

28. Adoption of Revised Policy No. 04-02, Payout of Accumulated Leave Balances for Long-Term Employees

County Attorney Thiele explained that the item was a request to modify the eligibility requirements for the existing policy on accumulated leave balances for long-term employees from 25 years to 20 years for the County's only two contract employees, the County Administrator and County Attorney.

Speaker:

- Curtis Baynes, 1323 E. Tennessee St., stated that he did not support the County making in-service payments to employees for leave balances and recommended that this policy be discontinued.

Commissioner Desloge suggested that the proposed change be done as part of a contract amendment as the two employees the change would affect are contract employees. In anticipation of this recommendation by Commissioner Desloge, Mr. Thiele provided a proposed addendum to his employment contract.

Commissioner Desloge moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Dailey, to approve the "First amendment to Employment Agreement for Leon County Attorney" as presented and bring back as an agenda item the policy for Board review.

Commissioner Akinyemi remarked that he respectfully disagreed with Commissioner Desloge, as policies should be changed for a "position" not for a particular employee. He favored the scheduling of a workshop to discuss further. In response, Commissioner Desloge conveyed that it was not uncommon for contracted employees to have amendments to their contracts.

Commissioner Dozier indicated that the issue raised many questions and would prefer to see the policy come back as an agenda item. She noted that while she is appreciative of the County Attorney's service and the great job he does, the fiscal impact of the action is unknown.

Commissioner Proctor conveyed his support for the requested change and affirmed that it would apply also to the County Administrator.

A substitute motion was offered by Commissioner Proctor, duly seconded by Commissioner Akinyemi, to approve Option 1: Adopt the proposed revised Policy No. 04-02, "Payout of Accumulated Annual Leave Balances to Long-Term Employees."

Commissioner Maddox echoed his appreciation to the County Attorney, but conveyed that he could not justify voting for the change without knowing the full fiscal impact.

Commissioner Akinyemi offered a friendly amendment that an agenda item be brought back to include fiscal impact information for this policy. Commissioner Proctor accepted the friendly amendment.

In response to some of the Commissioners concerns, Mr. Thiele assured the Board that there were funds in the County Attorney's Office existing budget; thus, no transfer from any contingency fund would be necessary. In addition, he noted that 33 other employees have taken advantage of this program and had his previous employer participated in the Florida Retirement System, he would have over 30 years of employment.

Chairman Dailey commented that he could support either option that has been presented; but opined that the policy as written is flawed and should be brought back for a full review.

Commissioner Sauls stated that she would support the substitute motion, to include a complete review of the policy.

Commissioner Proctor spoke in support of "grandfathering" in the 12 years of employment of Mr. Thiele, which were outside of the Florida Retirement System.

The substitute motion, as amended, carried 7-0.