

Board of County Commissioners

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Current Term: 2009 - 2012

County Commissioner

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Current Term: 2011 - 2014

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Kitty Jung

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FACTS:

1. Washoe County Employees' salaries in the past 10 years grew at a rate of 5.4% LESS than the growth in CPI.
2. Washoe County has eliminated 725 positions (with an additional 39 positions slated for layoff this year). This is approximately 16% of the County workforce; resulting in closed libraries, delayed response time to citizens and less road work.
3. The comparison of COLA adjustments report that was provided by the County indicates that the non-represented management employees have received higher COLA's over the 10 year period than many of the bargaining units and they are providing less concessions than the non-represented employees and WCEA for FYE 2012.
4. Washoe County has been recognized twice by the Nevada State Legislature for the fairness and objectivity of our classification and compensation system.
5. More than \$5 million of labor savings have been agreed to in the 2010-11 fiscal year alone. This was achieved through wage reductions, employees paying more for their health benefits, increased health insurance deductibles, and changes in health plan design.
6. Washoe County's compensation was set at the average when the system was launched, and has remained consistent, growing at only the pace of the overall consumer price index in seven years.
7. Washoe County's salary ceilings are 4.6% *below* the *average* of all Nevada public employers surveyed by the Hay Group.
8. Compensation levels are consistent with the County's stated target pay (i.e., market average).
9. Employees have foregone cost-of-living increases for four years.
10. The original point-factor methodology and salary market surveys have been regularly updated and reviewed for validity.
11. As part of the 2010-11 contract negotiations, new employees hired after July 1, 2010 will not be provided any health insurance coverage upon retirement.
12. We have about 500+ fewer employees now than we did four years ago. Some vacant positions have been frozen, but the majority has been eliminated through attrition and layoffs.
13. Staffing levels are at the lowest in five years, about 16% less.
14. Labor costs now comprise about 65% of our total general fund – a reduction from previous years and far below other local governments in our state.
15. Services have been reduced because we do not have the staff to support them. Hours of operations have been cut, programs eliminated and we rely on volunteers for non-critical, yet important tasks, such as opening and closing our parks. Infrastructure maintenance projects like road repairs and park maintenance are being deferred.

Board of County Commissioners—Pay and Benefits

In a press release issued by Washoe County in April 2010, the following quotes were made by two County Commissioners after they voted to take their “voluntary” pay cut.

Commissioner Larkin: *“I think it’s important for us to set the standard.”*

Commissioner Jung: *“We’re in this together. It’s the most compassionate thing to do, and I urge our collective bargaining units to have the same philosophy. Laying off people to save jobs is not a sustainable way for any organization to run.”*

While both statements sound great, it is actually a slap in the face to every “average” Washoe County employee once you truly analyze what the BCC has done. This document will summarize what we believe the BCC has done over the course of several years. You can decide if they are compassionate or not and if you have been treated the same?

June 27th, 2003: Las Vegas Review-Journal: Commissioners raise their pay

In a press release by the Review-Journal, Washoe County Commissioners gave themselves pay raises to bring their salaries up to the MAXIMUM allowed under state law (from \$39,600 to \$50,123). This may not seem significant until you understand Washoe County was in another terrible budget downturn and was holding 153 county positions open to cut costs.

Current Commissioners David Humke and Bonnie Weber were present when the BCC took action to approve this raise in accordance with Assembly Bill 23 (BCC Meeting Minutes from June 24th, 2003). The law as written clearly indicates they did have the authority to obtain a waiver “if the resources of the county were insufficient to pay those increases”. It would stand to reason, 153 positions being held open because of known budget woes would qualify?

June 26th, 2007: BCC Meeting Minutes – Commissioner Pay Increase (4% each year for 4 years)

**Commissioners Present: David Humke, Bonnie Weber, Robert Larkin

At the above meeting, the BCC approved to increase their salaries pursuant to Senate Bill 516. Senate Bill 516 “allowed” but did not “require” our County Commission to receive a 4% raise for each fiscal year through 2010/2011. Their action ensured this would take effect on July 1, 2007 by their action.

Pay Deferral?

The County has provided rather convoluted information about the BCC pay. Without having their actual pay stubs to see the big picture, it is difficult at best to understand. Would they actually provide pay stubs over the last four years to obtain a better picture?

What has been publicly stated is the BCC has given deferrals of some sort to match what other employees have done. So in essence, if you receive a 4% pay raise and then defer 2.5% with other employees.....are you doing the same as everyone else? The next year the deferred amount is no longer deferred and gets added to pay. But then the other 4% raise is coming, so part of that now gets deferred. Is any of this similar to what you have received or given back to the county? Even if they deferred 4% per year for the past 4 years, I believe any County employee would love to do the same.....right? After all.....the money being deferred are raises.....are all increasing their retirement, etc! When is the last time you received a pay increase?

THEIR PAY: YOU DECIDE

	<u>(2008)</u>	<u>(2009)</u>	<u>(2010)</u>	<u>(2011)</u>
David Humke:	\$77,448.96	\$84,406.95	\$91,756.22	\$96,486.04
Bonnie Weber:	\$74,490.79	\$82,674.56	\$91,953.46	\$92,704.56
Robert Larkin:	\$70,719.68	\$80,788.11	\$88,172.28	\$89,508.24
Kitty Jung:	N/A	\$71,911.40	\$81,550.18	\$85,707.63
John Breternitz:	N/A	\$73,677.30	\$84,059.56	\$88,990.28

*2008/2009 DATA: Transparent Nevada

*2010/2011 DATA: County Budget Model

Conclusion:

The County is on record boasting a philosophy of paying their employees below the median of comparable jobs in similar jurisdictions. I guess this only applies if you are the "low hanging fruit". The closest BCC pay in our area is Douglas County (40-50 thousand). Our BCC receives pay and compensation just barely below that of Clark County. They can blame their outrageous pay for a part time job on the State Legislature if they choose to. We simply need to demand they do not provide quotes to the paper and other media sources touting their huge pay and benefit cuts. **THEY HAVE NOT DONE WHAT YOU ALL HAVE DONE. IT IS SIMPLY NOT TRUE.**

The recent comments by Commissioner Jung supporting Washoe County employees (RGJ) is a very positive to the employee groups and more importantly that she made it publicly. We should allow her to act on those words and give her the opportunity to do so.

In contrast, Commissioner Bonnie Weber was quoted in the same article stating, "County employees are no different than other county residents who have lost jobs in this economy or left their homes in the middle of the night." REALLY Commissioner Weber? This should speak volumes to all.



Washoe faces millions in additional cuts

Washoe County commissioners plan to decide in January on how to cut \$6.8 million more from their general fund budget if no further wage and benefit concessions can be negotiated with county unions.

At a commission retreat on Thursday, County Manager Katy Simon said she would present options to the board in January, saying financial conditions for the county might have changed by that time.

As of April, Washoe County had 1,994 employees to be covered in the current general fund budget. Some unions have agreed to a combined \$4.7 million in concessions to reach an original target of \$11.5 million in labor savings. That means \$6.8 million in employee cost reductions must be made one way or another. And that could include layoffs.

County officials had hoped concessions would fill the entire gap, putting the county on a sustainable road for the next several years and avoiding any further layoffs. Ideally, those concessions would have been made at the start of the fiscal year in July.

Employees

The Washoe County Employees Association

is the county's largest labor group, representing 1,041 members, including rank-and-file employees and their supervisors.

Its members already have agreed to \$2.4 million in concessions in continuing a 3.4 percent wage cut since July 2010.

The county is seeking \$2.6 million more in additional wage and benefit cuts from these employees.

The association plans an all-membership meeting Monday night to discuss the issue.

Associations representing 430 sheriff's deputies and deputy supervisors have not agreed to any cuts this year and are still targeted for \$2.9 million in wage and benefit reductions, according to a chart presented to commissioners Thursday.

Greg Sawyer, a Washoe County detective speaking for the deputies, said negotiations are at an impasse and the next step is binding arbitration. He said the

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county is unwilling to accept a 7 percent reduction in pay and benefits. The change is to be permanent, he said.

That's hard to swallow, he said, given commissioners salaries rose 9 percent from 2008 to 2010 when deputies took cuts. And this fall, the commission identified excess funds to pay off \$18.4 million owed in a lawsuit to Incline Village homeowners in property tax refunds.

The continued threat of loss of jobs is taking its toll on morale and higher anxiety among employees while they're still striving to serve the public, according to a survey among department heads and other county executives.

Sheriff Mike Haley asked for a report on how much county employees can be expected to do. Since the recession began, the county has lost 27 percent of its workforce.

Commissioners

Commission Chairman John Breternitz said he hopes management can lay out how much the county can afford to pay employees over the next several years and then decide with employee groups how that money should be spent. That would stop labor and management from fighting, he said.

Commissioner Robert Larkin, however, said the new reality is the economic is uncertain, making county finances unstable.

Commissioner Kitty Jung said county

employees have given up more than other municipal employees across the state and she won't support asking them for more.

"Enough is enough," she said. "To keep banging on employees is not fair. It's unconscionable."

Commissioner Bonnie Weber said county employees are no different than other county residents who have lost jobs in this economy or left their homes in the middle of the night.

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