

Chairman Rob Fines called the Thursday January 16, 2025 special meeting of the Hughes County Board of Commissioners to order at 5:30 PM with members Bill Abernathy and Tom Rounds present. Randy Brown was available via zoom. County Manager Lori Jacobson, Sheriff Patrick Callahan, Chief Deputy Sheriff Dustin Drew, Director of Equalization/Planning Director/Building Official Eric Booth, Juvenile Services Supervisor Chad Siedel, Highway Superintendent Trent Arbach, Jail Administrator Gerald Wasko, Deputy Emergency Manager Nick Dooley, and HR Manager Lindsay Rounds were also present. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: No conflicts declared.

AGENDA: Moved by Abernathy and seconded by Rounds to approve the agenda as stated. All voted Aye. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

HUGHES COUNTY EMPLOYEE EVALUATION DISCUSSION: PAY GRADES: HR Manger Lindsay Rounds reviewed different pay scales with the Commission. The M-7 scale previously used, the M-20 scale, and the pay scale used by the State of South Dakota.

Finance Officer Thomas J. Oliva spoke to the Commission about reinstating the grade and step pay scale for Hughes County employees that was eliminated December 18, 2023. The scale starts with Pay Grade 10 and ends at Pay Grade 25. Each Pay Grade includes Steps Minimum through 7, and lists the positions of employment that within each Pay Grade. The review would be given on the employee's anniversary date, and any wage increase would be dependent upon that review and would not be automatically given.

Commissioner Rounds asked if different pay scales could be used for different departments in the County and how that process could be implemented.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Dustin Drew spoke about needing more structure to follow when it comes to pay as we hire new employees and as it applies to current employees.

County Manager Lori Jacobson stated that department heads would need to have some training on the process of conducting reviews and how to provide constructive criticism to encourage the growth of employees.

PAY FOR PERFORMANCE: HR Manager Lindsay Rounds opened the discussion regarding employee performance evaluations and how the process would be handled going forward. She spoke about the optional increases that could possibly be given depending on an employee's performance.

Commissioner Rounds stated that he was concerned and wanted to make sure that the review process would be positive for employees in order to retain them and keep them growing.

Commissioner Abernathy stated that the reviews would be a positive way to improve the effectiveness of the departments within the County.

Commissioner Brown spoke about the budget and how determining the revenue the County would receive each year and the expenses the County incurs are difficult to predict.

EVALUATION PROCESS: HR Manager Lindsay Rounds reviewed the evaluation forms to be used by Department Heads when completing employee reviews, and expectations, training, and frequency of the reviews.

TIMING: It was decided that the departments would come up with their own pay scale that would best fit their departments, and that those pay scales would be presented to the Commission sometime in February.

Sometime in March the departments would present to the Commission the timing that would best fit to perform the annual reviews.

HR Manager Lindsay Rounds stated she would conduct training with the department heads in April in order to better prepare them on how to implement these reviews with their staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Chief Deputy Dustin Drew asked about the Sheriffs overtime schedule and requested further clarification. It was noted that a mistake was made and that a correction to the Sheriffs Deputies overtime schedule would be made at the following meeting of the Commission.

Chief Deputy Auditor Jennifer Deyo asked about shift differential pay for jail staff and stated that the addition of that policy to the Hughes County Employee handbook would be beneficial.

Moved by Abernathy and seconded by Rounds to adjourn the meeting until **Tuesday at 09:00 AM on January 21, 2025.** All voted Aye. Motion passed.

ATTEST:

Rob Fines, Chairman
Hughes County Commission

Thomas J. Oliva, Finance Officer
Hughes County, South Dakota