



Richland County
Detention Center AD Hoc Committee
June 24, 2021 – 12:30PM
Zoom Meeting
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29201

MEMBERS PRESENT: Allison Terracio, Chair, Yvonne. McBride and Cheryl English

OTHERS PRESENT: Chakisse Newton, Gretchen Barron, Ashiya Myers, Angela Weathersby, Tamar Black, Leonardo Brown, Lori Thomas, Ronaldo Myers, Dr. John Thompson, Jennifer Wladischkin and Randy Pruitt

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Ms. Terracio called the meeting to order at approximately 12:31.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - a. March 16, 2021 – Ms. English moved, seconded by Ms. Terracio, to approve the minutes as distributed

In Favor: Terracio and English

Not Present: McBride

The vote in favor was unanimous.

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** – Ms. English moved, seconded by Ms. Terracio, to approve the agenda as published.

In Favor: Terracio and English.

Not Present: McBride

The vote in favor was unanimous.

4. **COMPENSTATION RECOMMENDATION** – Administration specifically addressed the starting pay for detention officers at Alvin S. Glenn Detention Center. This initial recommendation is one step in developing a plan to address employment issues at the Detention Center. They want to move forward with this item, so as not to delay the overall plan. Mr. Brown stated what they are requesting the committee to approve deals with the starting pay of the detention center officers. There is a staffing challenge at the Detention Center. A part of the staffing challenge deals with pay. Within the budget they have now, they want to make a recommendation to try to affect some of those challenges. The first requested motion is to increase the starting pay for detention officers, with less than a year of employment in a correction facility, to \$34,000 a year, effective the payroll period beginning July 3, 2021.

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Ms. English inquired if this was in line with compensatory pay with others, and what was used to determine the numbers.

Mr. Brown responded they looked at other municipalities, and Richland County was not the highest, but we are no longer the lowest. This would be a step to make us competitive.

Ms. Terracio inquired if Richland County was among the lowest paying counties for detention center employees.

Mr. Myers responded 20 years ago the Detention Center ranked among one of the highest paid detention centers in the State of South Carolina. Currently, Richland County is behind smaller counties, such as Fairfield and Kershaw. Even with this raise, it will put it just above those two counties, but still behind the larger counties.

Ms. Terracio inquired about the current starting pay, and the difference with the raise.

Mr. Myers responded the current hourly wage is about \$14.60, and with the raise it would be \$15.40.

Ms. Terracio noted this gave a basic idea of what the increase would be. She inquired how this aligns with the Total Rewards Plan.

Mr. Brown responded there were some numbers changed, but from the Detention Center perspective, the needle has not moved forward. Total Rewards has not produced the results because it was implemented in one year, but was looked at as a multi-year initiative. In a multi-year initiative there were things we were not anticipating, and the funds were not funded in the timeframe in which the decision was made. Only part of the funding was distributed and awarded by Council in the year it was approved.

Ms. Terracio stated she assumes we are going to continue a discussion around Total Rewards, and possibly salary compression, so that senior employees do not get compressed down with the newer people.

Mr. Brown responded this is just one step. The issue right now is retention and trying to get staff in the door on the frontend. They also have some internal things they are looking at, and recommendations they are going to bring forward to the committee to address staff who has been there, and not just new staff.

Ms. McBride noted her concerns is being compared to the smaller counties, and not the larger counties, in terms of bringing the salaries up.

Mr. Brown responded they were trying to make incremental steps within the funding we have, so we can get approval. Anything that would require County-level involvement, they do not want to get held up in taking these steps to affect pay now, while the County decides if it wants to be the highest paid. They can make these changes now within the budget we have and make improvements immediately and still allow for greater Council/Committee input, as to where we want to fall on the scale of pay for the Detention Center.

Ms. McBride stated, for clarification, based on the budget, we do not have the resources to do it now.

Mr. Brown responded, based on the department's current approved budget, we can make these steps utilizing the resources we have at our disposal. To go higher, for the entire facility, as a whole, it is going to cost more than the Detention Center budget can sustain, assuming we are able to fill all the positions.

Ms. McBride stated, within the motion, it needs to state when we are going to come back to increase the overall wages. She noted she was concerned with the turnover and salary.

Mr. Brown responded this initial motion was step one, and they planned on coming back this year with additional recommendations, as well as in future years.

Ms. McBride noted, if Council passes the American Rescue Plan bonuses, she assumes Detention Center employees will be getting hardship pay.

Mr. Brown responded they were not looking at bonuses. They were looking at pay employees could count on year-to-year, and increasing that pay so this is something perennial.

Ms. McBride inquired if they are losing more senior and experienced staff.

Mr. Myers responded in the affirmative. He noted they do not have a work-life balance due to shortages.

Ms. McBride stated we need to do something to keep the senior staff.

Mr. Brown responded that is something they did share, but the recommendation today is focusing on the starting pay for the detention officers. They are looking at a salary structure that would address the pay for employees who are already working, and senior staff. That will be coming to committee in the future.

Ms. Terracio stated the motion is to increase the starting pay for detention officers, with less than a year of employment in a correction facility, to \$34,000 a year, effective the payroll period beginning July 3, 2021. In addition, to increase the starting pay for detention officers, with more than a year of employment in a correctional facility, to \$35,000 a year, effective the payroll period beginning July 3, 2021.

Ms. McBride moved, seconded by Ms. English, to approve staff's recommendation.

In Favor: McBride, Terracio, and English

The vote in favor was unanimous.

5. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:56PM.