



The Gladwin County Board of Commissioners met for a special Board Meeting, on July 20, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairperson Karen Moore. The Pledge of Allegiance was said, roll was called; Commissioner Szuch was running Late, all other commissioners were present.

The Board reviewed the Consent Agenda –

The Board reviewed the consent agenda; a motion made by Commissioner Taylor to accept the agenda with changes/ as written, seconded by Commissioner K.Grove, all in favor motion carried.

Cash balances

Communications

Finance

Committee Meetings

New Business

1 – Second Interviews for County Administrator

Answers are summaries and are not verbatim.

(a) Mark Justin, 9:00 a.m.

- 1 Tell me about yourself and why you'll make a good finance manager.
Educated in Accounting & Finance; experienced in Corporate Finance. Government accounting is different than the public sector, but I have managed people, budgets, and clients, with 35 years of experience in finance.
- 2 What is your understanding of a finance manager role and are you ready for the challenge?
It is critically important to be careful with management and spending of funds. Transparent and fiscal responsibility is our jobs.
- 3 Tell me about your ability to work under pressure?
The higher the pressure the more calming influence I can be, you have to be collaborative and work through the task.
- 4 What is your financial management experience?
Community boards like the city housing commission in high school, in addition to previously stated experience.
- 5 What do you believe are some major challenges in financial management that local governments have going ahead? How are you prepared to address those?
Proving services that constituents find important, creative problem solving around the dam projects, transparency, and communication; listen to people and allow them to have an active voice.
- 6 When making a decision that has a wide impact across different parts of our organization, what factors would you consider?
Everything that could have an impact, work from the bottom up, listen to input & make recommendations.

- 7 Describe a situation where you needed to use data to prove a point.
That has been constant, in packaging using syndicated data, Investing & building portfolios is always data driven
- 8 Detail is critical in our industry; what do you feel makes you a detail-oriented person and why?
A natural curiosity is most critical, you can't assume, Ask a lot of questions, and work to understand.
- 9 Which accounting specific software are you familiar with?
I've used early 90's software, then later corporate software's like SAP, Kronos, Quicken & Quick books,
- 10 What steps do you take to ensure an optimal budget?
Bottom-up Building, forecasting, gathering input, task assignment, data gathering and comparisons. As well as budget meetings and planning,
- 11 What processes would you put in place to ensure the accuracy of accounts?
Bottom-up budgeting, accountability starting at the lowest levels, communication and collaboration are important.
- 12 What kind of financial report does upper management need and why?
Are revenues coming in on schedule, and if not why? Spending within the budget and having contingencies.
- 13 What methods/metrics do you use to evaluate the organization's process?
Simple tracking, where are we at and where we are supposed to be? Anticipate things coming up and making adjustments.
- 14 Is a cash flow statement enough to tell whether a company is doing well?
Absolutely not. Good to see if day to day needs being met, but not for projection.
- 15 What's your experience with benchmark in studies?
Everything I've done has compared to some type of benchmark. The only way to know how you are truly doing is to have something to measure against. Marketing, salaries, etc.
- 16 How would you help staff change from a "this is how it's always done" approach to new processes you implement?
Not a good way to start a conversation. I believe in the power of creative thinking. No real progress can be made if you are always accepting the status quo.
- 17 Tell me about a time when your knowledge of financial regulations benefited your company.
In my currently role, under SDC & other regulatory agencies, knowledge and experience in regulatory control
- 18 Have you reviewed Gladwin County's current budget? Do you see areas of success or concern?
Law enforcement eats up a lot of the budget, a few deficits in a couple of funds are concerning, I'm interested to know how the budget has been overspent, and why. Positives are the services provided to our community; appropriation happens smoothly.

Commissioner Szuch joined the meeting at 9:27

- 19 Walk us through the budget process beginning to end.
Start mid-year, look at performance and anticipate next years needs, meet with departments, assign tasks. Toward the fall compile information to present to the board. Build on what contingencies you can to account for unforeseen expenses. A series of planning, scheduling, and collaboration.

Commissioner Moore asked how much knowledge do you have on America Rescue Plan Funds.

Not much. I know there are funds available but would have to gain that knowledge.

Commissioner R. Grove asked are you up for the challenge of long hours, especially at first.

Yes, of course. Live locally, plan to be involved in local meetings. Currently work close to 70 hours and look forward to being involved.

Commissioner Moore asked if there "are other things you would like us to know?"

My concern coming in is that there are so many nuances to county budget that you don't know until you've lived it. Things that are familiar to you are not to me, but I've always had a strong ability to learn quickly.

Commissioner K. Grove asked to share the county's current accounting software with Mr. Justin. Discussion was had about BS&A.

Mr. Justin asked if there was an individual specifically in charge of accounting. Chairperson Moore and Interim admi Maveal shared that process.

Mr. Justin asked what the current budget process is, Chairperson Moore and Commissioner Taylor shared that process.

(b) Jole Johnson, 10:00 a.m.

1 Tell me about yourself and why you'll make a good finance manager?

I have a lot of business experience as well as experience in various levels of government. I've worked with our community college and the Great Lakes Community Alliance, and I have a good eye for detail. I helped bring MI out of a deficit and balance the budget. I am committed to Gladwin County, I've been at Johnson elevator for ...years, 3 terms at the state, you can count on me being involved active and committed to Gladwin County

2 What is your understanding of a finance manager role and are you ready for the challenge?

I don't make the decision on budget or expenditures but am in the position to ask the hard questions. Have a few concerns over the budget, and can bring to you some alternatives rather than reducing the fund balance

3 Tell me about your ability to work under pressure?

Not a problem there. I have had a lot of opportunity to do that working in legislature, many decisions have been made under pressure. It is important to listen and take all opinions into account. Working under the USDA, many programs were on a timeline for execution, and we were able to get that done,

4 What is your financial management experience?

In addition to forming and fulfilling a budget for a business, I've had private sector training in financial analysis & budgeting as well as workshops and training at a Legislative level. Working to make sure we stayed within a budget & from the right pot of money.

5 What do you believe are some major challenges in financial management that local governments have going ahead? How are you prepared to address those?

Balance in necessary; services, needed upgrades, improvements and maintenance. Being prepared for unexpected challenges and new requirements. Looking for

financial resources and balancing revenues and expenditures. Be aware of financial opportunities and programs available to the county.

- 6 When making a decision that has a wide impact across different parts of our organization, what factors would you consider?
The administrator should be strongly involved in all of the departments, positives and the negatives. Work with them on planning, and move forward with the best programs from there
- 7 Describe a situation you needed to use data to prove a point.
That is often the case. One of the times I used data at the USDA was in justifying where we used our sealing allotments. There were very strict guidelines on the number of people we could hire under two types of employees. We used Data from a Tableau program to look at each categories responsibilities and progress to make these decisions.
- 8 Detail is critical in our industry; what do you feel makes you a detail-oriented person and why?
I agree it is important, & I have the ability and natural instinct to do that. I went through the budget and came up with questions, comments, and suggestions on it. Things add up, and it's important to make sure spending and revenues are both on the right trajectory.
- 9 Which accounting specific software are you familiar with?
I've used whatever came my way.
- 10 What steps do you take to ensure an optimal budget?
Be realistic. Ask each department for their budgets and go through them together.
- 11 What processes would you put in place to ensure the accuracy of accounts?
Make sure that we get numbers from each department, from the clerk, opportunity for internal audits on a regular basis.
- 12 What kind of financial report does upper management need and why?
I would want to see the details and assume you will want to see the same thing. We need summaries, but also need the detail to analyze.
- 13 What methods/metrics do you use to evaluate the organization's process?
Compare to other years, are we within our budget, is our fund balance growing? Look at our pensions, etc. I always say surprises are for Christmas and Birthdays, not for Government.
- 14 Is a cash flow statement enough to tell whether a company is doing well?
No, you can tell how they are operating but you can't tell where the assets and liabilities are at. Balance sheets are essential.
- 15 What's your experience with benchmark in studies?
I have used them a lot; It really does help. You can see similarities and compare where you are at.
- 16 How would you help staff change from a "this is how it's always done" approach to new processes you implement?
I haven't had a big problem with that. It takes a little while to adapt, but if you continue with the expectation that this is how we do it now and why, you'll have a pretty good response
- 17 Tell me about a time when your knowledge of financial regulations benefited your company.
There are many times that they have been a benefit. Looking at FSA, we had things come forward where other States were not going in the right direction, and I was able to use regulations to show this was illegal and we could not do it.

18 Have you reviewed Gladwin County's current budget? Do you see areas of success or concern?

Yes, I see both. One thing I can say is we did have some serious disasters, but the emergency management budget was kept in line. Many situations I thought were handled well, reduced expense for example. The big problem was over capitol improvements, I assume this was a timely issue, but I would have liked to have presented you with options.

19 Walk us through the budget process beginning to end.

Ask department heads for their projections, assist and review those budgets. Work on this early so we can be timely, work with the clerk to make sure she is in agreement. Compile the information, evaluate it for adjustments and present it to the board.

Commissioner Moore asked how much knowledge do you have on America Rescue Plan Funds.

I know a fair amount. One of the first things is to know the Commission's priorities. And to know where the money can be spent. Work with the Commission to ration a match fund for local governments. Infrastructure in water, sewer and broadband would be areas to focus on.

Commissioner R. Grove asked are you up for the challenge of long hours, especially at first.

Even though my jobs with legislature were limited, I am looking forward to an opportunity to not have an expiration date from the time I start. I am able and willing to move to Gladwin County for this opportunity, I enjoy Gladwin County and look forward to the different meetings and community activities. This provides accessibility to residents of the county if they wish to talk with me.

Commissioner Moore asked if there "are other things you would like us to know?"

I do want to reiterate this is a long-term commitment for me. I want to do a good job and would like the opportunity to work with you.

Commissioner Moore asked about Mr. Johnson's budget concerns.

I have 12 budget concerns. Top two are the large expenditure in capitol improvement, & our Probate Childcare Expenses very greatly from past years; I would like to know how Probate Court plans to keep them down.

Discussion was had on capitol improvements expense.

Further conversation was had about a timeline for the Board to make a decision.

Chairperson Comments

Chairperson Moore noted she would like to join the fair board, and Commissioner R. Grove had agreed. Though he enjoys the fair board, he is very busy and is willing to allow Chairperson Moore to join the board in his stead. Commissioner R. Grove & K. Grove both noted they had attended the fair and had positive reviews.

Board Comments

Commissioner Kyle Grove, District 1 – none

Commissioner Ron Taylor, District 2 – none

Commissioner Michael Szuch, District 3 – none

- Asked about the status of a wage plan and performance & evaluation standards. Also, asked if we would be moving forward on the overall structure of the County Administrator. Chairperson Moore said the plan is to have the standards available at the next meeting, and that she had met with MSU Extension and had a discussion with the recent Osceola County Administrator. She is interested in being a consultant for our county going forward. Osceola County is very similar to ours in the current situation we are facing hiring a County Administrator. Further discussion was had on what that would look like.

Commissioner Moore, District 4 – none

Commissioner Rick Grove, District 5 – none

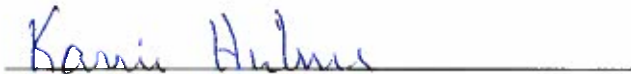
Attorney Report -

Essentially settled the AmeriHemp lawsuit; drafted an consent order for the board to decide on.

Motion made by Commissioner Taylor to allow Attorney Hoerauf to settle the pending litigation with AmeriHemp. Seconded by Commissioner R. Grove. All in favor, motion carried.

Public Comment - none

A motion was made by Commissioner R. Grove to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Szuch. All in favor, meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m.



Karrie Hulme, County Clerk



Karen Moore, Chairperson

Posted 7/29/21