

Macon County Board of Health Finance Committee Meeting

**Macon County Health Department
MCHD Main Conference Room
1221 E. Condit Street, Decatur IL 62521
July 13, 2022, 9:00 AM**

Mark Scranton, Board of Health President, called the meeting to order at 9:00AM.

Roll Call

Mark Scranton, President – present
Jeff Entler, Vice President – present
Candace Clevenger, Treasurer – present

Health Department Staff in Attendance

Brandi Binkley, MPA, SHRM-CP, CPHA Public Health Administrator
Sheree Zalanka, Chief Financial Officer
Evan Trimby, Information Technology Specialist
Luke Leach, Information Technology Specialist

Public in Attendance

None

Mark Scranton opened the meeting with good morning, everyone, we are here on Wednesday, July 13th at 9:00 a.m. for a Finance Committee meeting and I will ask Brandi, would you please do a roll call for us.

Brandi Binkley said I would. Roll call was taken.

Mark Scranton responded please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge of Allegiance was completed.

Mark Scranton asked do we have to do a formal vote for approval even though we have only got three of us here, on the agenda?

Brandi Binkley responded, "We do yes, we have a quorum."

Mark Scranton replied so I ask for approval of agenda topics for today's meeting. Jeff Entler made the motion and Candace Clevenger seconded. Roll call taken, all votes yes, motion carried.

Public Comment

Mark Scranton asked Brandi do we have any public comments for this meeting?

Brandi Binkley responded we do have anyone present, and we did not receive any e-mail public comment either.

Old Business

None

New Business

Mark Scranton said okay, so we will get right to the meat and potatoes on this. I told Brandi I would like to keep this down to about an hour or hour and a half conversation because I know with getting together on a weekday is challenging in itself and, we've all got other responsibilities and activities to tend to, but I am going to stay pretty focused on the conversation today.

Mark Scranton continued with so, discussion on the pay grade scale and I would like to preface this conversation with that I personally think we need to look at how we've been approaching increases in pay to people. I'm a big believer in performance-based pay, based on length of service and their job responsibility and activities that they pursue, and these things are really important to me because I think that people that are doing the job deserve to get paid appropriately for the work that they're doing, and this definitely is an important part of the budget because 80% of the total expenses for the health department are geared towards payroll primarily. So that's a pretty significant chunk of the of the budget expense when you start looking, looking at how much money is being spent out. So, that being said, one of the things that I would challenge the administration to look at as it goes forward. I know you have several vacancies in some different departments right now. You have included that in some of the documentation sent out to everybody. But at the same time, I think again, compensation is tied to performance. When you look at doing this as opposed to just across the board blanket pay increase. And so, I would like to use just as an example from one department and it is the Environmental Department. One of the things I looked at recently and I was, I was missing 2 reports for the last two months, for some reason they've been left out of our regular board packet, but you've got 7 people in that department. One that does administrative tasks in terms of clerical work and things like that, but in theory you have 6 inspectors in that department, and I sit here and look at these numbers.

Mark Scranton continued with I don't think anyone else has looked at it or not, but I kind of got a problem when I look at the dynamics of how that particular division is being ran in terms of workload and responsibilities and how people are being paid once again based on performance. You've got two individuals out of six that are doing 80% of these monthly inspections and in some cases, some cases three, but you got two people, primarily, I won't name names specifically, the information is in the packet if you guys choose to look at it, but I'm, I'm really concerned about that. Because we come and ask in a time when we're trying to be mindful coming out of COVID and stuff. We had the benefit of some extra resources for a lot of different things for every everybody in different levels, school districts and businesses, and things like that. And of course, the Health Department had a lot on its plate with dealing with the COVID on top of all the other activities. But we're past that point now to

where that's not an overwhelming factor in the day-to-day activities. And I'm really concerned when I look at these numbers that we have. Basically, less than half the staff in that particular department is doing 80% of the workload. So, what I'm being asked is to look at a pay grade scale, to look at the ways we can save money. I have got to be really honest with you. I don't see this particular situation; I don't see the need for seven people in that department. And I'm just using it. I'm not picking on them. I'm just using that as an example. We have got other areas where we have vacancies, and we obviously have a need to do something. And for whatever the reasons are, we can't find people, whether the interest isn't there or the ability to pay them an appropriate salary that's competitive with what's out there in the rest of the workplace. And I use example maybe like a nurse working at a doctor's office or hospital versus working here. If we need those people here and we can't offer them a competitive wage, you're going to continue to have those vacancies, and we need to figure out how to fill that gap with people. But at the same time, I'm looking here at two to three people in the department that really aren't pulling their fair share of the workload. And I question whether we're not out of balance in certain areas. So that's one of the things I noticed going through the information for today's conversation. I want to bring that up to everybody because I think that that's the Administration's responsibility to look at each department and determine if we are really overburdened in some areas and understaffed in others, and you got to make some tough choices. And if I was looking at this right now, I could tell you I'd cut at least one or two people outta that department right there just based on their job performance in terms of what they do on a monthly basis. I mean, you got one guy, 65, 60 ya know to 70 inspections a month out of 90 inspections that's doing all that work. And then I got three people that did zero inspections, or one or two of them. There's something really wrong there and leadership should lead by example. And I just don't think that's a proper environment for incentive motivation for hourly employees to say, why should I try any harder when I'm doing all the work and I'm not getting the pay? So that really starts to develop into a mindset that creates some frustration, I think, at certain levels. But also, we need to bring that information. Okay,

Candace Clevenger stated Mark I don't have that information.

Mark Scranton replied I'd be glad to share it with you, Candace. It's a monthly report.

Candace Clevenger replied I thought you said it was in my packet and it was not in my packet.

Sheree Zalanka replied it is from the monthly Board of Health packet, the Environmental Report.

Candace Clevenger stated it doesn't show salaries, though, to compare it that way.

Mark Scranton replied well, I'm not looking at salaries necessarily, I'm looking at what they're doing with their job. If part of the responsibility is for inspections and you got one person that's doing 75% of the work for that entire department, that's...

Candace Clevenger replied but I don't know. Is their workload really evenly distributed that that is their responsibility? So, my job might be 75% something else and only 25% inspections. I mean as a

Board are we really into that level of looking at what people are doing? Yeah, I see what you're saying about that, but...

Mark Scranton replied yeah, I want to bring it up because another area is where we need to get people if we can't offer them that job because we have another division over here that maybe a position could be eliminated because the activity level doesn't warrant that much staff, then maybe you could take those funds and put that towards offer. I mean, I'm looking at this one sheet right here, it's highlighted. You've got vacancies and clerical staff, you got a Dental Assistant vacancy, Environmental Health actually has a vacancy position, which that just kind of escapes me with the staff that they've got right now, that we'd be asking for that vacancy to be filled. You've got Care Coordinators; you've got two openings in there. And then when you get down to WIC, WIC is where I think we have the most need and probably the greatest service is probably utilized at the Health Department, would that be fair to say?

Brandi Binkley responded not necessarily.

Mark Scranton continued, okay, but you have a lot of staff there. You've got 25 people in that division. That's one of the largest divisions that we have here. And you've got a very large, I mean, you've got like ten to twelve vacancies just in that department alone. So, you're really in a hole there with getting that staffing. I don't know what the reason, again, behind that is. Just competitiveness. These people are pursuing other jobs because of better opportunities, better benefits, those are questions only you can answer. But I start looking at that and I look at other places where I think we could make some adjustments in staffing which again frees up revenue, so to speak, for paying maybe these people another 5 or 10% more to get them coming to door to come here to work and be competitive with what they might make at a lot of local hospitals or doctors' offices. I think that's really important because we're here to provide a service. If we can't get the staff to do the job, then we're not meeting the needs of the public because we're not providing services that they need. So, I think that's something that needs to be evaluated in the course of looking at all this with the pay and the budget, because eventually your desire is to fill all these vacancies. And if we have to do that now, now that's extra payroll being added on board that we currently are not paying for, so.

Sheree Zalanka responded these vacancies are already included in the budget. All these vacancies are included in the budget, yes.

Mark Scranton replied all these vacancies are.

Sheree Zalanka replied yes.

Mark Scranton responded okay.

Candace Clevenger replied are we starting at a deficit budget? This is the conversation that we're trying to get to a certain point.

Brandi Binkley responded I don't think we've even had a chance to really get there. If I can kind of, I guess, take a turn. I think one thing I want to say before I get into anything else is I completely agree about competitive pay. We've been working on that for years and have made really great strides and improvements. However, we do have to have Board support to be able to alter any kind of our pay structure or anything like that. But let me just go on the record saying I am all about paying our people better. Whether it's people that have been here many years, who definitely deserve it. And then also offering competitive pay for people that are incoming and making that balance in a fair way. So, I'll go on record saying that I 100% agree with that and making any kind of changes or improvements in that area. I think it's a misconception to say that if we have too many people in one department that we can't get people in another department. That's not the way that our budget or our staffing plan works. So, I do want to just say that as well. And then I do want to say with utmost respect, I think some of the things, Mark, that you're saying are not fair about the Environmental Health Division. I think if you'd like to talk some time, I mean, I can even sit here right now and give you a pretty good idea. But having their leadership team who I know has already answered questions about why some of the people on the staff have more inspections and some have less inspections because they do have different types of assignments. But to say that they're not cutting their weight or that two or three of them should immediately be let go. I think that honestly. You don't have a full understanding of how the division is run to be saying that..

Mark Scranton interjected I am not saying to let two or three people go what I'm saying is we need to look at from the outside. If you look at those reports and say, I got six people that are supposed to be responsible for doing inspections, whether it's at a certain percentage or whatever, all I'm saying is you've got six people there that fall in that category do inspections. 2% are doing 75-80% of the work on a regular basis. So, to me, that tells me if something's not right there.

Brandi Binkley responded but I think you have to ask those questions and allow for staff to actually answer them without just making statements, especially in an open meeting that are false.

Mark Scranton responded we are here to discuss pay, to discuss the budget. Brandi added that's fine. Mark Scranton continued, and if I feel that we're lopsided in a certain area, I'm going to bring it up. I'm more than agreeable to have that conversation. I want you or leadership to explain to me, this is why I need this many people, and if I'm satisfied with that explanation, then I'm okay with that. Don't get me wrong. I'm not here to say we're going to take somebody, just cut them out. But on the surface, when you look at that paperwork, I'm sitting there saying, why are two people doing 80% of the inspections?

Brandi Binkley responded well then, I'll reiterate what Kathy said was, we do have three environmental health specialists. So, while some of the other people on the team are qualified and do help in a leadership role to support that function, their primary function is not constantly being out in the field. We do have three Environmental Health Specialists. One has resigned to basically move back home, and that is why there's a vacancy there. So now we have two. One of those people has specifically been given additional duties of covering an extra zone because we used to have four Environmental Health Specialists. But we look at our staffing and determine, do we really need four or do we have

enough staff or adequate enough staff that can cover extra zones? So that is one of the reasons that you're going to see one person specifically doing a lot more food inspections than the others. And I know we've talked about some people are specifically assigned to food, some are specifically assigned to septic or well, we have the two-brand new Environmental Health Specialists who are still in training, so they were not going to have as many on there. One of the people that you see on that list is also our Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. So, her primary duties are not in Environmental Health as far as conducting actual inspections. So, hers are always going to be less than everyone else's. And I have no problem answering those questions. I just feel like to come right out and say things like, we should get rid of a couple of people and stuff in a meeting where they're probably going to see that that can be really damaging and also lead to us losing more staff or people being afraid for their jobs and maybe unnecessarily. But I'm more than happy to answer any questions. I just think some of the things you said are not completely accurate, are assumptions and are dangerous.

Mark Scranton replied I totally disagree I'm sorry, no disrespect with what you're saying, but I totally disagree with you. We're here to solve a problem. Our problem is we have a budget that we have to make decisions on. I run a business, Jeff runs a business, Candi runs a business. They all have different facets to how those businesses are ran. We have a responsibility to the taxpayers' and communities, not only how we manage the money that we get, because the majority of the money that this department gets to operate on is through grant funding. So, we rely on getting that grant funding. And if we lose any of that money, then we got to look at we'd have to make some really, really hard decisions across the board. All I'm saying is for the sake of conversation and start looking at things, I want to learn, okay? If you tell me, hey, this is what these people are doing, they justify their use of time and we need this much staff, they're not okay with that. Don't get me wrong. But on the surface, if you just go on the premise of looking at reporting, that looks, really lopsided and I want to know why it looks that way, that's all I'm bringing it up and I'm just using that as an example because number one, I don't have reports from other departments and the other departments, their work activities are pretty mixed in my mind. The way I interpret what I read in the reporting, it's hard to really nail this down and say, okay, this many people are doing this one specific task and that's all they're doing. That's an easy one to pick because it's very clear cut. They're supposed to be doing inspections. That's what I'm saying. So, if there's a need for it and it's justified, I'm more than okay with that. But I just want to bring to everybody's attention because we're going to make some tough decisions about pay increases and things like that. I'm not going to be agreeable to do that when we haven't looked at where we can make some adjustments in the payroll because it's the majority of our overhead costs. So don't get me wrong with what I'm saying. Like I said, that's why I'm trying to show here's an example of where I see us not utilizing people in a proper manner or overloaded on this side or top-heavy or whatever. And then over here, this to me, bothers me a lot, especially when you get down to this. You've got staff of 25 people and you've got at least a third of it is vacancies. And the WIC program provides a lot of services along with the other things that probably fall into that category. Up here you got one and two. Yeah, it makes a little bit of a burden on everybody else, but you have to work through it to you can find somebody, but I can't fill these openings down here. If you come to us and say I need more money to pay these people in order to be able to hire them, we're going to figure out where the

money's going to come from. It's going to come from two sources, either going to come from revenue generated or cutting expenses in other areas. And overhead costs are probably not going to do a whole lot of cutting on that side. So, the only thing we could do is look where we can make adjustments to payroll. It's a business decision. It's nothing personal against anybody. People have to pull their fair share of the load, and at the same time, if they want more money, they have to justify why they're doing what they're doing. I mean, I mean I don't know if anybody else feels that way. That's just how I look at things to run the business because you're constantly making as a business owner or as administrator, you're making decisions on it on a regular basis on where to tweek things, somebody calls in sick. I got two supervisors, they both call in sick today just out of the blue, don't know why. So, all of a sudden, I got one guy taking the burden of three people. You got to make some adjustments and you got to be flexible. I just want to understand where we're at and where we're headed.

Brandi Binkley responded and I'm fine with explaining any of that. I'm just saying I think questions have to be asked and given the opportunity to answer them before some of these statements are made, which can be very damaging. We are already struggling, as you said, with vacancies, just like literally almost every employer across our nation right now, especially in healthcare. And so that's not just specific to Macon County Health Department, but I just want to also be really respectful of what they are doing and be able to have the opportunity to tell all of you and tell the rest of our Board what they are doing. And yes, like you said, every day we are having to make decisions to run this business as efficiently as possible and as effectively as possible. I did put in the Accomplishments and Challenges document a lot of information about challenges that pretty much all of our divisions are facing right now, which again is not just specific to Health Departments, but the staffing shortage is a huge one. Health Departments historically have been short-staffed for many, many years where people have to wear a lot of hats and handle a lot. And right now, it is definitely even more challenging with people moving jobs. One of the reasons is being able to get more competitive pay elsewhere. Like the example that you gave to a nurse. They're able to go to hospital, long term care or other places and make significantly more. But the nurses in our building are not the only ones that feel this way or have left for more money. Another big reason that we are hearing that people are leaving, and I've heard this from other people in other industries as well, is flexible scheduling. Not all of our positions can have flexible scheduling by any means because we are a public facing organization. We do serve clients and patients. But I just put in that document that that's something that the board might want or need to look at moving forward. We also get a lot of requests and have lost several people just in the last year who are able to find remote or hybrid work environments at other businesses. And we have not been able to offer that on a permanent basis for staff to this point. And I think we may need to consider arrangements like that. Those are some of the top things that we have heard for reasons that people have left and reasons we can't get certain positions filled. They're able to find that other places right now because businesses are getting more progressive and more competitive with what they're willing to offer to their candidates. And some of those things we have not yet been allowed to offer to the candidates that we're trying to bring in. So, I definitely am open to

any of those conversations with our Board because I think that we're going to have to get creative in order to provide this necessary service to our community.

Jeff Entler responded I'd like to talk more about that. That's an interesting topic and how we can make that more beneficial. But our task at hand today is what twofold were to review and agree upon the pay grades and then reviewed budget. There are two tasks today, I think.

Brandi Binkley stated I think so, so just to give you some background, usually in previous years we would have the Finance Committee directly before the Board meeting in August. The Finance Committee would review pretty much the final budget and then it would be taken to the Board meeting for the full Board to review and approve. At that time, before it went to the county processes. I didn't expect that there would be any kind of vote today just because of the last meeting I know Mark had expressed just kind of all of us having a conversation about the budget, about raised percentages before we got into next week's meeting with the full Board saying the budget draft that we have. As a reminder, we're still really, really far in advance of when this budget is actually going to start. We are at five months right now and so the budget numbers will probably change because we're going to continue to get end of year numbers in from our June 30 wrap up dates for our state grants. So, these numbers are going to change. But Sheree did work very hard to get them updated and current for you as of today. But my understanding per se was it was more just a conversation about what you all think as far as kind of what we put together, raised percentages for staff and any thoughts just to prepare for next week's review by the full Board? Does that make sense?

Candace Clevenger replied I like to talk about how the pay grades are listed on papers relate to the budget and it relates to how you actually get increases, so everybody moves to that. Did everybody get the same increase? And just explain your logic there. How the relationship between the budget and then your payroll, personnel practice.

Jeff Entler responded thank you, I agree, yeah.

Brandi Binkley stated all right, so what we do each year is we do get an approved raise percentage. That would basically be the maximum percentage for all staff. We do have a performance evaluation process that we conduct in the fall. So, people do obtain a score with those evaluations, and depending on where they score, they can earn up to the percentage rate that's allowed for that year. So, let's say someone has been underperforming and they score low. They may not get the full percent, but if someone scores very high, they're doing a great job. They would get the full percent. And it has a score system. So, it's all quantifiable, it's all recorded, it's all in their files, all of that. And then with the pay grade scale, what we do, this is just for new incoming staff. So, this would be if we have a clerical position that's open and we make an offer to them, we would say you're coming in at currently \$26,000 or so. We would offer that to them to come and work with the Health Department.

Jeff Entler responded with what data, I tried to calculate, how did you increase it from 2021 to 2022?

Brandi Binkley replied with so what we do each year historically is the max raise percentage that has been approved by our Board. So, let's say the max raise percentage is 4%. We increase the pay grade scale by half that. So, what you see here is a 2% increase. The reason that we always increase the pay grade scale is because we want it to keep our recruitment offer number competitive. We don't want to continue to increase staff in the building, who definitely deserve it, but then forget about these numbers for new incoming people because that's what we're using to recruit and bring in new staff. So that would be half the percentage. And then if you look over to the right where it says full time hourly, that's broken down on that 35 hour work week, and then your part time hourly is a quarter more than full time. And that's just because we're not having to pay benefits for them. So that's the way that's been set up historically. And then for people that, let's say someone starts during the year previous to the performance evaluation, but they haven't yet been here for an entire year, so they wouldn't get that full raise. We do have a prorated raise that they get so that they aren't making the same as a brand new person. So, we have a calculation that we use for all of that. So then that way, if you've been here, let's say you've been here for nine months, you haven't yet been here for a year, but it's not really fair that you're making the same as a brand new person for the whole next year. So, we set up a prorated system so that they would be able to get a slight increase to reflect the months of service that they've been here and that sounds kind of confusing. We could even show you the calculation if you wanted, but it's basically just to honor that they've been here and keep them moving up. Does that help with the pay grade scale?

Jeff Entler replied yes, that brings me up to speed. I guess I should have been able been smart enough to figure that out.

Brandi Binkley responded, oh, that's okay.

Mark Scranton replied so our deadline for budget approval by County Board is what? October?

Brandi Binkley responded that our meeting is September 12. They just sent it to us yesterday. They set it for September 20 because we asked for the very last one. But that's our Board meeting night. So, we asked it to be moved to the previous one because September 20 was the very last possible one.

Mark Scranton replied with, but I mean, do they approve it in September or do they approve the whole thing in October?

Brandi Binkley replied well, they approve the whole thing...I believe they display it on October 3rd.

Sheree Zalanka responded final approval is November 10. But our last option to present our budget is September 12th.

Mark Scranton replied when are the evaluations that you're speaking about, when do those get conducted?

Brandi Binkley responded so, those are usually conducted like in October, November time frame. And then if we so that we're not doing them late or trying to cram them all in after December 1, staff are told that raises have not yet been approved, but that they would be updated on that. So, then we have all of their scores and we get all of the forms and everything ready because usually by the time those evals are conducted, we know it's so far into the budget process like it's already on display for the public to see that we know it's probably going to be, let's say 4%, but we do not guarantee that to staff and we do not communicate to staff, you're definitely getting this or have them sign anything for that until after that full budget is approved by the full County Board.

Candace Clevenger asked if somebody is underperforming, is there a chance they get nothing? Brandi Binkley said possibly. Candace Clevenger continued by asking if everybody gets their raise on the same day. Brandi Binkley said yes on December 1. Then Candace Clevenger responded with so if somebody is being hired and they are, let's say you're hiring somebody with a lot more experience than a new level, do you adjust these numbers for new person coming in?

Brandi Binkley replied with we usually do not. And there have been situations in the past that negotiation, if the budget allows for that and if the experience allows for that, that there have been some slight alterations that have been made, but it's been very, very rare.

Candace Clevenger replied with so basically for the budget you plug in the vacant positions at these amounts and like if I was already working here, my salary plus 5% or 4% whatever you're asking for.

Mark Scranton responded with so I guess I'm looking at this and I almost think that part of this may be a little bit backwards. So, we're doing evaluations after based on performance and part of that evaluation go factors into pay compensation. So, we're doing that after we've already approved the budget.

Brandi Binkley responded the budget you're just approving up to that percent though.

Mark Scranton replied yeah, but now you're, now you're, sending a blanket policy across the board to give you guys the authority to say we're going to give anything from zero to 4% without even any knowledge about what your bulk of staff is going to be based on your evaluation.

Jeff Entler responded can I shoot one little question in here? I'm trying to make my opinion on. If you've only given one person 2% and one person 4%, does that mean at the end of the year you're going to have a little bit of a surplus out of that?

Brandi Binkley replied possibly, yes. If we didn't get the goal. If we're..

Jeff Entler replied okay you don't take that other 2% and somebody doesn't get 6% because your policy is okay. So, when I had a department of 50 people, I could do that, and I wanted to make sure – that's good. Thank you. Sorry to interrupt.

Mark Scranton responded yeah. So, I guess my question now that you've brought that up, I'm wondering too. I know I went to a couple of meetings this, sometimes last year. I know you guys are having conversations on where people were at, has been brought up about when people get hired and stuff like that. Historically, what has the County Board done with various departments? And I know some of that came up in the meeting last year because I went to the Budget the Finance Committee meeting where the judge came in, Brandi went in, the clerks, everybody came in and said, this is where we're at this is what we're asking for. What has historically been a range that the Board has been okay with as far as pay increases being approved? Because I thought somebody came and asked like two and a half, 3%, and they kind of like said, no, we're not going to give you that. So, I didn't know as far as the authority that the County Board has, can they come back and say, no, we're not going along with this? What are you guys proposing for a 4% increase, even though it may not be utilized, you want to have that kind of like tax levy? We can do this up to a certain point. Doesn't mean we are necessarily going to. How was it in the past, that?

Jeff Entler responded I asked that question, a lot of it's new to me, and I'm not on the Finance Committee, but I asked that question as of recent in the general number, that range that's being looked at is two and a half to 4%. So, we're going to talk more today, but I'm really opposed to that hard 4%. Three and a half...I think I'm there. We negotiate...would I go to 3.9%? But I'm vehemently opposed to 4%. It looks and feels like we're getting the max. And I don't know that there are many departments that got a lot of 4% increases at the County at a whole.

Mark Scranton responded well, I just remember going to that before...then Jeff Entler said but we're saying that if we're gonna ask for 4, the other thing to look at is really how much of that 4% last year did we really use? Did we use 3.5%? Did we use 3.75%? That would be a good story to tell.

Brandi Binkley replied with I would say, and we could probably figure a number for that pretty easily, but the majority of our staff did earn the most.

Jeff Entler replied they did?

Brandi Binkley responded so most of it did get used, yes.

Jeff Entler responded, I know that's a hard thing, but in one of my corporate roles I was highly judged on. I didn't agree with this, but I was to give zeros and fours and if I didn't, I was critiqued, and this was in Chicago. This was a really open corporation that thrived on really attracting and retaining the employees that was a big part of their corporation.

Brandi Binkley responded well, I know that there was a meeting several meetings ago, Mark, that we were talking about having nonexempt pay levels and you expressed some concern that we had employees in that \$20,000 range for some of our positions. So, I know you can probably see we still are going to have four levels worth of positions, of types of positions that would be in that range even with this 2% increase for incoming staff. And I do feel strongly, especially with inflation and the cost of everything, and I did look at cost of living adjustment number for Social Security because that's

something that we talked about in the past when we presented our budget to the Board and to the County Board process. But that number for this year I think was like 5.9 and estimated for 2023 is to be like seven to nine. And so, I am going to advocate for my staff to be able to get raises or have the ability to earn a raise that would help them be able to afford their bills and their expenses. And I think also we have to be really mindful of that with the minimum wage increase, with the hourly and salary offers that people can get going a lot of different places here right now because businesses are so desperate to get staff and also with all these vacancies and with losing people because they can be paid more competitively other places. So, I do realize we have to send it through the County Board process, but I hope that our Board will also buy into the idea of a significant raise to salaries and hourly rates when presenting it to the Board because that has helped our budget to be successful in the past to be able to be put through even if we were asking for a raise of that size. And I mean some of the salaries and other departments are not comparable. So, I think that also it is difficult for us to compare ourselves to them because they aren't all fully staffed either. Some of their pay is very low and we do want to pay our staff enough that they can afford to live and pay their bills and stay here with us, especially if they want to be here.

Mark Scranton replied what level, what level, looking at this pay grade starting salaries, at what level does this transition from hourly into salary?

Brandi Binkley responded so you'll see level, so if you're meaning nonexempt / exempt, there's the column, the third from the right that does define who is exempt or nonexempt. We do have people who are level 8 and above. So exempt people who are part time, so they would get paid salary, but they're exempt. They're not nonexempt. So, they wouldn't get like the comp times if they worked over 40, nothing like that. They're generally not working over 28 hours per week if they're part time. Does that answer your question?

Mark Scranton replied well, yeah, it does, and it doesn't. So because in my mind you're classifying people as they are in a nonexempt category, they're truly an hourly employee. Is that correct?

Sheree Zalanka replied no, I think what you're trying to understand is if you're full time, you receive, you are paid a salary. If you are part time you are paid an hourly rate.

Candace Clevenger replied and not level one through seven?

Sheree Zalanka replied no, if you're full time, you're salary.

Mark Scranton responded well, it's confusing because you've got this broken down listed full time hourly, part time hourly. So that's what I'm looking at this. And at what point do you break this off? True hourly workers and salaries. You're telling me that we're paying a salary at level three or level four.

Brandi Binkley responded so the way that it works, that is set to be their annual pay if they work their 35 hours every single week, 52 weeks of the year. If we have employees who, even if they're considered salary, if we have employees who take time off and they don't yet have benefit time to

cover it, they're not paid for that time. Does that makes sense? So, it's not like you just get your money no matter if you're here or not. We clock in and we go by the hour. So, if you're out and you're on unpaid time, you're not getting paid for that.

Candace Clevenger replied that 36 hours or 40 hours they get paid for salary. Is that how that works?

Brandi Binkley responded the 36 to 40 would still be their hourly amount, but they get paid.

Candace Clevenger replied they get paid more than the regular, their weekly, salary?

Brandi Binkley responded well, if they're 36 to 40, they would get flex time for that. And then if they're over 40 actual hours work, that's when the comp time, time and a half would kick in if they are nonexempt.

Candace Clevenger replied so you don't ever pay comp time.

Brandi Binkley responded just if they are nonexempt and go over the 40 hours actually worked.

Candi Clevenger asked so one through..

Jeff Entler responded those they didn't bank.

Brandi Binkley responded well, you mean over 40 hours? Jeff replied yeah. Brandi responded, if it goes over 40 hours, legally, since we're government, we could do comp time at time and a half, but we pay it because then we're limiting the liability of keeping it on the books. We really, really hardly ever have anyone get paid comp, time and a half because we're just really careful about that. And then, for example, we're doing Backpack Attack on Saturday, August 6. So, we're going to be here providing vaccinations to families with children going into school. So, any of our staff who are going to be here that day, if they are a nonexempt staff person, their schedule that week is just going to be altered a little bit to ensure they don't go over 40 hours and we don't have comp time that we have to pay out. And then for having these numbers on the form, Mark, this form is really just used internally. It is a public document, so any staff person could ask for it. But this is something that we use for accounting purposes, payroll purposes, so that we have these numbers for HR purposes when we're making a job offer. So that's just so we have what the hourly rate is. Since we do have to record and report by the hour, financially, progress reports, we have to have those numbers and that's why we get them voted on every year.

Mark Scranton replied I guess where I'm at a loss at, we start talking about I know last year this was discussed too. Where did you guys come up with formula for 35 hours? Being a full time and being in a salary position. Because nobody in the business world does a 35 hour work week. And if they are salary people when they're hired, there's expectations they're going to put the hours in that's required to get the job done. It might be 30 hours one week; it might be 50 hours the next week. I got, I, I, that whole thing right there, I got a real problem with it because you're telling me that they're full-time people and their salary, but they're only working 35 hours a week. I think that's just, I don't understand

what the expectation is or how long this has been done that way, what the justification is. If I'm over here working in the hospital and I'm saying I'm getting a salary and I'm getting X number of hours and I'm working 40, 50 hours a week and you say, well, you can come here and work salary, you only got to work 35 hours a week. Now we're comparing we're back looking at compensation. We're comparing apples and oranges again, I don't know anybody that works a regular job that works 35 hours a week even it's considered full time, especially being salaried. I just don't understand that.

Brandi Binkley responded well, I think that the 35 hours work week has been here at the Health Department, at least for the 17 years I've been here that's been in place. And I would encourage you to look at other County Departments as well because I know at least some of those are also 7 hours. That's kind of like a standard County thing, government thing. I don't know. There are other Health Departments..

Jeff Entler replied I'm sitting here thinking that it is, but I can't, I can't..

Mark Scranton interjected I just can't grasp so..

Jeff Entler added so Macon County wide, I think that's prevalent, the 35 hours work weeks. And I think that's possibly to compensate for the pay level not being full market value. Am I right?

Mark Scranton responded but is it based on operating hours of business being open or cuz that means we're..

Jeff Entler responded how do you cover the 40 hours? I know what you're saying.

Candi Clevenger said, 8-4:30pm, and Brandi said yes, 8 to 4, 8:30 to 4:30. So then people can have their hour lunches.

Jeff Entler replied, you have overlap, generally coverage that way.

Brandi Binkley responded that's generally the hours that you're going to see here, 8:30am to 4:30pm, 8am to 4pm, staff take an hour lunch. They stagger lunches so that there's coverage throughout and buildings not closing. I think that's pretty common in the County. I know it's common in other Health Departments and other Counties as well. And then I guess the other thing is, again, even though if they don't work their full 35, they're not getting paid for a full 35 if they don't have benefit time. So, it's not just blanket money that they get, no matter how little or how much they work that week, that we do account for every single hour.

Mark Scranton replied but you're paying extra if they work over 35.

Brandi Binkley replied we are not paying them extra.

Mark Scranton responded well; they're being compensated.

Brandi Binkley responded they get flex time that they can take at another time, which is a great benefit that has helped us be able to secure people, especially, like to your point about trying to

recruit, let's say a nurse has been at the hospital, they're going to come here and make significantly less, but their nights and weekends are limited. They're not nonexistent, but they're limited. But then we have this flex time because a lot of people come from environments that we've been able to recruit here, where they are pushed to work 50, 60 hours a week. And people are sick of doing that, especially as we get and not to stereotyping younger generations that they are not going to just work 50-60 hours and just give up their whole life to their job and ask for nothing in return. And understandably so, I think that flex time has really helped us be able to get and keep people because it does provide them with a little bit more flexibility in their schedule, especially if they don't have a lot of benefit time, especially if they're newer in their career or if they're newer here. And so that has really been a benefit that has helped us, and it really hasn't cost a lot because generally if somebody is off, their coworkers are covering them. So, the money that we already have in the budget for other people working is what ends up covering that flex time.

Mark Scranton responded so does exempt employees fall into the same category as far as hours put in every week?

Brandi Binkley responded yes.

Candi Clevenger replied Brandi, what are your operating hours?

Brandi Binkley responded 8am to 4pm. Starting point is open. They're like 8:30 to 4:30, but they have staff here starting at 7:00. So, we also have staggering staff that start at 7:00 and are here as late as 4:30 because some of our programs see people earlier in the day to provide additional accessibility. Some of them see patients or clients later in the day to provide that accessibility.

Candi Clevenger responded I do think it's a common thing in Macon County, of what other offices are 7 hour work days; their operating hours are not as long as like..

Jeff Entler chimed in, where that started or came from, I'm not sure. I am like Mark, I have to bite hard to agree with that, but it's been that way for a long time to change and steer the ship backwards.

Mark Scranton replied so, if exempt employees work over 35 hours, how are they compensated?

Brandi Binkley replied they get flex time if it's approved by your supervisor.

Mark Scranton responded so if you work 60 hours a week, they're just getting flex time.

Brandi Binkley replied they would get flex time.

Mark Scranton is that endless.

Brandi Binkley replied no, that's the flex time that is capped at 35 hours in a bank total. And I'm telling you, if I'm seeing the staff person again, like you said, watching numbers, watching workload, if we've got people working 35 hours and people working 60 hours, I see that there's a problem, there a discrepancy. And that's where I say, okay, we need to look at workload and shifting some things

because we should not have people working 60 hours a week unless we are in an emergency or it's back to school. My goal is not for my staff to be working 60 hours a week. That's not really ideal. That doesn't give work life balance. That's what people want and need to live a healthy life. So if it's an emergency, if we've got big events going on, okay, 60 hours, and then I can tell them, hey, you get flex time. So, when things slow down, you can take off a couple of days or whatever. But if I'm seeing 60 and 35, two employees, I'm seeing that there's something lopsided and we need to make some adjustments there.

Jeff Entler asked before I lose track of it. All these open positions are none of them are new, I take it? They're all people that have left and replacements.

Brandi Binkley replied right, yes, and I will tell you, we now have another one of someone that's going to be leaving in August since I made this, but now we have 14 vacancies.

Mark Scranton replied I just don't understand that. I really don't.

Candace Clevenger replied so you use a 7 hour work day is that what you do? 7 hours per day, not 8 hours per day. Brandi Binkley said yes for the 35 hours. Candace Clevenger continued and stated so you calculate your salary as 7 hours per day times the rate, not 8 hours per day. If I'm going to go for a job and you say what's my annual salary going to be, this looks lower than if they come to work at a place like at my agency. They get paid 8 hours a day at my place. Do you see what I'm saying?

Mark Scranton replied yeah, I understand what you're saying, but when I start looking at where people are at that are being paid salary and look at where the exempt people that are out on this list, if my only requirement to come work this job is to come work 35 hours a week, I'd say sign me up. Especially when you get into the higher level positions. Because the amount of money that works up to per hour, if that's the only requirement that they have to work is 35 hours a week and there's no expectation of working an extra amount of time. But that's conversation needs to be happening at the front end when you're hiring somebody. Most businesses, when they're talking to somebody about being paid a salary, especially an executive or management level, there's a certain anticipation that you're going to be required to work more than 40 hours a week. It's not going to happen every week. That's part of what you're getting compensated for is those phone calls at 7:00pm at night or you got to come in and cover for somebody on Saturday that couldn't be there, that you'd already tasked to do a job, that comes with the territory, so to speak. And if we're able to function to where we're paying this amount of money for some of these positions and the language is such that you only have to work 35 hours a week to get compensated for that, then we're paying a lot of money out in some of these positions.

Candi Clevenger asked is your issue at 35 hours a week or you think that exempt employees should do that exempt employees should work and always do more because..

Mark Scranton replied I want to be careful here. I don't get into the specifics on money. But if I put level four or nine, getting the supervisors, for example, if their salary is such that it's that much money

and they've only got to work 35 hours a week, what are they truly working? I mean, are they putting in extra overtime to where they have accumulated flex time or whatever? So then you look at that and say, okay, if they're working on an average of 45 hours a week, then is there a need, I guess is what I'm saying, to make adjustments in the base salary to start with, with the expectation that they're going to work those additional hours? Or is it more benefit? I guess what's more important to the people at some point you're talking about cost of living increases, inflation, all this stuff. It's all impact on all of us. So when we look at the cost of running the health department, we've also got extra increase. Utilities are going up huge. I mean, I'm looking at my business utilities going up 25%. That's a lot to eat off the bottom line.

Sheree Zalanka replied actually that's covered by the building commission.

Mark Scranton replied well, I know, but I'm using that as an example. Sheree Zalanka said, I know, but that doesn't directly affect our budget. Mark continues when you look at what is the individual what are they more interested in money or are they more interested in benefits? And the benefits are the flex time or whatever. So, if we were to have a conversation with just pick somebody from staff that says a supervisor position and say if we were looking at this, is it more important for you to be making more money or is it important for you to have that benefit? Because if you make more money, that comes with the expectation that you're going to put x number of hours in a week. Doesn't mean you have to, but the expectation is that you're going to get compensated to do that if and when that comes up. That's why I'm trying to kind of balance this out because you brought up people looking to get more money. Well, is the money more important than the flex time? I don't know. And if you say we're going to pay you a salary and your expectation is you're going to work 35 to 50 hours a week, you build that into it and they get a bump in pay, they might be okay with that. But if you say anything over 50, you're going to get flex time or 45 or whatever number you want to land on some people may say I get this, I'm okay with that. And after that I want the flex time because I could have a three-day weekend or whatever. I totally understand that too. Sometimes that has more value than the money does.

Brandi Binkley responded and I think so as far as having to work outside of hours, all of our staff are told in the interview process that we are on call and we are required to work outside of hours for all positions. Obviously supervisory positions have to do it more than staff at other levels. Our offers of employment that we give to candidates before they even start their jobs here also say that you will have to work outside of your regular business hours. And I don't believe that we have any supervisor that regularly only works 35 hours. They're all putting in more than that or significantly more than that each week. And then as far as what's more important to staff, your question about pay or flex, I can't answer for every single person. But as an employer looking at the crisis our nation is in with trying to staff businesses, I would say both because staff do want to be paid enough to pay their bills and be comparable if they went somewhere else and staff don't want to work tons of hours every single week and not be with their families or not be able to have personal time or rest. And I think especially for a team at an organization that was the incident commander in a pandemic that is still going on, they more than ever are seeing the quality and the importance of having time separated from work and of

having work life balance. So, to me, all of those things are important, not just one or the other. And I think a lot of our staff, especially supervisory team that I feel more comfortable kind of speaking for would say the same. I don't think it's an either or right now.

Mark Scranton responded out of curiosity, I just like to maybe, just maybe take a survey to them and just kind of get the pulse of where their minds are at. Because like I said, a lot of things happened in the last two years. People have changed their attitudes on certain situations. But like I said, now it's costing gas is costing us almost double what it was two or three years ago. Well, I can tell you how much I'm burning through every week just for myself and it's a lot. So, moving forward, because we're looking at this on an annual basis, it may be a case where they might say, hey, I would really appreciate having more compensation right now and I'm willing to do this in order to get that additional compensation versus the flex time. Because flex time doesn't put gas in my car. It gets me a day off from work, which in turn can save me money. But I might decide I'm taking the kids and we're going to St. Louis for the day or whatever. Well, there's a burden there with that because of the extra expense, just the cost of being able to do day to day activities. I'm trying to find a balance here again to where we give people what they need within the limitations of what we're able to do. I mean, if you take this across the board and say everybody gets 4%, the people at the top end still come out money ahead more than the people at the bottom end just because of the ratio of what their compensation is to start with. I mean, just from level two to level ten, those amounts almost double. So, if you throw 4% on top of that, all of a sudden, this becomes a bigger margin up here financially in terms of dollars than it does personal to bottom says, okay, I get 4%. That's \$500 a year, that's \$10 a week. It doesn't mean anything to me. I spent \$30 extra for gas just to go to work this week, that type of thing. Because I'm a big believer in lifting people up and you have to start at the bottom and work your way up and there's no motivation for people to have a place to aspire to, especially when it comes to getting paid. It can be a big morale booster, or it could be a deterrent. So, I just thinking outside the box here on what we might be able to do or not be able to do. And I'd kind of like to see where staff's at on that because they're working with these other people that are down these lower levels every day and they might say, one person might say, hey, what's important for us is more money. What's important for us is we're working a lot. We would really like to have extra flex time. It doesn't have to be the same. I don't think it has to be the same for everybody. And you may say this is going to be too complicated, we can't do that. But again, like you said, maybe a little bit of balance is saying we're going to give you some money, but you also get this extra time. Maybe there's a balance there somewhere, I don't know because we don't have that information here to talk about it. You know what your people are doing and they know what their people are doing. So, I think you guys need to have a conversation and come back and say they feel really strongly about this, and I would support whatever that might be, but I would like to know what that is without getting into micromanage and what you're doing. You could come to us and say, I've met with everybody, these guys over here, or 80% of people feel this way about it. Then we got to make a decision. Okay, majority feels that this more important factor than we look at, like, as Jeff said, two and a half percent to 4%. That's pretty broad range in terms of pay. It's not on a lower level on an hourly basis, but on the upper level, it's

pretty significant. You're talking about twice as much money. If you go two and a half percent to 4%, you're almost double the money there.

Jeff Entler replied well, I would suggest that on some of the top end positions, we look at just a flat amount and not a percentage or a cap that would reduce the liability and give us the ability to push the money back down.

Sheree Zalanka replied I do also just want to state that our health fund balance, is in a great place, and we are not in a position right now where we need to look at a critical need to cut expenses. So, I just want to make that clear.

Candace Clevenger responded the other piece that I think falls into the budgeting is that the money doesn't all come from the same place that's funding the positions. Some of the positions are paid for because they come from other funding; from fee for service that somebody else can be paying it. So when you're trying to balance all these different ways you get money in and then have standard, comparable fair pay scale, you have to work with a lot of different things in there to make it. I think we're trying to just get to a base that starts. The first thing is what are we going to put in the budget for the starting salary going forward, and then what are we going to do for increases for the staff for this year? Getting a survey, staff feedback could be beneficial down the road. We could maybe even do an adjustment down the road if we wanted to, but not with the data we have right now.

Mark Scranton replied I just did some real quick math here, so just use an example like level ten, which is the supervisory level. That's \$54,800 that is where you're at right now on that, right?

Brandi Binkley replied no we're on currently at \$53,700.

Mark Scranton Okay. But I'm just going to take this number just because I got it in front of me. The numbers were getting right away. So if you only did 1% at the \$500 year increase, \$10 a week is not going to get anybody excited. Okay. I get extra \$10 a week. If you go to the max, which is 4% that you're talking about, that's \$2,200. That's got a little bit more meaning behind it. But still, in the scheme of things, it's not a big bump. But at the same time, we got to be responsible as the board, too, to manage the money. And as she's saying, we're not in a critical situation. Way of not being in the critical situation is by making good business decisions along the way and keep your eye on the ball and keep yourself fairly on track. Because none of these grants where majority of the funding come from, are ever guaranteed. They could get pulled for a number of different reasons or reduced or whatever.

Sheree Zalanka replied if the grant was pulled then a significant amount of staff would also be eliminated.

Mark Scranton replied right, that's what I'm saying. So it's important to look at that. Sheree Zalanka added in so it doesn't totally equal out. Mark Scranton continued, but because you do, again, you don't want to lose good people. If you got a temporary reduction, maybe that grant is just for that year and you say we think we're going to get this back because people are gone, they're gone, you're not going to get them back. So can you move them around, put slide them into another slot.

Sheree Zalanka said we would do that if there were that vacancy.

Brandi Binkley also replied and we would do that if they qualify for the other vacancy. Because with our programs, whether it's separation of division or even responsibilities in the division, like this WIC for an example, a lot of health departments experience difficulty in hiring for some of those WIC positions because the qualifications that are required for some of them are so specific. So, there are Health Department Administrators with coordinators across the state who have been advocating for years to get changes made in that because it does make hiring and staffing more difficult. But yes, anytime, just like with the Contact tracers, anytime we have openings, if we know we have really good people here, we're going to try to get them to apply for something else and stay here on our team. And we did do that with our Contact Tracers, we've been able to hold on to some really great staff who were qualified for other types of positions and moved into those because I agree, I never want to lose a good person. But also, you can't keep somebody on just to hang on to them in hopes that maybe you'll get the money again. You just hope that maybe they'll come back or maybe they'll find something else in the interim. And I do want to say, just so you do know this, with our Health Fund balance being healthy, like Sheree said, that's definitely because there have been really difficult fiscal decisions that have been made over the course of time at the Health Department and right now it's sitting at 6.9 million. That needs to be there for emergency purposes, of course. COVID was a great example of that in the beginning when we had no funding to support our additional needs and there were no grants even being talked about in the very beginning. So, if we had to support that, we did have some Health Fund dollars that we could use for that. And then also we don't want to let all of the Health Fund dollars sit there forever because you're supposed to use them to benefit the organization. So over the course of years our board has supported some different initiatives if some of the dollars have had to come out of the Health Fund. That Health Fund also on one of these documents, Sheree has your third page, three months and four months. If something happened for some reason and we had to operate just out of the Health Fund, that gives you numbers. So, then that shows we do have enough of a reserve and plenty more even to help cover expenses if something happened. And we just kind of have to live off of the Health Fund for a certain amount of months, which as you all know, is good business practice. So, when you see the budget summary information, when you see the one that shows exactly how much would come from the Health Fund, which is the best one to kind of bring them to for that?

Sheree Zalanka replied well, if you look at the three page documents of the stapled documents, the very last page, the summary has our preliminary numbers for FY 23 comparable to FY 22 page.

Mark Scranton replied Sheree, you mean this page right here?

Brandi Binkley responded yes.

Sheree Zalanka responded so just like first draft go around of the budget we're sitting at, \$232,000 would come from the Health fund.

Brandi Binkley responded so where that looks like a minus. Essentially that just means that those dollars would come out of our Health Fund, which is our reserve or kind of savings or for a simpler way to put it, for initiatives that are not covered by our tax levy or by our grant dollars. And in that some of the most significant things that would be coming out of there, security is a big one that I wanted to kind of talk through with this group today. Also, discussions about the Digital Environmental

Health that we are working on sitting through and then the way we have grown, our clinical services and clinical nursing. Some of those costs are included in what would come out of the Health Fund. As you can see with having a \$6.9 million health fund and some really responsible spending and budgeting over many, many years, if we are pulling \$232 out of health funds to support initiatives, that's the purpose of it. Also, another thing is this is a very preliminary budget draft and so usually what we do before we even get it to the board is go through and see where else we can make some cuts, if there's anything else at all that can be cut out of that. And so, we have not done that quite yet, but wanted just to get you the best, most comprehensive draft possible. So hopefully that gives you a little bit of an idea. And I will tell you of that \$232. I need to ask Sheree about this amount.

Sheree Zalanka replied that \$106,000 for security increases. So also when I do the budget, I obviously do not want to see a negative number as the bottom line. That's never my goal and I don't want to see that year to year. But if I can justify it for a year and it looks like it's not going to be a continual negative number and we have \$6.9 million sitting in our fund balance, then it's not an issue. So, it's a security, like Brandi said, that's \$106,000. Right now we feel like we need to have security here at all times. We plan to continue to explore that and see if there's better options that aren't as expensive.

Jeff Entler replied is that just the cost of the County Sheriff's. Is that what that is?

Sheree Zalanka said yeah.

Brandi Binkley continued, yes, and we're having to pay them time and a half now because they are considered County employees. We weren't before, but now we have to. And I did check that with legal, but we're required to pay them time and a half.

Mark Scranton responded so they are working on higher back or on duty.

Brandi Binkley responded they are higher back. We did look at doing an on-duty officer several years ago where it just basically would be a Health Department officer. And that by itself was going to cost potentially well over \$100,000, which this right now is projected to be over \$100,000, which is why we've been talking about what other options there may be out there, and we've been researching those, but it was going to cost well over \$100,000. And if someone was off work so let's say we got a senior deputy who has four-or five-weeks' vacation, any days that that deputy was going to be out, they would not send us a replacement. So, we would, depending on who ended up getting that position, potentially have someone out of the building four or five weeks of the year with no coverage. And so this way at least we've been able to provide the coverage on a daily basis without not having somebody up there. This is obviously an expense that hasn't historically been planned for. But because of the way people have acted when they've come in here. Some of the threats. Some of the angry behavior. Some of the physical attempts or kind of bullying that people have come in and shown. And then things that have been happening in other healthcare organizations and really just across the nation in general. That is why we felt like we need to have them there. A lot of staff have been very grateful for that and have said that they do feel a lot safer with that person being here. And so I really would ask the board to support that for the upcoming year.

Mark Scranton replied I have no issue about that at all. I worry about when we leave here for the late-night meeting, walking out in that parking lot.

Brandi Binkley and that person is supposed to be here until we all leave that meeting.

Mark Scranton replied but you know what I'm saying.

Brandi Binkley replied yes. Mark Scranton added that's when things are most likely to go sideways. Brandi continued when my staff leaves here at 5:30pm – 6:00pm in the winter by themselves. I'm terrified so..

Mark Scranton asked so is that part of the union agreement that you now have to pay them time and a half?

Brandi Binkley responded I'm guessing that's what it is. The County sent something out. It's been some months now because we always have been paying just the flat rate. I think it was like \$35 an hour. And then they sent something out about if they were being used, it would have to be time and a half. So, I did check with the State Attorney's office. Does this apply to us? Do we have to pay time and a half for them to come to a County building and help cover? Because obviously they're at the courthouse, they are at the County building. We're a county building. A Healthcare organization. Healthcare organizations are one of the lead places that face abuse and threats and attacks in our nation and so it's really important to have somebody but obviously it's costing us a lot of money.

Mark Scranton responded that's a conversation to have with the sheriff. I think if the sheriff's office is supporting other facilities at the taxpayer expense, then we should be getting the same expectation of service here. I say that, but then the other side of that coin is the cost obviously is an issue. There is a lot of people that have stepped away from law enforcement for obvious reasons over the past few years now I think you could probably find somebody that would be more than willing to come in here and work. And I don't know what the laws are on that. I know there are some provisions made for retired law enforcement around what they could do as far as carrying and things like that. And it may be such a thing that what you're talking about could be a job that could be tasked into two part time positions. I know an individual that was on the city police department that works part time at a local business here in town that is very susceptible to similar type issues, theft and just problems with people in general coming in and just their sheer presence as people makes an entrance in the billing. That nonsense doesn't occur. Every once in a while, has to do a thing. But again, from a staffing standpoint, if you got somebody who can't come, then you got a day you're without or whatever. Or maybe you go out there and say, hey, let's find these two competent retirees that want to come in for part time. I can tell you right now I probably know half a dozen people. They might not want to because they work a career, they don't want to do another career. But if you said, hey, would you come in and work three or 4 hours a day? I think these guys are probably more than glad to come in and do that task. And then when you have an issue like hey, I got to be off this day, I got this going on or I'm sick, then that person that works going to be the afternoon might have to come work that entire day. I think you should obtain the level of service you have an expectation for and have some very competent people because I can tell you I was at a state facility a couple of weeks ago and a guy came in there and just completely went off the rails and the state no longer has SOS officers present at facilities. They had a private security guy. This guy wasn't even prepared to deal with this situation.

Jeff Entler replied at the driver's license.

Mark Scranton responded yes, it got ugly really, really fast and I thought I was going to have to get involved with myself because the staff was like totally petrified and I mean the guy got situated, deescalated and got out the door. They had to wait for the police to show up. And then the guy was long gone. This guy didn't have the authority or the ability to take any legal steps to secure this individual or whatever. And you got to have somebody that's got the right mindset that's looking at what's going on around them. I told you before, when we first met, when I first came on the board, security facility was my number one priority, having swipe cards and getting people in and out of the building. So, you know, my position on that, that has not changed. Brandi Binkley said, good, good. Mark Scranton continued, and if anything, it's probably gotten more important. So, I will support you to do whatever. I will be glad to go and talk to the sheriff myself and have a conversation with them because I don't believe that it's fair. If these other departments are getting the services of the sheriff's office as part of their responsibility to the county, there's no reason for them not to be staffing here, in my opinion. But maybe there's something I don't realize behind the scenes. There's a reason why, obviously, the courthouse, they have several deputies, correctional officers, court officers that are there on duty. I think it's something we need to explore, but there's a couple of options to think about.

Jeff Entler responded yeah, I'll take that task on. I would agree with that. I really don't like to see your point, a negative number of the budget, but thank you for explaining it. And I think it's justified.

Sheree Zalanka responded I mean, I always look at that every single year, and I go through, and I start at the department level, then I go even further down to the grant level and see where we have big negative numbers at. We talk about it and see if we can come up with a justification with it. And if we see that it's going to be an ongoing issue, then we address that so we don't continue to have a negative number coming from this place. There's a few areas in this budget that I still need to look at more thoroughly because I just finished it yesterday.

Jeff Entler replied thank you by the way for being diligent.

Sheree replied I'm pretty comfortable with what I've seen already. I already went through if you look at this document that at the top says top tax dollars used program. I already went through this. This is like, at the grant level. I already went through this and quickly came up with justification for almost every line item. And nothing is really alarming and an ongoing cost other than the security increase.

Jeff Entler replied so these are tax dollars versus grant dollars?

Sheree Zalanka replied yeah. So, if you look at the FY 23 budget, that column would show you what the bottom line would be when you look at revenue minus expense for each of these grant program divisions, whatever is listed there. So, like, if you look at the third one, the third line, Clinical Services, their revenue minus expense for FY 23 is looking like negative \$464,000, right now. There are some areas there that we still need to look at there, staffing, and other changes that occurred. That one is a big one where it's hard to compare to last year because COVID, a lot of things kind of changed. Funding has shifted, like staff time requirements have changed. So, we really need to look at that one a little more. And if you go down, like Environmental Health, they are showing negative \$163,000. Part of this is their revenues down for the loss of tanning and swimming fees. And then we're also going digital. So, we are going to see some increased expenses the first couple of years with that, they'll

have some additional consulting hours. They probably won't continue to have years to come. So that's a big reason for that bigger negative number.

Candace Clevenger replied are there any other items on here that are annual onetime expenses that like that \$20,000?

Sheree Zalanka responded not really. There's like some grant changes, like for the Community Care Program, the 761 line. We have a big grant in that division this year that they are receiving. So that has kind of thrown that one off. And then sometimes it just looks a little weird because I have to budget on varying grant years. The timing is difficult to get a handle on our grant years, sometimes we have state grant years, sometimes we have federal grant years, which are both different than the county fiscal year. So it really is just a guess.

Jeff Entler replied it's got to be a nightmare.

Sheree Zalanka replied I mean, this budget includes seven months of one state fiscal year, five months of another. So, I mean, I don't even know what the last five months of this year. I have no idea what our grant award is going to be for that year. So, it is a big guess. And that's why we come through with resolutions throughout the year and have to make adjustments as we go. And our spending isn't always equal. Sometimes we have a huge purchase in one grant. So, I can't just say it's going to be \$20,000 a month for this grant. It's not really reasonable to do that. But that's my best way of budgeting. I try to just do it an equal distribution.

Mark Scranton replied I just, if you did, you said currently you've been paying them \$35 an hour.

Brandi Binkley responded no we are paying \$52.50 an hour.

Mark Scranton responded, well no, I'm saying now it is but I am saying it was \$35.00 an hour. That's only \$63,000 a year and that is if they were here from the time you open the door until they left, that's a full 35 hours a week.

Brandi Binkley responded well, I will say when I had the conversation about us possibly getting a full time security person here, it was before COVID. It's when Tony Brown was sheriff. So, what he explained to me, and it could be different now, I don't know. So if you can help with that conversation, I appreciate it with Jim, but they would have to post the position and then people would bid for it. So the reason that it was looking like it could be well over \$100,000 and the higher weeks of vacation is because if a senior level officer bid for it and got it. It could cost more than \$35 an hour if that was like their full time.

Mark Scranton responded right, but that's not including any additional things, benefits and everything else to get packaged, bundled into that. Brandi Binkley added yeah, like your fringe benefits. Mark Scranton said that's why I think your best route is to go with some retirees because then you can negotiate that outside of the realm of what stipulations are.

Brandi Binkley responded right, that would definitely be we've looked into that and I have been asking some other area Health Departments that have secured someone to be at their facility, how they've

done it, and there are some that hire someone and then of course, there are differences in if it's armed officer or not. Mark Scranton said right. Brandi Binkley continued, I know the city also does hire back, which then we would not be the same employer. So, my assumption without not yet progressing in this research because I wanted to see the Board was supportive of it, is that we wouldn't have to pay time and half to them because they're not County employees. And I know that then we would be paying less than the \$52.50.

Mark Scranton replied yes, I think there's some agreements in place. I know, like the park district, because I'm involved in some of the stuff they do. They'll do some hire backs for extra security for like events at the Devon and things like that to where they'll get city or county.

Brandi Binkley responded, and they used to come here. Yeah, we just have had county and sheriff's department, they've helped they get all scheduled and everything for us. We just let them know, do we want to continue and what are the hours, when is the board meeting, all of that. And then they get everybody scheduled. We of course have to put it into the payroll system and all of that because we're all using the same payroll system.

Jeff Entler replied so Brandi, how do you staff that now? Is there a person here from 8:30am to four then every day?

Brandi Binkley responded 8 to 430pm, because we do have significantly amount of staff then.

Jeff Entler responded at our meeting nights there's somebody, and other than that, do you have other events at night or weekends, and you have somebody then?

Brandi Binkley replied if we have a night or weekend event, then yes, so like.

Jeff Entler responded so, that event you will have Saturday, and Brandi Binkley replied, yeah, it someone signs up, yes. Jeff Entler continued so whenever your door is open, you're going to have some..

Mark Scranton responded I think from a cost standpoint, again, the challenges of trying to find available people in the interest of law enforcement, trying to be out on the street and be getting out and around. I think the retirees might be a good option. I mean, I know half of those guys are retired ISP they might say, you know what, everybody retires goes and finds another job. I just saw somebody yesterday at the funeral home, of all places, just retired from years of service to the community. He's already working a part time job at the funeral home, okay, they get bored, they want something to do. It would be very attainable I think for a reasonable price, I'm talking like \$30-\$35 an hour to get somebody who would be willing to come in and say, hey, I'll come in here for 4 hours. Because the reality of it is it can be somewhat mundane. But you have people that have a lot of experience that's a real asset for you because they've been doing that particular thing for so long. They also have resources. They know how to contact people when they have a situation that comes up. I've dealt with it for years with the celebration. We all work together. I think that's very attainable for you, and I'll be glad to talk to Jeff. We'll pursue that. But the first point of the plan is to go talk to the sheriff and say, what can you do for us? What do you do for the other facilities? I think we should all be treated equally in terms of having that. And that would be the preferred thing to do because they're

a radio call away if something goes sideways. You need people here as fast as you can get somebody here. And so that with the electronic lockdown, I'm 100% favor of that, and I'll be glad to try to help you with that. I know we're kind of getting off course a little bit, but that's part of our conversation. So, I guess, Sheree, you went through this thing about where these different departments are at, the holes they are in. Enlighten me when I look at the bottom line on last year's budget versus this year is that number, where do you come with that number at the bottom for \$232,000?

Sheree Zalanka replied that's the sum of everything above in that column.

Mark Scranton responded okay, well and the reason I'm asking that, it doesn't make any sense to me unless I'm missing how to determine this, because like you mentioned, Clinical Services, you got to change the \$300,000 there from one year to the next. So, you're negative..

Sheree Zalanka responded so in FY22 they were negative \$160,000, and right now they're showing negative \$464,000 for FY 23. So, we have looked at that, and we still plan to look at it more, but a lot of it has to do with staffing changes. A lot of the CNS staff last year, a lot of their salary was paid out of COVID grants. Now their time is focused more back on regular Health Department activities that have always been ongoing. We also are still retaining the COVID project director to handle, Brandi can go into that more, but handle ongoing COVID issues. And she's also being transitioned into some other job duties as well. And then they also have three part time nurses in the budget right now. Because they do still have an open RN position right now that they have not been unable to fill. There's a lot going on there that account for that big increase. And Brandi and I, like I said, I just finished this yesterday, and I said to her last night, this is definitely an area we need to look at a little more before we finalize it. But really, if you look at all of this comparatively to last year, the only divisions with significant increases in what is being taken from the Health Fund or tax dollars is Admin, where you see the security increase sitting, Clinical services and then Environmental Health.

Mark Scranton replied so you got, your sum down here at the bottom is basically derived from now that I look at this. So like community care program, for example, you went from being almost \$400,000 in the hole last year to only 200 this year. So you actually still have deficits in a lot of these individual accounts, but the levels have changed. So that's how you come up with that number at the bottom.

Sheree Zalanka yeah, and it's almost always expected to have deficits because that's where those tax dollars are going to come in and help fill the gaps where we don't have grant funding, maybe, or where we don't have enough grant funding.

Mark Scranton responded so I guess, so I guess just trying to figure this out, when I look at some of these things, we just went through dealing with two years of COVID, but why has some of these department's expenses gone up substantially when they were dealing with that this last year going forward? You think it would be just the opposite. You think some of the stuff would actually be going down or is that just the eb and flow of business activity?

Sheree Zalanka responded some of the expenses we were able to cover with COVID funding. So that kind of eliminated some of burden on the dollars.

Mark Scranton replied last year, you mean, last year?

Jeff Entler responded I would see it going up because you're, here me out a second, you're not getting the COVID money in from the government, and we've still got to do a base level, and Mark Scranton added, yeah, that's true while Jeff Entler continued to support for COVID, right?

Brandi Binkley responded yes

Jeff Entler replied so you're going to have ongoing, I think COVID is going to be around forever, but that's debatable. But ongoing, you're going to have a hole there. You're going to have a new focus, right?

Brandi Binkley responded yeah, and I mean, it's just the same for like monkey pox or if there's a TB outbreak or anything that could come along. That is part of our essential purpose, public health, that we maybe didn't necessarily budget for having a TB outbreak, but they cost a lot of money and a lot of staff time. So that's part of the reason that there may be more cost to tax dollars or to the health fund ultimately by the end of the year because some of those emergencies that come up, you don't plan for them, you know, they could happen. So that's why we keep a reserve and why we keep that health fund to help protect the health department and be able to continue our function. But we may not know that some of that stuff is going to come along, but we may have a responsibility to serve and to address the issue, whether it's a pandemic or anything else. I mean, there's been plenty of other types of emergencies we respond to.

Jeff Entler replied I see your point.

Mark Scranton responded well, I want to be conscious of the time, it's at 10:30am now. So, at this point, does anybody on the Finance Committee have a strong position or anything that they want to bring to where we might want to be as far as looking at the pay scale, and I think it's still pretty early from what Sheree is telling us. And obviously the purpose of starting to do this a little bit earlier this year was to be more informed and more in tune to what is going on with what the needs are for the department and also the expenses that we're dealing with, everything to get a little bit better educated. Because as I said last year, I'm not going to look at a budget right before meeting and make a decision on what I've got to support or not support. So, I think this is a good, healthy conversation today, but does anybody have an opinion on where we should land on this pay scale thing at this point or is it something we still want to kind of continue to?

Jeff Entler responded well, I think I made my point earlier. I would like to hold it closer to a 3.5% overall increase with the thought of on the higher end having some whole dollar amounts for increases opposed to percentages. It's a recommendation, you're the Administrator, you can make your choice at will, but that would be my recommendation. I understand what you're doing with the 2% and I think overall I'm comfortable with that. But again, the 4% is the top of the scale and I think all departments need to set an example and not just grab for the top number. And we have a little bit of posture to go into the middle ground and even 3.5 on the top still on the top side.

Mark Scranton responded give me that cheat sheet I handed to you with my notes on it. So, I kind of agree with what Jeff is saying and I hand this over to him to look at because again, I think we need to try to improve being competitive and things like that and work our way from the bottom up. So, my

concern is if we say we're going to be okay with 4%, then how does that get split up? So, I kind of took this and divided up into some categories. You're saying you don't want to do 4%, you're saying three and a half. But what I worked out in my mind, what I think is a good place to at least start anyway, is 4% for nonexempt employees. That would be the cap on that. And then two and a half percent on level seven through level ten, and then one and a half percent on level eleven through 13. Because again, the percentages end up being deceiving, like you said, percentage versus whole dollar amount. So, if you take a look at and from a percentage standpoint, say, well, that doesn't sound like a big increase, but then when you actually take it and multiply that out, that actually ends up being pretty good bump overall in terms of money. So, I like to see distinct separate levels for caps in each one of these, in my mind, I'm looking at three different sections here. I think that'd be a good place to go back, maybe run some numbers and see how it shakes out and see how that impacts the overall bottom line with the budget, with those adjustments being made. Because again, people that are doing a lot of the work in the trenches work are the ones that usually get compensated the least amount of money and probably have the greatest need again to get more compensation. But again, as I told you earlier, I'd be curious to see what staff's impressions are, their subordinates and see what's more important to them. Is it a time more important? Is the salary more important? I can tell you from my experience, my business, nine times out of ten when I talk to somebody, they don't care about benefits. They want to know if they can make more money because they want that cash in their pocket. I don't know. I find that a lot of business owners, they do different things to incentivize people to stay on. I just had an employee leave today that's going to leave and he got offered a job at another company. He's already making really good money and they're going to pay \$6 an hour more than what I'm paying them. I can't afford it. I mean, I love to keep the guy who's been with me for a long-time, great employee. Sometimes you just can't compete. And we can't try to put ourselves in a position that we're trying so hard to try to retain people that we end up losing out financially in the long run. So. I'm not sure, but that's kind of where I've landed on this kind of a somewhat graduated scale in terms of percentages because I think this is a good place to start at least to be equitable to the people. The lower levels, I think on the management side, if we do a 4% increase across the board and we allow that cap to happen without some kind of oversight, I think we're not making a very conscientious decision to be fiscally responsible. So that's what I came up with.

Candace Clevenger responded when I look at the list of vacancies in the yellow here...I don't know, you can tell me if I'm wrong, but when I look at that, it looks like they fall in the areas we are going to get the least amount increase.

Sheree Zalanka yes, the majority of them are level 8, I was also going to point that out.

Candace Clevenger replied so what concerns me is when I look at the higher level that you're not going to be composed to get under that. The reason people might take like an RN to take that level pay is for the 35 hours work week, for the IMRF, for the life balance. Otherwise, they would be at the hospital where they get paid for every bit of their time over. They work over 50 hours and they can rack up to make \$100,000 a year. They want that kind of lifestyle. So, I'm concerned that you're not going to get people to do those jobs if you don't keep it competitive. I could look at these numbers and see where they fit because I'm in healthcare and they're lower than hospitals and things like that. An advantage that the health department has is the 35 hour work week, even though I struggled that too, I have to admit, Brandi and I have had conversations about that but..

Jeff Entler responded it may be less stressed then. I'm pretty familiar with it. My daughter-in-law, has a BSN, I hear a lot about what she does and why she does what she does. And she came from a nursing home to OSF and Carle, and she was postop and stress and then went to a doctor's office at Carle and less stress, but money has always been more. And she went into Carle, she moved to Bettendorf and she said, I'm sorry I got to quit. And they said, no, we don't want you to quit. We're going to make a job for you and you're going to work remotely. And that's what she does. So yeah, it's interesting to see that stuff.

Brandi Binkley said oh that's great.

Jeff Entler replied and she's in a pilot program that I think they're getting ready to hire a second person because it's worked.

Candace Clevenger responded (in summary) our turnover rates are real high. All of ours are RNs or LPNs.

Brandi Binkley responded I do want to say, like, to your point about the more stressful the job, the higher the pay level, which is obviously why our supervisors are being paid more. They do have greater responsibilities, and they do jump in the trenches. If you look at all these vacancies, yes, their peers are helping cover, but a lot of those duties are being picked up right now by our supervisory staff. So, I do want to make sure that they are rewarded and that they are compensated at a fair raise percent as well. Just because they've been working hard and they've been the one having to pick up slack or train people over and over or put in those extra hours, which thankfully we've been able to give them the flex time for doing that because they have had to face so much for staff turnover, staff absences, whatever that has been. I do have concerns too, for sure, about our staff that are especially our one through four level staff. Those people are under at their full time out. They're under \$15 an hour. You can go a lot of places right now, make \$15 an hour. So, I would love, even if not for this current budget, to look at shifting those up. But then you have to be careful with doing that, which is conversation we've been having for years. Candi can vouch for that about pay compression, too, because if you're with the minimum wage increase and push them up yeah, push them up and then you got your supervisor. So, you do carry a greater load and greater responsibility, are working all day of the week. If they're on vacation, anybody calls and there's an emergency, whatever it is, they do it. I mean, you all know that you run businesses. So, I think that is a challenge too, is if we do bring them up, we do have these other people who are leading them or who have been required to get a certain amount of years of education or a certain amount of years of experience, or come in with a certain amount of years of supervisory experience. So, I definitely don't want it to be compressed too much or result a situation where we do have a supervisory staff who feel like they're being punished because they make more, but rightfully so, because they do have greater responsibility. So, I'm not necessarily saying that to present a resolution right in this moment, but if our Board is open to making some big changes or adjustments, then I certainly am open to that conversation as well. Again, I don't think it's for maybe this current budget just because of the amount of time that we do have. But I think, again, like I said at the beginning, we're going to have to make some changes and maybe some serious changes to ensure that we do have staff to run the place. And I think we can do that and still be very fiscally responsible with the money that we have.

Jeff Entler replied I know some of the other county departments have that same problem or situation and they're trying to remedy it. Yeah, it's something for maybe another discussion.

Mark Scranton replied so hearing what you just said, Brandi, I'm just looking at that too. So, is there anything that restricts us from going beyond 4%?

Brandi Binkley responded no. And I will tell you, Mark, just so you have all the background going back, it's been several years now, but our pay used to be even much more significantly lower than comparable organizations, whether it was health departments or then of course, other health care businesses here. So, they did do a salary assessment. This was many years ago, maybe like 2016 or 2014, where it showed just how grossly under our salaries were for staff. So, at that time, our Board and the full County Board process did approve several years of 6% raises to move the needle up to get our staff even anywhere close to being in the low end of comparable to other organizations. So, it's been done before when there's been proper justification to show that it's been needed. And we did have a Board that was very supportive when it went to the County Board level of saying, we need this, we have to have this, we have the funding to cover it.

Jeff Entler responded who helped you do that, Brandi? Do you remember?

Brandi Binkley responded you mean the salary assessment?

Jeff Entler replied yeah.

Brandi Binkley responded I don't remember the name of the business. I can look it up. We have reports, we've done another salary assessment since then. But we could not find a private business that would take on that task. So, between me, Bethany, and then we had an intern and worked with some other health departments to get some numbers out of the last couple of years or so. We're closer. Some areas there's a greater discrepancy, especially when you look at our level eight range, that's professional level. So that would be where your RN, your case managers, dietitians, people who are required to have some kind of professional level degree or anything. Jeff Entler started to say, just from what I know that's's.. Brandi Binkley continued that's what Candi is referencing to on the level 8.

Jeff Entler responded that is close to where I look at my daughter-in-law, just my little myopic view of things.

Mark Scranton responded so really quickly, so we can wrap things up. So I just did the math based on what you mentioned. So if you did a 5% bump on the nonexempt, then I'm picking the higher end of the scale. So, you can kind of take that and interpret that. If you did 5% at that level, and then you did two and a half percent at levels eight through ten, the actual net dollars that you get in the increase, they almost work out the same, even though the percentage is half. You know what I'm saying? So again, people lowering the scale feel like they're getting lifted up along with everybody else. If you took without having the levels one through 13 numbers here, just kind of taking a stab at that at a percent and a half, you got that factored in. It brings everybody, everybody up. It may not be the most ideal increases, but again, I think we need to give the people at the bottom that we're struggling with, especially when you've got these holes to fill. So, I'm proposing that we, at least for the sake of conversation, that kind of wrap things up. I would look at maybe a 5% increase on levels one through seven per cap that section, and then two and a half on levels eight through ten, and then levels eleven through 13. I do one and a half percent. That gives everybody a lift up. And in terms of dollars across

the board, that there's still a range, there actual dollars, but it does gives everybody an increase there. I know we're going through some tough times right now, but you got to decide where you want to put your money. And my preferences, I'd rather put it down here at the lower levels, because those are the ones that are the hardest to find in any job. And it's been said there's people out there paying almost \$20 an hour now to work at a box store, fast food joint or whatever. And I think that's where your greatest challenges are in terms of hiring people, retaining people, because if they come in and say, well, I'm going to do this, I'm going to work for \$14 an hour, I'll make \$18 to make tacos.

Sheree Zalanka replied actually, our hardest level to fill are the level 8s that's the majority of these highlighted items you hear. And I mean, maybe I'm out of line saying this, but I think a lot of our current level 8s are going to be very upset and look for other opportunities when they find out that clerical staff are getting a 5% raise and they only have the ability to receive a 2.5% raise.

Brandi Binkley added, at least level 8s, I mean..

Mark Scranton responded I think you can't, I know the percentage perception. I don't like to use that because if I come in and tell somebody I'm giving them a dollar an hour raise or I'm giving them .25% or .025%. That's why I just did the math. You look in terms of dollars, what you're looking at, if people just focus on the percentages, then you're going to say, yeah, I think that's lopsided. But when you look at the actual dollars, you're bringing everybody up at the same time. The actual additional money that they're getting is similar, that middle section. And if you said, hey, .025 is not enough, I want three, I'm just saying this down here. I would think where you got people that are working that are well under \$20 an hour, I would think that's your biggest challenge in keeping people and finding people higher. And again, I don't know, but I'm just looking at it again from the outside and say, okay, if I'm an LPN and I'm making \$16.50 an hour, can I go work at a doctor's office or hospital? Can I make more than that? I would venture to say that they probably can.

Brandi Binkley responded right, and that is the same for the level 8s.

Mark Scranton responded and again, we're never going to be competitive with what the private sector is paying, but we need to try to elevate these people to say, hey, I like the environment. It's a little less stressful. I'm only working 35 hours a week. If I work extra, I get these extra time to have days off. So there's an added value to those things that you can't it's kind of hard to put a number on those if that's what somebody prefers but bottom line is we got to come up with a number here, and if we don't do it today, we at least need to have a conversation. You guys go back and look at everything again, but we need to have some kind of a level, and I'm not in favor of a straight 4% across the board. I think you need to identify where your biggest weaknesses are, your strengths, and where you've got room to maybe go a little bit higher than the ones where right now maybe not so much.

Brandi Binkley responded we can definitely look at that and kind of bring some more insight because I think definitely to your point about your nonexempt levels, that number is an alarming, right? We want to get that number up. But then when you get to level eight, specifically the vacancies in level eight alone, and the requirements and the levels of degrees, professionalism, et cetera, that are required that is alarming. And that is one of the areas that was less competitive when you would put us up next to other Health Departments or other healthcare organizations. So, it might be something that, okay, it's the same percentage, but for different purposes, but to get them all more comparable or more

competitive, but for different reasons. And I think historically, the reason part of the reason percentage is used is because if you do have people that are higher up or making more money, they've earned that because they've been here for a long time, or they achieved greater certification to be eligible for a higher level. So, I do have concerns, too, about staff feeling punished for making more in the beginning.

Mark Scranton responded yeah, and don't get me wrong, in doing quick math. So if you did the lower levels that we're talking about, I took the top one there, which is \$34,000. You took that, did a 5% increase. You take that and split that out over the course of the year, that's an extra \$32 a week. That's not a lot, especially if you're going to pay \$10-\$15 now just to go get something for lunch. So, I mean, it doesn't set the world on fire, but that might be the difference between this person saying, hey, I appreciate this, and I'm going to stay around, or they might say, it doesn't matter. It's still not enough for me. I'm going to go make tacos. So, I'm open to looking at this and making adjustments. I just want to say, I think we need to break this at certain level, so we need to have different percentages. If you want to look at the percentage amount versus dollar amount. But that's what I did. I came up with .025. It came up on the middle section, Sheree is talking about that's where your greatest struggle is, okay, so I did that. It comes out to almost the same amount of money per year increase. So, I'm looking at dollars, not percentages, because I'm looking at what I put in the person's pocket at the end of the day. Percentages are important but that's..

Jeff Entler replied I like that thought.

Mark Scranton responded that is a good way to quantify it in a person's mind, because she said, hey, they get 5%, I only get two and a half. We're not saying that these people out here are going to get 5%. We're saying we're putting you in a position to make those choices based on performance, their credentials, their aspirations to move up the ladder, which, again, it gives them more a goal to reach for. Say, hey, when there's opening, I'm really interested. I want to go from here to here. Then they're going to make another \$10,000 to \$15,000, potentially more a year. That has real values. Now we're talking about this \$1,000 a month instead of \$32 a week. So, you got to try to figure out how to make it work for everybody. But I think a staggered scale for these different levels is definitely a way to go that will be equitable from a financial standpoint.

Brandi Binkley responded so let me ask I know you are trying to wrap up. I just want to make sure I'm clear on kind of what the expectations are before Tuesday night, I will survey my supervisory level staff about the time and pay kind of thoughts of their subordinates as you requested it. And then I'm going to use this, but I'll put it in kind of a different document just for review purposes that gives some different ideas. As far as if we staggered it, what would it look like if we did dollar amount versus percentage? What would it look like? And then we can put that in front of the Board for a full discussion and then determine how we would want to adjust the budget based on what's decided Tuesday night. Does that all sound okay and are you all agreeable to that? And then I'll bring all these documents for everybody to look at that night and then in advance of the meeting, they'll have it as well.

Candace Clevenger, Mark Scranton and Jeff Entler replied sounds good to me.

Brandi Binkley replied any other questions for us before?

Mark Scranton responded nope, I appreciate everybody coming and appreciate everybody's input because we all come from different backgrounds. We've got different thoughts on this. I appreciate you guys maybe enlightening us on things that were, I won't say naive about, but we don't have a full understanding of why some things that as we talked to you in the meeting I'm not the same. You have to make the decision. Ultimately, Brandi, you work for us. These are your people. You have to sit and look at it because you're dealing with stuff on a daily basis and you have to say, hey, I get what everybody is saying, but the reality of it is this is why I need to make this work. And if that means you got to make some cuts somewhere in order to provide funding to help pay for some other things, I tell you what, this worries me a lot more than anything else we looked at today. Brandi Binkley added, yeah, we worry about it every day. Mark Scranton continued, so, when I start looking at this, I'm like, okay, you got one or two openings there out of 23. Okay, that's not bad. I got one here. That's not bad. I get down this, you get 25 people in that department. You've got that many slots that are open right now, that's a real weak spot in my opinion. Just looking at from the outside on this information right here, I'm really concerned on what you need to make these vacancies get cut by like half. And I mean, that needs to be a goal and we can have a conversation another day on that, maybe the two of us or whatever. But you could say, here's my struggle. I either can't find the people or I can find the people. They won't come here because they're not getting paid enough money. What's it going to take to get them in the door and keep them here?

Brandi Binkley responded and we can definitely talk about that, for sure.

Mark Scranton replied how do we achieve that we do it between revenue increases, expense cuts in other areas, whatever, but I'm really worried about it.

Brandi Binkley responded those are all in the Budget. These are literally just we can't get people to take the jobs or stay. These are all accounted for in the Budget. These are just positions that we need filled based on grant requirements or case load needs or whatever it is, but we can definitely chat anytime about that or any other questions you have.

Mark Scranton responded how does the feedback you're getting is it they're not interested because they don't want the job or It's not paying enough?

Brandi Binkley responded it's those points at the beginning, it's the salary, it is the flexibility. They want to work remote or be hybrid. A lot of these positions, like your Level Eight positions, some of those are very public facing, but could potentially be Hybrid. We've lost, I think, five people just in the last six months to a year, specifically because of remote and being able to be remote and make more.

Jeff Entler responded how do you define hybrid, Brandi.

Brandi Binkley responded so Hybrid would just be any business that has a set up where some of your duties, you come into the office to perform, and some of them you can do remotely. Some businesses do like a two, three split or four, one split, or come into the office when you need office hours, and then otherwise be out in the field. Because we've got Care Coordinators, Case Managers who are out at people's houses all the time. Do we need to make space for them in here? Not necessarily. If we've

got the technology, which in a lot of Divisions, we do. So, we can definitely make some moves like this. But I would need the Board's support because when we did have some remote staff for contact tracing, which, by the way, really was our only option and saved us a lot of money not renting a space like some Health Departments did, I caught a lot of heck for that, but I stood by it because it was the right move. It was a fiscally responsible thing to do. We have the technology to support it. We have the IT team to support it. It worked well. Managers were able to manage them, communication was very good. We had great feedback from the Staff because of the flexibility, our accessibility for them always being available for them, even though they weren't physically in the building, and then they were able to come into the building if they needed some kind of support or supplies or anything. So I know we can make it work for staff whose positions merit it, a clerical person who's up at the front desk. They can't do it, they'll never be able to do it here, but there are some staff that really could. And we're running out of room too. That's been a challenge for a very long time for us and for me, in 2022, when so many businesses are going remote or hybrid. There is no reason for us to go rent an extra building, in my opinion, and pay more money unnecessarily. So, I really think it's the wave of the future and it makes sense.

Mark Scranton responded there are a lot of businesses here in town. I know from talking to people conversations that that's what they're doing, especially if they're in a corporate type, office type environment. They're saying, hey, we got planning that we are going to meet on these days, have face to face conversations because we need to have a team's meeting. We need to interact in person. You're working three days out of the office, two days here, and they got somebody's working Monday, Wednesday at that desk, and the other person is coming in working on Tuesday, Thursday. They got a lot of that. My boys work for a company up in Bloomington, and they had 700 employees up there in two buildings. They closed one building completely down, and that's what they had gone to now is a staggered physical work schedule, presence in the facility. And they're doing because they're looking overhead costs. I mean, they're looking at the cost of billing, utilities, all the other things that go into it. But unfortunately, nobody is getting paid any more money. Companies do what they can to save money, but at the same time there oughtta be a balance there. They're saying, you save the money. We could pay people more money to get them to stay too.

Brandi Binkley responded we've lost some really good people, and I know of at least a couple more who have asked to be permanent remote, and I worry that they're going to find the next good thing and be moved on to that. People who have seniority here who then will tell us in exit interviews, I really don't want to leave. I'm really sad to leave, but it's not enough money and I have to pay my bills or I really don't want to leave but this is remote and it works better for my family arrangement. So I think that's why I did push in my challenges document and I was representing what all of my supervisory staff said, that we need to think about how to move into the future so we can get people here that can stay because they want to. We really get positive feedback from our exit interview processes. And generally, that's why people leave: money and like the remote setting stuff now.

Adjournment

Mark Scranton responded okay, motion to adjourn. Jeff Entler made the motion, Candi Clevenger seconded, all in favor, motions passed.

Brandi Binkley responded anyone in favor? Anybody against? All right, thank you all so much for coming. And I'll have that other document ready Tuesday. And if anything before that, just feel free to give me a call or shoot me an email.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Hertel
Administrative Assistant II

President: _____

Secretary: _____

Date: _____