

- Using 401(k) forfeiture funds to reduce county contribution. There is currently an unused balance of \$54,000 and expected annual forfeitures of approximately \$30,000.

Mrs. Woodard advised the previous vendor allocated funds at the end of a calendar year. Those funds are now being disbursed quarterly and are being used.

- Filling vacant positions requires at least 30 days. The County should budget the savings (lapse) in a central account. Reduction of salaries and benefits is approximately \$150,000.00.

Mr. Fender agreed this recommendation was a good idea. However, implementing such would be very difficult. Additionally, this goes to the bottom line and helps increase fund balance for our purposes.

- Integration of the 3 retirement plan will save employees a substantial amount of retirement money since they pay the administration charges. This change should add several thousand dollars to each participants account, by retirement date, as well as improve internal efficiency.

Mrs. Woodard advised there are two plans and three vendors that offer the employee different investing options.

Roads and Bridges Recommendations

- A moratorium on acquisition of unpaved roads is desirable.

Mr. Akridge agreed with this recommendation.

- Management should revisit the road plan and move the heavily maintained unpaved roads to the top of the list.

Mr. Akridge advised the road priority list changes, and the Board can move roads up.

- Based on provided info it would seem more cost beneficial to use asphalt rather than Terrabind.

Mr. Akridge stated the use of asphalt or Terrabind would be determined on the location of the road.

- The existing leave policy places an extra scheduling burden on management, and modifications would improve productivity with existing staffing levels.

Mr. Akridge agreed this was a good recommendation, and it should be looked into.

Solid waste recommendations.

- Outsource the entire curbside collection business for the unincorporated area. No reason for the county to be in the accounting, billing and collection business.

Mr. Lannie Brant presented the response to this recommendation. Mr. Brant advised that unlike the County, BFI has no legal means to collect unpaid bills other than stopping the service. Mr. Akridge further advised that the cost would be excessive.

- An updated budget is necessary if the former “Old Still” site is going to be used.

Mr. Brant advised the landfill is only open on Saturdays for 8 hours.

- An improved investment strategy will yield higher returns and offset the inflation effects.

Mr. Mike Fender stated we are currently earning ½ to almost 1 full point, which is better than what others are offering at this time.

- Strive for profitability since it will enhance reserves, ensure debt servicing capability and possibly contribute to the General Fund revenues.

Mr. Akridge advised the County should strive rather for fiscal soundness.

2004 Budget Recommendations

- Implementation of the proposals contained in this report should be shared with employees. We recommend that merit increases be re-instated no later than 1/1/2004.

At the direction of the Board, Mr. Akridge will look into this matter.

- Real progress for fiscal soundness at the County and Cities will also come from a “fair” solution to consolidation of certain services. This will only be obtainable through an even-handed approach to how the services will be managed going forward.

Mr. Akridge advised this is often hampered by politics and money.

Mrs. Woodard recommended waiting until the plan year was over to see the effects of the changes previously made January 1, 2003, and then make changes as directed by the Board.

Mr. Rainer stated for the Commissioners to make an informed decision they would need to see recommendations from the staff and parallel those with those of the advisory committee.

Mr. Herrin and Mr. Feller both stated that they felt benefits should not be cut until the employees’ salaries were brought in line.

Mr. Rainer requested making parallel recommendations on what staff would estimate could be saved but also showing the impact it would have on the employees.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Rainer adjourned the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David L. Rainer, Chairman

Jodi M. Galloway, Executive Assistant