



The Gladwin County Board of Commissioners met for a Special Board Meeting, on June 30, 2021. The purpose of the meeting was to conclude interviews for the County Administrator position. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairperson Karen Moore. The Pledge of Allegiance was said; roll was called. Commissioner Szuch was absent, all other commissioners were present.

The Board reviewed the Consent Agenda –

The Board reviewed the consent agenda. Commissioner Taylor noted changes under New Business, Authorized Signers for Gladwin Zettel Airport. A motion was made by Commissioner K. Grove to accept the agenda with changes, seconded by Commissioner Taylor, all in favor, motion carried.

Cash balances

Communications

Finance

Committee Meetings

New Business

- 1- Commissioner Taylor proposed a resolution to approve the Persons Authorized to sign on Behalf of Gladwin Zettle Airport, seconded by commissioner K. Grove. Chairperson Moore noted that the information had been reviewed by civil council and was discussed by the Airport Board. Interim Administrator Maveal added that this was approved by Gladwin City already. Roll call vote, 4 - y, 0 - n, resolution passed.
- 2- Interviews for County Administrator

* Please note, all responses to interview questions are summaries and not verbatim.

(a) Mark Justin, 10:00 a.m.

- 1) Provide a brief summary of your education and work experience.

Attended grade school in Gladwin, have an Associates in Police Administration, interned with the Gladwin Sheriff's Office, worked for the Gaylord Department of Natural Resources as a heavy equipment operator. I obtained an Accountancy Degree from Aquinas in Grand Rapids, then worked for Sarah Lee as a Corporate Financial Analysis; then sales and marketing for nearly thirty years. I became the Brand Management, Director of Marketing, and President of a Medical Consulting Agency. It has always been a goal to come back to Gladwin and retire, I am the 5th generation of family here.

- 2) Please briefly describe your experience with economic development

Breaking new ground and devising new sources of revenue in the business world is something I've done for years. It is important to put together the right research and information to reach a goal, and a team is collectively smarter than any one of us.

- 3) Please briefly describe your experience with beautification programs.

Brand Identity, a products look and feel, package design, advertising. Translating that into Gladwin County I think about the lakes, blight, and I think there are a lot of

opportunities to enhance and improve our county. If you live and love Gladwin County, you want it to look and feel the best that it can.

- 4) **Do you consider yourself a leader or a manager? How would you describe your leadership or management style?**
Very collaborative, I believe in the collective genius of people. I've been classically trained in Human Resources by many companies. As a leader you play to people's strengths and shorten the weaknesses, Everyone should feel like they are growing in their job. Standards of performance is important, transparency and communication.
- 5) **What do you perceive to be the county administrator's role in working with the Board of Commissioners?**
I think ambassadorship is a big part of it, representing the board and bringing the issues back to them. To be a resource for the county Commissioners, and involvement in the townships. Management, administration without creating issues for the commissioners.
- 6) **What are your expectations of the Board of Commissioners in relation to yourself?**
Upfront clear direction of the roll. An understanding of expectations and good communication. Involvement in conversation and supporting each other.
- 7) **In your opinion, what role should the administrator have in the community?**
Being at community events, township meetings and a face for the media.
- 8) **How do you deal with the news media?**
To be transparent and stay on topic; the ability to redirect the line of questioning back to what you want to talk about. A unified voice for the county.
- 9) **What is the best way for an administrator to deal with an angry constituent?**
Try to understand the issue and what the root cause is. I am a calm person all the time, even when people are angry. The key is to understand and make them feel as though they are being heard. Not to make promises, but for them to know appropriate action will be taken.
- 10) **How and when do you delegate responsibility?**
It depends on who I am delegating to, I believe in ownership of your responsibilities. It has to be to a person who I know understands the task, because I am not a micro manager.
- 11) **Have you taken part in mediation, fact finding, or arbitration? If yes, please explain your experience, including your role and your thoughts regarding the outcomes of these experiences.**
Yes, I've done a lot of mediation. Conflict resolution with employees and in contract situations. Sometimes there is no obvious resolution, but most times we can leave the table with a better understanding of one another's needs.
- 12) **Have you ever had to discipline, demote or fire an employee. Please elaborate.**
Many, many times, unfortunately. For illegal, unethical, or immoral issues, I do not have any issue with firing. Performance issues are harder. I do performance evaluations and improvement plans, make sure the person knows where they need to improve. If they still need to be fired, I will work with them on a transition, it's not cold hearted. I believe their should be procedures in place for this.
- 13) **Are you familiar with state and federal laws relating to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment, employees with disabilities and equal opportunity?**
Yes, I've worked in that world for a long time. Some laws have been progressive over time, and I am very familiar with them. I have yet to be in an employment situation where I didn't have to deal with those issues.
- 14) **Have charges of violation of state or federal employment laws or a grievance ever been filed against you? If so, please explain.**

No

- 15) What experience have you had in the preparation and implementation of personnel rules regulations, procedures and compensation plans? Please describe.
Developed a lot of new ground and created a lot of new positions. A lot of thought has to be put into where the revenue is coming from, sustainability, business needs, job descriptions & market evaluations. Making sure you have thought through everything, and that it is a collaborative effort.
- 16) Tell me about a time when you feel you compromised your integrity for the benefit of the company? Would you do it again? What was the outcome?
A buyer for Kroger in Dallas hinted that he wanted a new bass boat. The sales guy and I decided we would buy him one (with the approval of my company). It made our company a lot of money, but I feel like I compromised my integrity. It felt dirty and I would not do it over.
- 17) What are the 3 (three) things that are most important to you in a job?
Having a feeling of adding value to the organization, sustainability in the position or continuity, feeling like you are doing a good job (integrity and personal respect).
- 18) If I were to poll everyone you have worked with what percentage would not be a fan of yours and why?
There have been some conflicts but can't think of anyone who thinks poorly of me. Even my ex-wife, we are still okay with each other. I think everyone would tell you good things.
- Commissioner Moore asked what do you believe is the greatest challenge facing Gladwin County?
The "Lakes" issue, the threat to the tax base, unknowns about property values. This is not how our county is supposed to look. I worry about our Drug issues in the county, its not unique to us, but I feel it is significant.
 - Commissioner R. Grove asked how would you separate a friendship from a working relationship?
The core of what we do is to do a great job for the county. I have no problem with putting friendship aside, to sit down and address an issue. We can be friends and disagree on issues.
 - Commissioner R. Grove asked about Grant writing?
No specific grant writing, but have written a lot of Request for Proposals, written a lot of bond proposals, and addressed shareholders in corporate settings. I'm sure there are specific requirements to grant writing and I am a good business writer.
 - Commissioner Moore asked if he had any questions for the Commissioners?
 - Mr. Justin stated "I am curious about the position and why we have one now".
Commissioner Moore responded that there used to be on years ago, and it ended. We had some major changes in our county at the beginning of the year and it was the right time.
Commissioner K. Grove responded that there is only a small handful of counties in the state that do not have administrator.
Commissioner Taylor explained the need for continuity.
 - Mr. Justin asked if there is contractual piece that provides a term for this position.
Attorney Hoerauf responded "A typical contract for an Admin is 3 years, but everything at the county level depends on appropriation".
 - Commissioner Moore asked, "Do you have anything to share with us"?
No, not really. I assumed it would be a committee interview but came prepared to answer any questions you had.

(b) Joel Johnson, 11: 00 a.m.

- 1) **Provide a brief summary of your education and work experience.**
Technical Certification from Michigan State University in Agriculture and Technology, six years at the State House of Representatives & then I termed out. Government consulting, and a presidential appointment to the U.S. Department of Agriculture in MI.
- 2) **Please briefly describe your experience with economic development**
As the Chamber of Commerce President, while at Johnson Elevator & the House of Representatives, I worked with my districts and actively helped in Economic Development. I'm in tune with the needs of local government and EDC's to help as needed.
- 3) **Please briefly describe your experience with beautification programs.**
As the Chamber of Commerce president, I undertook some projects in Clare, and at a distant level, as State Representative.
- 4) **Do you consider yourself a leader or a manager? How would you describe your leadership or management style?**
Very much a leader; my style is to have an open-door, accountability, team leadership, team success. Listen to input, respect expertise and consider all suggestions to make a responsible decision.
- 5) **What do you perceive to be the county administrator's role in working with the Board of Commissioners?**
Someone who is a liaison between the Board and everyone else. Elected officials, department heads, the public & the media. To work with the county to implement the boards decisions.
- 6) **What are your expectations of the Board of Commissioners in relation to yourself?**
The overall goals of the commission are important, a strategic plan is helpful. For me to know your goals, have an open-door policy, and working with the clerk to help prepare your agendas.
- 7) **In your opinion, what role should the administrator have in the community?**
Be accessible to people, the best suggestions come from our community, and be active in the community.
- 8) **How do you deal with the news media?**
I've had a good relationship with the media. You have to be able to answer their questions, but not be put in a pigeon hold.
- 9) **What is the best way for an administrator to deal with an angry constituent?**
To listen, asked open ended questions so they have an opportunity to speak. Misunderstandings can often be clarified; explanations can be given and we can find common ground. Take them into account and go from there.
- 10) **How and when do you delegate responsibility?**
It varies with the position; here I think we will find department heads and elected officials. I will be a resource for them, but not step over them to take their responsibility away from them. Shared responsibilities not delegated responsibility. I'm not afraid to do the work myself; getting out in the community, doing the research, but am willing to delegate when needed.
- 11) **Have you taken part in mediation, fact finding, or arbitration? If yes, please explain your experience, including your role and your thoughts regarding the outcomes of these experiences.**
One of the things as a State Director of Farm Services is appeals. I co-ordinated appeals with 49 county offices. Often a producer has a different opinion, and they have appeal options. I had to research what was going on with the constituent, research how those things compared to national regulations, and discuss changes, flexibility and

options for a positive outcome. If it went to the state committee, I would brief the committee on the situation and the potential options for outcomes. The state committee would make a decision, and I would implement it at the county.

- 12) **Have you ever had to discipline, demote or fire an employee. Please elaborate.**
Several times, it's never enjoyable. First, document the reasons for what you are doing. Have conferences with the employee, discuss expectations, job description and discrepancy. Work to resolve discrepancies, have a plan and a timeline. If you help them know what needs to happen, they will make the improvements.
 - 13) **Are you familiar with state and federal laws relating to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment, employees with disabilities and equal opportunity?**
Very familiar. As a USDA Supervisor they have "AG Learn", some trainings are required, that is one.
 - 14) **Have charges of violation of state or federal employment laws or a grievance ever been filed against you? If so, please explain.**
They have not.
 - 15) **What experience have you had in the preparation and implementation of personnel rules regulations, procedures and compensation plans? Please describe.**
Deeply involved in that as a private employer, putting together employee plans. At the Federal level we did job descriptions, but with guidelines and choices. The Federal Government is very good at making sure you are in continued contact with your employees.
 - 16) **Tell me about a time when you feel you compromised your integrity for the benefit of the company? Would you do it again? What was the outcome?**
I can't think of a time that I ever did that. I always work to do what is right regardless of the consequence.
 - 17) **What are the 3 (three) things that are most important to you in a job?**
That my service is a benefit to the public and those that I work with, the ability to make some decisions and implement tasks that are delegated, and accountability.
 - 18) **If I were to poll everyone you have worked with what percentage would not be a fan of yours and why?**
Maybe 3%, probably the people who had been toured to get their things and go.
- Commissioner Moore asked what do you believe is the greatest challenge facing Gladwin County?
There are big issues that come from the dam failures, I see there may be State financial help. I'd have to ask questions, but I see the fund balance is just under \$200,000. I'd have questions about pension liabilities, defined benefits, etc..
 - Commissioner R. Grove asked how would you separate a friendship from a working relationship?
I try to be friends with everyone, but you have to do what is right regardless of who is involved. Make sure there is no appearance of friendship taking precedence over law and procedure.
 - Commissioner R. Grove asked about Grant writing experience?
I am very familiar with the programs but have not written for any. Very familiar with USDA, and MISHDA. I am aware of opportunities and funding coming your way. You need to look for grant opportunities to build on this, to build partnerships within the county.
 - Commissioner Moore asked if he had any questions for the Commissioners?
 - What changes do you hope to have take place?

Commissioner Taylor responded that part of our thinking is to establish continuity between commissioners. Many other counties have administrators.

Commissioner Moore responded that we used to have an administrator; that position went away; the Executive secretary position is gone, and with changes in the last election it was the right time.

- Commissioner Moore asked if there was anything he would like us to know?

Not really, but I have a handout of why I am a good candidate if I can hand them out. I mean what I say and say what I mean, I am helpful to local government & would enjoy the opportunity to work with you.

(c) Mark Schaefer, 12:00 p.m.

- 1) Provide a brief summary of your education and work experience.

I have a background in sales and operations; went to Central Michigan University and received a Bachelors in Science with an emphasis on Business Administration. I have a Certificate in Project Management from the University of Washington and worked towards my Masters in Information Management at Seattle Pacific University. I have 10 years in insurance sales, worked with start-up companies on business systems as a solutions consultant. I worked for Pitney Bowes in Management Services as a Business Analyst and helped grow a global operation in eight different countries with multiple locations that I was responsible for.

- 2) Please briefly describe your experience with economic development

While with the Gladwin County Record, as a sales person, I thought it was important to help local business to promote themselves, to meet their marketing objectives in print and digitally.

- 3) Please briefly describe your experience with beautification programs.

I am the deputy supervisor for Secord Township, and will be getting involved in those projects.

- 4) Do you consider yourself a leader or a manager? How would you describe your leadership or management style?

I am more of a leader; my management style is to empower people.

- 5) What do you perceive to be the county administrator's role in working with the Board of Commissioners?

That is a question I was going to ask you. There was an administrator, and that was eliminated, and now reinvented. Looking at the job description, it's a supporting position to make sure the commissioners and their constituents get support.

- 6) What are your expectations of the Board of Commissioners in relation to yourself?

Good communication, open and honest, keep me informed. I compromise and find a middle.

- 7) In your opinion, what role should the administrator have in the community?

I like to get involved all of the time. I go to meetings that I am not invited too. Part of the admin. position should be another set of eyes and ears in our community.

- 8) How do you deal with the news media?

I think they share the same goal as the community, they want to show Gladwin County in the best light.

- 9) What is the best way for an administrator to deal with an angry constituent?

Understand their concern, they are often angry because no one will listen to them. See how we can help them.

- 10) How and when do you delegate responsibility?

I prioritize first, determine what components I need to address personally, and who can handle what can be delegated. It depends on what is in front of me.

- 11) Have you taken part in mediation, fact finding, or arbitration? If yes, please explain your experience, including your role and your thoughts regarding the outcomes of these experiences.
No
- 12) Have you ever had to discipline, demote or fire an employee? Please elaborate.
Yes, I don't like to fire people, but it is sometimes inevitable. I believe when I make a selection, I do a thorough enough job to select the right candidate. But review performance when needed, a written performance secondly, and follow the process.
- 13) Are you familiar with state and federal laws relating to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment, employees with disabilities and equal opportunity?
Yes. I would say I am quite familiar. I've had a very diverse team.
- 14) Have charges of violation of state or federal employment laws or a grievance ever been filed against you? If so, please explain.
No
- 15) What experience have you had in the preparation and implementation of personnel rules regulations, procedures and compensation plans? Please describe.
When I was a business analyst, part of those components was benefit structure. It was one of the biggest things I did.
- 16) Tell me about a time when you feel you compromised your integrity for the benefit of the company? Would you do it again? What was the outcome?
I've never compromised my integrity and was let go once because of it.
- 17) What are the 3 (three) things that are most important to you in a job?
Making a connection with the people I work with and building trust, culture is important and communication.

Commissioner Szuch joined the meeting at 12:32

- 18) If I were to poll everyone you have worked with what percentage would not be a fan of yours and why?
There is a percentage out there, I'm sure of it. I am a little out of the box when I approach a situation.
- Commissioner Moore asked what do you believe is the greatest challenge facing Gladwin County?
It depends on who you talk too, there are 22,000 people in the county. I love this county and need to help make this place a better place. Two things could truly help the county, infrastructure for broadband technology and the opportunities to improve the presentation of the county.
 - Commissioner R. Grove asked how would you separate a friendship from a working relationship?
I am really good at that; I think it is respect. Everyone needs to understand that the purpose of the Administrator is to support the agenda of the Commissioners.
 - Commissioner R. Grove asked about Grant writing experience.
No, I've never written a grant, but there are tools. I am very astute at writing and good at technologies, I don't think that would be an issue.
 - Mr. Schaefer stated that he is curious why we have an Administrator position now.
Commissioner Taylor responded continuity for the county when new commissioners are voted in. Very few counties do not have an administrator and we no longer have an executive secretary.

- Mr. Schaefer asked what the board thinks are the biggest challenges facing Gladwin County?
Commissioner Moore answered that we certainly look at the infrastructure of Broadband, fortunately Bob Balzer is involved in that process, and the lakes are certainly important as well.
Commissioner K. Grove responded that it's pretty calm with the exception of the lakes.
Commissioner Moore added that gypsy moth control is an issue now, but we need to plan ahead and prepare for the future.
 - Mr. Schaefer asked what the number one concern of the residents of the county is.
Commissioner Moore responded that she thinks it is transparency.
Commissioner Taylor answered balancing finances & sticking to a budget.
Commissioner R. Grove stated that each township has its own issues it has to deal with.
- Commissioner Moore asked "Is there anything else you would like us to know? You can see I'm pretty transparent, my background is rich.
- Mr. Schaefer asked one last question, "How will the board work with the administrator"?
Commissioner Taylor answered that they will develop a good sound policy for daily operations.
Commissioner Moore commented to have the administrator be an adviser to the board.

Chairperson Comments

I would indicate that concludes are interviews. Applicants have completed the application and consents to do background checks. I think I should take these to my office and have Todd scan and email them to the commissioners. As we have an internal candidate, we want to be fair.

Further discussion was had on how the board will proceed. The Civil attorney will reach out to MMRMA for direction. Conversation was had on setting a special board meeting.

Board Comments

Commissioner Kyle Grove, District 1 –

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Commissioner Ron Taylor, District 2 –

- Let's talk about the process. In my opinion we should take the top two and go forward with second interviews. Conversation was had in the potential process. Commissioner Szuch recommended that the employment offer be structured and presented to the board before moving forward. Benefits, compensation, contract v noncontract, performance standards, etc.

Commissioner Michael Szuch, District 3 –

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Commissioner Moore, District 4 –

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Commissioner Rick Grove, District 5 –

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Public Comment -

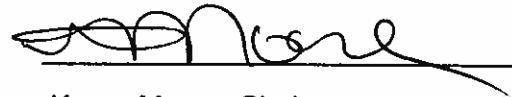
- Mary Moylan commented that the three interviews today were outstanding. Team building was consistent in all three interviews today, did not see it in the first interview, and believes this is very important. Stated her concerns over the recent lawsuit against the board and her views of the cause. Asked the board to think ahead and move forward for the good of the county.
- Jim Braidwood commented on the selection process. He stated his credentials in Human Resources and shared his views on the critical choices in front of the board. Stated it is essential to consider the political background.
- Diana Mella, my husband intended to speak, but was called to family with bad news. Diana read a signed statement from her husband, John Mella.
- Jim Braidwood added that the compensation package for the County Administrator should include some incentives.

No other public comment.

A motion was made by Commissioner Taylor to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Szuch. All in favor, meeting adjourned at 1:18 p.m.



Karrie Hulme, County Clerk



Karen Moore, Chairperson

Posted 7/13/21