



May 23, 2019

**TO:** Mayor Jerry L. Demings  
-AND-  
County Commissioners

**FROM:** Byron W. Brooks, AICP, County Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "BW B".

**SUBJECT:** Open Discussion  
**DISCUSSION AGENDA ITEM JUNE 4, 2019**

The following item has been submitted for open discussion at the June 4, 2019 Board meeting:

- District 5 – Update Commissioners' Staffing Policies to Meet Today's Needs


The memo related to this item is attached.

BWB/mf

Attachment



To: Mayor Jerry Demings  
-AND-  
Board of County Commissioners

From: Commissioner Emily Bonilla, District 5 

Date: May 20, 2019

Subject: Open Discussion: Update Commissioners' Staffing Policies to Meet Today's Needs

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At minimum, my request is to add a 3rd Aide and take away the limitations of what type of positions we can have and the amount of salaries. We each have different district needs and should be able to freely staff our office as needed to meet those needs. Some of us may want to stick with 2 Aides, that is what they need, but others have a growing population of low income families that really need our help and we can't do that with our hands tied behind our backs due to policies made over a decade ago (2004) which are grossly outdated.

My ultimate request is to take away the policy all together and allow the budget process to determine limitations. This way we can be free to manage our offices as we see fit to best serve our constituents' needs.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Currently the Orange County Commissioners are only allowed 2 full time aides and at salaries that were determined in 2004. In 2004, the population of Orange County was 996,922. The population in 2010 according to the census was 1,145,956. In 2010 the Commissioners' staffing policy was already behind in the needs for the county based on population - not to mention our county was undercounted.

"As of 2018, Florida's Miami-Dade County is the most populous county in the Sunshine State, with 2,751,796 residents [13 Commissioners], representing a population growth of 10.2% since the last census. Miami-Dade is followed by Broward County(1,935,878) [7 Commissioners], Palm Beach County (1,471,150) [7 Commissioners], Hillsborough County (1,381,627) [7 Commissioners], and Orange County (1,323,598) [6 Commissioners] as the only other counties in the state with populations in excess of one million. Of these, Orange County has seen the highest population growth at an impressive 17.7%." (source: <http://worldpopulationreview.com/us-counties/fl/> May 17, 2019)

I called these other counties Commissioners and 3 of 4 of them have 3 or more Aides - the exception is Hillsborough County which has 7 Commissioners with 2 Aides each. These 3 counties also do not have or were unaware of limitations by the County on how many staff members they can have or how much they can pay them. They do however have budget

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meetings the way we do and they have their budgets approved annually by the board collectively as we do.

There are many issues with the 2 Aide and salary limitations. Each district in each of these counties, including ours, all have different needs. While one district may have mostly municipalities in their district and therefore do not have many constituent calls, other districts have a growing population in their unincorporated areas. Each district also has different types of concerns for their constituents, such as poverty - while one district may be very affluent, another has over 75 percent of the district in poverty which has different needs. Because of these disparities among the districts, each district's staffing needs are different.

Another issue with the 2004 policies are that by limiting the type of position and salary we may not be competitive when hiring and it makes it difficult to find or keep qualified staff who is willing to work a job that requires unusual and long work hours. Being an Aide takes someone who can be skilled in many areas, multitask, work long and unusual hours and learn very quickly. People of this stature do not want to work at just above the living wage and rightfully so deserve so much more for their skill sets and all they are being asked to do.

Another issue with only having 2 Aides, is that if someone wants to take a vacation, is out sick or resigns and needs to be replaced, the office falls behind processing all the incoming emails and documents. Whenever someone is out of the office, we fall behind on the hundreds of emails we receive daily. If we have an emergency (we call them wildfires), it also puts us behind on everything we have to manage daily because we have to drop what we are doing to put out the "wildfire". Having 3 or more Aides will make it easier to manage the staff's work/life balance that they all desire these days - especially the younger generation.

Cc: Byron Brooks, County Administrator  
Cheryl Gillespie, Agenda Development Office Supervisor

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