

County commissioners hire HR consultant

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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Edwards will help determine needs, solutions

LEXINGTON—With 165 employees and no centralized human resources department, Dawson County could be missing some essential coordination of policies and benefits.

Jay Edwards, who previously served as HR manager for Tenneco in Cozad and now runs his own consulting firm, will help the county identify possible problem areas and solutions.

During the regular bimonthly county board meeting on Dec. 18, commissioners agreed to hire Edwards as a consultant at a rate of \$65 per hour, not to exceed \$6,500.

County clerk Karla Zlatkovsky said she handles much of the HR responsibility of the county, although she admittedly lacks expertise or staff to handle it.

“There are a lot of things that could be improved with someone who is trained in that area,” Zlatkovsky said.

For instance, right now there are no collective job descriptions and no current employee policy handbook.

Both could be managed by an HR professional.

Edwards will study what is currently in place across the county, identify problem areas and suggest solutions.

He will also advise the county how to move forward toward adding a human resources

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professional.

In other county business, commissioners met with representatives of three companies offering fiber optic capabilities: NebraskaLink, Charter Communications and Century Link.

Commissioners have been discussing for nearly a year switching to fiber optic Internet access to improve county communications and web-based programs.

After lengthy discussion, commissioners directed courthouse building coordinator Brian Woldt to set up a separate meeting with the representatives to determine the county's Internet needs and options.

In other county action, commissioners:

authorized an annual grant application for county aid that, if approved, would provide funding for the juvenile facilitator working on gang-related intervention as well as provide partial funding for the CASA program.

voted to vacate a short minimum maintenance road, Road 431, north of Lexington and revert the property ownership back to adjacent land owners.

received information from Larry Gill about Thirty Mile Canal's intention to form an irrigation district, extending from just west of Darr through Dawson County and six miles into Lincoln County. The formation is only in the planning stages.

agreed to ask Dawson Public Power to submit a new application for a communication tower the company wants to build south of Cozad. The planning and zoning commission recommended denial of a special use permit because the land on which the tower is intended is not large enough to accommodate its 160-foot height.

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The land is large enough for a 100-foot tower and Dawson Public Power agreed that would be high enough but commissioners would like the process to officially begin with a new application rather than an amended one.