

IN THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER 10) IN THE MATTER OF ESTABLISHING A
) 5% BILINGUAL PREMIUM PAY FOR
) NON-REPRESENTED STAFF
)
)
)

WHEREAS, as a result of changes in the demographics of Lane County resulting in a greater number of clients needing to access services provided by Lane County; and

WHEREAS, employees represented by AFSCME, AFSCME-Nurses, LCPOA, FOPPO already receive a compensation incentive for their bilingual skills when necessary for their jobs; and

WHEREAS, the bilingual premium pay would be awarded to non-represented employees if bilingual skills are necessary to perform their job; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners wishes to reaffirm its commitment to best employment practices as outlined in Lane County's Lane Code, Lane Manual, Administrative Procedures Manual, and Diversity Action Plan; and

WHEREAS, this bilingual premium pay will enhance Lane County's ability to enhance and provide services to more members of our community; and

WHEREAS, a salary survey was conducted of other similar counties and agencies, and that survey reflected that other agencies already have a similar practice in existence; therefore

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, Non-represented regular employees begin receiving a 5% bilingual premium pay provided that they meet the criteria set forth by Human Resources staff; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the 3% bilingual premium the Physician classification currently receive be increased to 5%; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that County Counsel, County Administration, and Human Resources staff update existing policies to allow for immediate implementation of this bilingual premium pay

Dated this ____ day of _____, 2010.

 Bill Fleenor, Chair
 Board of County Commissioners

AGENDA COVER MEMO

Memorandum Date: March 8, 2010
Order Date: March 17, 2010

TO: Board of County Commissioners

DEPARTMENT: Human Resources

PRESENTED BY: Hector Rios, Sr. Human Resources Analyst

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: IN THE MATTER OF ESTABLISHING A 5% BILINGUAL
PREMIUM PAY FOR NON-REPRESENTED STAFF

I. MOTION

**MOVE APPROVAL OF ORDER 10 -- _____ IN THE MATTER OF
ESTABLISHING A 5% BILINGUAL PREMIUM PAY FOR NON-REPRESENTED
STAFF**

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Over the years, Lane County Human Resources has received requests from County departments, requesting that Lane County be offering bilingual compensation for non-represented Lane County employees who are bilingual in English and Spanish and who utilize those skills regularly as part of their employment. For a variety of reasons related to staffing and the assumption that this would be costly, Human Resources staff did not pursue this possibility.

Currently, the only non-represented staff who are compensated for those skills are the Physicians for whom the BCC approved a 3% differential in March of 2005. Currently, no Physician is actually receiving this compensation, as we do not have anyone with these skills.

Employees who are represented by the AFSCME, AFSCME-Nurses, FOPPO, and LCPOA contracts receive a 5% additional pay for their bilingual skills. Currently, we have 49 represented employees throughout Lane County who are already receiving bilingual pay.

On January 21st of the current year, Jeff Spartz, County Administrator, directed Lane County Human Resources staff to bring a proposal for bilingual compensation to the Board of County Commissioners.

III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History

LCPOA staff began receiving a bilingual compensation incentive in 1993. In the case of AFSCME, Lane County began compensating represented employees who utilized their bilingual skills as part of their work in 2001. Such compensation was implemented via a bilingual differential or a premium or by creating bilingual classifications.

Since then Human Resources has received numerous requests from staff throughout Lane County to implement a similar compensation incentive for non-represented staff.

The demographics of Lane County continue to change as they have for the last decade or so, and this shift has resulted in a greater number of members of our community who may need assistance in a language other than English.

B. Policy Issues

Under the Charter, the Lane Code (2.260-2.265) and Lane Manual (2.235), the Board sets the classification and compensation plans for the County. Chapter 3, Section 20 of the APM addresses the process of performing a review or audit of positions, generally on an individual basis.

If the Board of County Commissioners approves the proposed plans, employees in the affected position will be reclassified to the new classifications and placed on the new salary ranges.

The County Diversity Policy is found at Lane Manual 2.390. It states:

2.390 Diversity is a key to the future success of Lane County. We are charged with providing effective government services in an increasingly competitive and diverse environment. If we are to succeed, each of us must embrace the value of diversity as being critical to the achievement of our mission. The more successfully we are able to conduct our business in a diverse community the more diverse our presence must be in that community.

(1) Policy. Lane County will demonstrate its commitment to diversity through the way in which it provides County services, through its employment practices, through its funding decisions,

and through its appointments to County boards, commissions, and committees by:

- (a) Ensuring that all County services, programs and activities are provided to its diverse communities in ways that are sensitive to and responsive to cultural differences, including accessibility for persons with disabilities;

C. Board Goals

The mission of Lane County is to provide high quality government services in a fair, open and economical manner to best meet the needs and expectations of our citizens and guests. The Lane County Strategic Plan clearly addresses the need for the Human Resources department to direct and coordinate the overall planning effort to identify actions to assure that workforce capabilities meet future needs, and to aim for a flexible classification and compensation system so that the system supports and does not inhibit excellent performance in the delivery of County services.

The County's Strategic Plan outlines specific objectives for our personnel programs, which include our classification and compensation plans. Section A2 states in part that we will "strive for a flexible classification and compensation system;" we will "ensure that the system supports and does not inhibit excellent performance in the delivery of County services;" and that "County personnel policies will encourage job-related training and career development support." Section B3 of the Strategic Plan goes on to describe the requirements of the Human Resources Plan, stating that it should assess both current and future workforce needs and capabilities, identify actions to assure that workforce capabilities meet future needs, and specify policies and practices to encourage training and development supports so employees have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform well.

Section 28 (4) of the Lane County Charter requires that "the Board of County Commissioners shall maintain a system of personnel administration, including appeal procedures, in which each person in that service shall receive equitable compensation fixed on the basis of

- (i) competence in the position with the county,
- (ii) record of service there and elsewhere,
- (iii) the range of compensation paid others by public and private employers for comparable service
- (iv) the county's financial condition and policies, and
- (v) other factors relevant to the determination of what is fair compensation for the individual."

In addition, Lane Manual Section 2.235, Rule IV-3(a) states that "the compensation plan for County personnel shall provide reasonably competitive ranges of pay for each classification of employment. The Board may make adjustments in a salary range or ranges as necessary to attract and hold competent personnel and to provide equity between the various classifications. Such salary range adjustments are to be distinguished from merit increases in that they are not intended to give recognition to length or quality of service but are to be based solely on prevailing rates of pay in private business and other public jurisdictions in our market area for positions comparable to the various classes of work in the County service."

Lastly, Lane County's Diversity Action Plan outlines specific initiatives regarding bilingual skills and abilities in the areas of Lane County as an employer and service provider.

One of Lane County's goals as a Employer is: "To recruit, retain, and develop a qualified and diverse workforce; to train and orient a workforce that is culturally competent", and one of the specific action items is to: "Develop a comprehensive list of strategies to further increase recruitment, retention, and promotion of diverse populations".

One of Lane County's goals as a Service Provider is: "...ensure that County services, programs, and activities are provided to its diverse communities in ways that are sensitive to and responsive to cultural differences,...", and one of the specific action items is to: "Increase recruitment, retention, and promotion of bilingual and/or bicultural employees". Additionally, one other action item is to: "Ensure availability of translators and interpreters through a standard contract and access system and encourage managers and department directors to use this resource".

One of the goals outlined in the Diversity Action Plan specifically for the Board of County Commissioners is to: "Show support for diversity, cultural competency, and equal employment opportunity initiatives through recruiting and hiring practices".

D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations

Human Resources staff proposes that a 5% bilingual premium pay be established for non-represented employees.

Because this compensation is not built into the base pay but it is rather a premium, the cost of other benefits does not increase. It will be strictly 5% over the base pay that an employee receives.

Currently, we estimate that there are about 6 employees county-wide who may be eligible for this premium.

Human Resources staff has developed a strict set of guidelines to determine eligibility for this premium before it can be awarded to non-represented employees. These guidelines include: employees must use their bilingual skills regularly as part of their job; employees must pass a fluency test administered by Lane County Human Resources; and the premium pay may be discontinued if business needs change.

Establishing the will cost approximately \$3,500 over the remainder of the current Fiscal year, and \$14,000 over the course of fiscal year 2010-2011. Because, the 5% is calculated over the base pay, and assuming staff receive merit increases, this amount will increase as non-represented employees advance on their respective salary ranges.

E. Analysis

1. Compensation Plan – Bilingual Premium Pay:

Implementing this bilingual premium pay will assist Lane County in strengthening our mission statement to provide high-quality local government services in a fair, open, and economical manner to best meet the needs and expectations of our citizens and our guests.

In addition, this bilingual premium pay will support Lane County's commitment to diversity as outlined in the Lane Manual, and will help the Board reiterate its commitment to the goal as outlined in the Diversity Action Plan.

Human Resources staff conducted a survey of other public agencies regarding bilingual compensation for non-represented employees. We found that Clackamas, Washington, and Deschutes Counties – as well as the State of Oregon, do offer a compensation incentive for their non-represented employees. The compensation differential ranges from a premium to a set amount per month, as indicated on the table below:

Agency	Amount
Clackamas	5%
Washington	\$110 per month

Deschutes	\$100 per month
State of Oregon	5%

Establishing this bilingual premium pay will enhance Lane County's abilities to recruit from applicants with bilingual skills and abilities when such are required for the job.

F. Alternatives/Options

1. Approve the proposed 5% bilingual premium pay as listed on the Board order.
2. Approve a 3% bilingual premium pay as currently already paid to the Physician classification.
3. Approve a monthly set amount of \$120.
4. Reject all options and instruct Human Resources staff to come back with other options.

IV. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION

Following Board action, Human Resources staff is prepared to implement the approved bilingual premium pay to be effective on the date of Board action, with the process outlined in the Board Order.

V. RECOMMENDATION

Human Resources staff recommends the Board approves Option 1 as listed above.

VI. ATTACHMENTS

1. Board Order