



EMMET COUNTY NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release – November 14, 2021

Please contact County Administrator Mike Reaves at (231) 348-1701 or mreaves@emmetcounty.org with any questions.

Emmet County Board of Commissioners Seek Members for New Reimbursement Committee

During its November 8 regular meeting, the Emmet County Board of Commissioners (BOC) voted for County Administrator Mike Reaves to initiate the creation of a new Commissioner Reimbursement Committee.

With input and feedback from county staff, the BOC recently reviewed and changed the employee compensation structure in the interests of equity and employee retention. Those changes are intended to reward loyal employees and make Emmet County an attractive option for potential recruits. Discussion during that process revealed the compensation structure for the county commissioners also has certain inconsistencies warranting review. It was determined this task would be best accomplished by an independent committee of citizens.

In addition to attendance at their own board meetings, the BOC is also required to have commissioner representation on more than 30 other boards, committees, and commissions. Participating consistently and fully on these other important boards, committees, and commissions can be time-consuming and expensive. The current BOC wants to establish a plan that provides fair and adequate compensation to all commissioners, now and in the future, for their participation on these other boards.

In its Nov. 8 meeting, the BOC decided the new Commissioner Reimbursement Committee will consist of five members, appointed by the Board of Commissioners, and its work will be limited to determining the overall compensation amount for the county commissioners as a group. As with other committees, those interested in being considered for a seat on the new board will need to fill out and submit an application, available on the county's website. Current BOC members will not be eligible to serve on the reimbursement committee.

When considering appointments to the new committee, the BOC will give preference to individuals with experience in elective office or other relevant expertise. All committee members must be residents of Emmet County.

The county administrator will coordinate meeting dates and provide a meeting location at the county building while also offering guidance to the committee in all pertinent areas, including, but not limited to, current and historical practice, legal requirements, budget considerations, and IRS regulations.

Outside legal counsel, with expertise in commissioner compensation, will be retained by the Board of Commissioners to assist in the process of constructing a compensation plan that complies with state law and IRS rules. Communication with outside legal counsel will be handled by the county administrator. The committee will elect its own leadership and will function in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, including making the meeting minutes available on the county's website for public review.

Once a compensation plan has been drafted, it will then be submitted for review and approval by the Board of Commissioners under regular procedures. After submission and approval of its report to the BOC, the reimbursement committee will be disbanded and its term will end.

Emmet County residents interested in participating on the Commissioner Reimbursement Committee can download an application at www.emmetcounty.org and submit to County Clerk Suzanne Kanine. Deadline for submitting applications is December 15, 2021.

#