

**GRAND FORKS COUNTY EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION  
EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE MEETING  
21 May 2008 @ 3:00 PM**

**OFFICERS PRESENT:**

Larry Ahles, Jason Johnston, Toni Kain, Andrea Huso

**OFFICE REPS & AND OTHERS PRESENT:**

Suzanne Kilichowski – Social Services  
Linda Hammer – Extension  
Larry Hoffman – Sheriffs Dept  
Julie Reichert – Family Services  
Kevin Anderson – Foster Care

**CALL TO ORDER:**

This meeting was called to order by President Ahles.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Vice president Jason read the minutes from last meeting, motion to accept as read made by Larry second from Linda, carried.

**TREASURERS REPORT:**

Treasurer Kain reported balances of: Checking - \$482.16, Savings - \$746.96, CD 1 - \$4,000 at 2.8% recently renewed for one year, and CD 2 - \$6,000 will expire on 11/30/08. Treasurer Kain also stated that an additional \$125 in membership dues was received and will be deposited in the account shortly. Jason made a motion to accept treasurer's report seconded by Larry, carried.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Employee election results were tallied and results are:

**President**

Larry Ahles received 45 votes  
Robert Bishop and Tom Grinde each received 1 vote

**Vice President**

Jason Johnston received 46 votes

**Secretary**

Andrea Huso received 47 votes

**Treasurer**

Toni Kain received 47 votes

**Negotiators**

Riel Lafontaine received 25 votes  
Rod Huot received 24 votes  
Kevin Anderson received 17 votes

Riel Lafontaine is no longer an employee of the counties so taking his place will be determined at a later date.

Other unfinished business pertains to the handicap doors and the time they are open. President Ahles talked with Brian and it was understood that the handicap doors will not be accessible until 8 a.m.

Cookbook was ruled out as no longer an option, not enough interest.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

Andrea brought an email she received from Marjorie Hanson and Ellie Voelker with concerns on the lighting in the court house? It has been known to be dark and dreary. Location of concern is unclear; Andrea will talk with Marjorie to clarify. Regardless, Larry will talk with Brian... a flag displayed after dark must be illuminated. It was also pointed out that the courthouse has historical remodeling that just took place, which was a lot of money, as well as a new security desk going in. Because of its historical value, not much can be added to its original status.

Replacement officers are needed for the Treasurer due to Toni Kain relocating to the west coast, and one negotiator Riel Lafontaine, as he no longer is employed by the county.

Julie Reichart was appointed as the new treasurer effective immediately.

As far as the negotiator, discussion and decision made that Larry will speak with someone from the States Attorneys office with hopes that one would represent that department as a negotiator.

Ideas on negotiations were discussed, such as:

1. Earning bonus vacation hours for attending wellness programs, the city is already offered this incentive.
2. Earning Easter Monday off as a paid holiday
3. Massage therapist
4. COLA

Members present discussed what percentage of pay increase to ask for, and when it should be implemented. There was talk about using our anniversary date to implement a 2.5% increase, as well as a 2.5% increase January 1. It was mentioned on the difficulty this may raise with payroll, so maybe asking for a flat 5% effective January 1 would be better. However, reinstating the anniversary date should be one issue and increasing according to the COLA another that may be best. Andrea will check out the history of COLA and bring any material to the next EA meeting. Questions pertaining to the merit system were discussed as well. Also, Andrea will put together a little survey that will go out with the next pay periods print out asking each employee to voice their opinions pertaining to the percentage of increase we should ask for. She is to first get the survey Okayed from President Ahles. Talk about who will negotiate for us, if we should hire someone or allow the negotiators to do so. Linda mentioned how it ruffled feathers in the past and several felt that it wasn't effective. More talk on the anniversary date was discussed; some thought that it should be broke down into less than ten years and over ten years of dedication.

Discussions on paid holidays were noted, such as when an employee's normal work week consists of 12 hour days, why are they not paid for 12 hours as a paid holiday instead of 8? Response was clear stating that paid holiday hours are determined by the Department of Labor, not by each department.

A question on what we do as the Employees Association was asked... What do we do? We are here for the employees, to help as we can, and as we see a need. However, it was mentioned how this may seem unfair to some employees. For example, if John Doe is having medical issues and the EA spends \$250 on a benefit for John, all the money is being pooled for that one event, it is not being equally distributed. Should the money spent be fair and divided amongst all? The answer is no, it is first come first served basis, helping when a need arises. If a small group of employees need help we should be able to help, no questions asked. Linda Hammen suggested we outline rules about the policy and procedure of releasing these funds, and how people come to the committee for help.

Andrea moved to adjourn with a second from Jason, so carried.

Next meeting will be June 18, 2008 at 3pm.

Respectfully submitted by Andrea Huso, Secretary