

Christian County Commission

Notice is hereby given that the Christian County Commission met for a work-study session at:
The Historic Christian County Courthouse | 100 W. Church Street Room 100 | Ozark, Missouri, 65721
On the 19th day of May 2023, at 2:00 pm
Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

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| Presiding Commissioner, Lynn Morris | County Counselor, Austin Fax |
| Eastern Commissioner, Bradley Jackson | Resource Management Director, Todd Wiesehan |
| Western Commissioner, Hosea Bilyeu | Linda Waddell |
| Commission Executive Assistant Tammy Nuckolls | Human Resources Director, Amber Bryant |
| Aroma McWilliams | Gretchen Garrity |
| John Garrity | Tory Pegram |
| Don & Laura Pettigrew | Renee Brumett |
| Reggie Micham | Scott Wooly |

A quorum was established at 2:00 pm.

The Commissioners met to discuss the Library Board Selection Process.

County Counselor Austin Fax – Read Statute #182.050

Presiding Commissioner Morris – The Commissioners voted, 3 – 0, that the Commission would take on the responsibility as the statute says. Right now, we are looking at how we will get this application process going, what the interview will look like, what the application form will look like, and how we will score. Mr. Fax, do we need a background check or not.

County Counselor

Austin Fax - It is advisable to do a background check. You have a great deal of discretion about how you want to do this.

Presiding Commissioner Morris – We will do background checks.

Eastern Commissioner Jackson – I have looked at the Christian County application and at least five or six dozen library boards across the country, and this is the one I kept falling back on as far as the questions asked. I think utilizing and tweaking it to fit our needs would accomplish what I need to do.

Western Commissioner Bilyeu – I think we start with the Board of Trustees appointment process. They have some places where they indicate possible questions that might be asked. This would be a good starting point. Historically we have always appointed the people through the Board of Trustees. We have not done the vetting. We want to avoid cutting out the people from the board of trustees. As we look at resumes, I want to know if the library personnel wants to recommend certain people.

Eastern Commissioner Jackson – I think we are going above and beyond what's statutorily required, and I think that's a good thing. I am willing to go through all this and use this as a template in the future. I am willing to take on the headache.

Presiding Commissioner Morris–Tori, have you seen it difficult at any time in the past when you had to select a board member that you couldn't find one out of these five districts?

Tory – We have always been able to find one. We accept applications year-round and post at least a month on multiple platforms. Usually, about 3 – 5 people per county apply. It's been very valuable to have people from different counties. The districts we have available right now are Ozark and Highlandville. It's been done by the township since it was founded 66 years ago.

Western Commissioner Bilyeu – County Counselor, we do the appointing and vetting, then the board sets policies, then the staff carries out these policies with procedures.

County Counselor – The commission would not have any authority to change or modify any policies or bylaws of the Board of Trustees.

To be specific, when it comes to the fact that it's currently set up to where there are these five regions, and they come from that. If that is to be changed, it would not be changed by us.

County Counselor – Correct, you can't legally change their bylaws, but their bylaws can't trump any statute. This tells you that the only requirement is that it must be within the district of the library.

For example, the Board of Trustees could not adopt a bylaw within their own board that says the county commission no longer has the authority; we are going to be a self-perpetuating board. That would violate the statute.

Eastern Commissioner Jackson - I think the five districts are a fine concept, but I don't know if that's the best idea. I don't want to hamstring anything by saying we must have at least one of this or two of that. I want the best of everything. If the best five people come out of the same geographic region and they are the best, most qualified people, then I think that's probably the best thing we can do.

Presiding Commission Morris – I want to look at it a different way, and I don't want to change a lot of the policies and procedures they have done in the past. I think we need to find two of the best board members. Many people feel like they are not part of the county. I believe that we need equal representation around the county. I would like to keep Renee B. on the panel to make it a panel of four. No decisions or voting will be made today.

Renee B. – As part of the board's process for making a recommendation to the Commission, they ask me for my perspective. I would appreciate that from the Commissioners, but I definitely should not have a vote.

County Counselor - It looks like in the past, applicants were submitted to the Executive Director, who then presented them to the Board of Trustees, the Board of Trustees conducts a majority vote to determine the recommended candidate and then library administration performs a background check on the candidate, if it returns with no issues, the Executive Director submits the name to the commission requesting appointment.

County Counselor - Are the question and answer recorded?

Renee - No, but it is a public meeting. The interview is all in a public meeting.

Eastern Commissioner Jackson – I would want to vet each candidate individually.

Western Commissioner Bilyeu - I would not be opposed to you meeting with them individually. We would still bring it back in a public meeting. I feel strongly that we have to use the same questions.

Eastern Commissioner Jackson - I suggest we have the application process ready by next week. If that's simply going with the CC Library Boards application and adding to it or something else. We need to decide next week on what that application will be and how we put this out to the public.

Western Commissioner Bilyeu - Do you think the board of trustees also vet these, or should we?

Eastern Commissioner Jackson – I think it's our responsibility statutorily to do this job and no one else's. When I select someone, my name is on the line. I will be held accountable for whatever happens with the person I put forward.

County Counselor - The first question you do have to answer is, to what extent are you going to allow the existing Board of Trustees to function as your gatekeeper? For example, do you want to have your own application process, or do you want to use what's existing? Do you want to have your own interview process right here, or do you want to have an interview process within the board of trustees? You can do any of these things. If you have a June 30 deadline, I think probably next week; there needs to be a decision made on that.


Presiding Commission Morris - I was prepared to look at our calendars and make sure that before we leave, we should choose a date that all three of us can fit in for next week. I recommend not including the Board of Trustees in this vetting process. Regarding the application, I like the one

from Henry County. I don't see much difference between it and the one that Christian County is using. Let's be ready to address these questions next week. I don't want to start from scratch. I think it makes sense to use our application process. Once we decide on the application process, then we are going to have to determine what questions we are going to use. How are we going to score it? A point system? Everyone looked at their calendars, and we can do a Work-study next week on Monday, May 22, at 3:30.

The meeting adjourned at 3:08 am.


Western Commissioner
Hosea Bilyeu


Presiding Commissioner
Lynn Morris


Eastern Commissioner
Bradley A. Jackson