

485

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



**FROM:** Executive Office

**SUBMITTAL DATE:**  
August 9, 2005

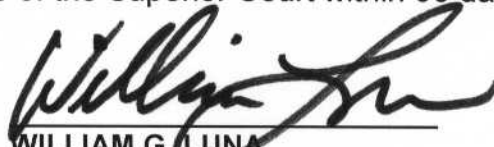
**SUBJECT: Response to the Grand Jury Report: Riverside County Human Resources  
Department Recruitment Process**

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** That the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Approve with or without modifications, the attached response to the Grand Jury's recommendations regarding the Riverside County Human Resources Department Recruitment Process.
- 2) Direct the Clerk of the Board to immediately forward the Board's finalized response to the Grand Jury, to the Presiding Judge, and the County Clerk-Recorder (for mandatory filing with the State).

**BACKGROUND:** On June 14, 2005, the Board directed staff to prepare a draft of the Board's response to the Grand Jury's report regarding the Riverside County Human Resources Department Recruitment Process.

Section 933 (c) of the Penal Code requires that the Board of Supervisors comment on the Grand Jury's recommendations pertaining to the matters under the control of the Board, and that a response be provided to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court within 90 days.

  
WILLIAM G. LUNA  
County Finance Director

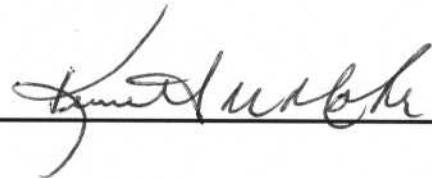
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ecruit05.doc

<b>FINANCIAL DATA</b>	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$ N/A	In Current Year Budget:
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$	Budget Adjustment:
	Annual Net County Cost:	\$	For Fiscal Year:

<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS:</b>	Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Requires 4/5 Vote	<input type="checkbox"/>

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE.**

**County Executive Office Signature**



Dept' Recomm.:  Consent  Policy

Per Exec. Ofc.:  Consent  Policy

Prev. Agn. Ref.: 3.3 – 6/14/05

District:

Agenda Number:

3.5

## RIVERSIDE COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES RECRUITMENT PROCESS Response to Findings and Recommendations

### FINDINGS:

#### Number 1:

In some departments, there appears to be a breakdown in communication between management and line staff regarding the recruitment process, particularly employees hired prior to the installation of the Resumix System. Many of these employees are unaware that they are required to update their resumes annually to be placed on a certified candidate list in order to compete for open positions either intra-departmentally or inter-departmentally.

#### Response:

##### **Respondent partially disagrees with the finding. Explanation:**

*The Human Resources (HR) Department regularly provides information to employees regarding how to be considered for promotional opportunities including the requirement to update their resume annually. The department cannot attest to individual employees' awareness of the need to update their resumes.*

*Some examples of the department's communication efforts are:*

- *The HR Department implemented the JobMatch system (Resumix) in 1998 and held meetings with employees and the Unions to explain the requirements of the new system.*
- *In March of 1999, a payroll staffer with instructions for preparing a scanner friendly resume was sent to all employees. This memo is included in all the new employee informational packets.*
- *The requirement to update resumes is posted on the HR Website.*
- *The requirement is covered in New Employee Orientation.*
- *The HR Career Development Division provides training on an on-going basis regarding how to prepare a resume for submittal to JobMatch at no cost to employees.*
- *The HR Services Teams provide ongoing on-site informational meetings regarding the recruitment process for existing employees.*
- *When a person is hired or promoted they receive a letter stating the requirement to immediately re-activate their resume and update it annually.*

- *Each time an applicant submits a resume they receive a letter informing them of the requirement to update their resume.*

**Number 2:**

Unknown to HR Recruiters, some hiring managers encourage "favored" employees to modify their resumes to mirror the CRF's job requirements to ensure a higher position on the candidate list.

**Response:****Respondent partially disagrees with the finding. Explanation:**

*The Human Resources Department is not aware of hiring managers encouraging "favored" employees to modify their resumes to mirror the job requirements listed in the CRF. Hiring managers may suggest skill requirements they feel are pertinent to the position. However, the HR recruiter independently determines the criteria used to qualify candidates based on an analysis of the duties of the position being filled.*

*The HR Recruiter also conducts an independent analysis of each resume to determine the quantity and quality of an applicant's work experience. If there are significant differences between the description of the duties performed on the applicant's resume and duties that normally fall under the job title listed on a resume, the HR Recruiters contact the applicants and ask them to submit a revised resume.*

*These safeguards mitigate any unfair advantage candidates might gain through coaching from a source other than HR.*

**Number 3:**

In some cases, management will forego the open recruitment process by filling promotional positions with inter-departmental transfers and/or Temporary Assistance Pool (TAP) employees. This is contrary to County Ordinance 440, Section 6(a) entitled Employment Procedures and the Riverside County Human Resources Department New Employee Handbook (Merit System). Grand Jury interviews indicate that these practices have significantly lowered employee morale.

**Response:****Respondent wholly disagrees with the finding. Explanation:**

*County Ordinance 440 and Board Policy are closely followed in filling all County positions. Ordinance 440 and the New Employee Handbook both state "The County operates under a merit system of employment, meaning that hiring and promotions for permanent positions are competitive, with equal opportunity, and are based on a person's qualifications for the position." Ordinance 440 section 6(a.) also states "Each officer shall appoint all necessary employees allowed for his or her department by this ordinance only from among persons certified to him by the Human Resources Director as eligible for the respective positions." In most cases, regular appointments are made from a list of candidates generated by the JobMatch system. However, there are some exceptions:*

- *Temporary Assignment Program (TAP) employees placed in entry level assignments are certified for hire through a competitive process initiated at the point of application with TAP. Although the TAP does not use the JobMatch system to generate certified hiring lists, the same criteria used to evaluate candidates for regular positions are applied when reviewing the qualifications of TAP applicants. Entry level positions by definition do not provide promotional opportunities for current employees so there is no need to demonstrate competition with current County employees. Since the TAP candidates are evaluated and placed based on merit and competition with other outside candidates, they are allowed to "transition" to regular positions after demonstrating competence in the assignment. This transition feature was specifically authorized by the Board of Supervisors when the TAP program was approved.*
- *Inter/Intra Departmental transfers are allowed without the use of a certified list as the employees participating in the selection process already hold a position in the same classification as the one being filled. The employees demonstrated eligibility for hire and participation in a competitive process when they were initially hired into the classification they currently hold. The same process holds true for employees who wish to voluntarily demote.*

**Number 4:**

The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) recruitment process for social workers may take up to two (2) months from requisition to hire. Due to the prolonged process many applicants may accept employment elsewhere.

**Response:**

**Respondent partially disagrees with the finding. Explanation:**

*There is no evidence that applicants are accepting employment elsewhere as all counties use similar testing processes.*

*The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) is required by the State to fill positions from a ranked list of the top ten candidates. In order to meet this requirement, most positions (including social worker positions) require extensive testing as a means of producing a certified list of candidates ranked by test score. The entire process can take up to two months from the point DPSS indicates to HR the desire to fill a position to the hiring of a candidate. The time required to fill social worker positions in Riverside County is similar if not more expeditious than the experience of other Counties. In October of 2004 the Human Resources Department implemented efficiencies in the selection process and continues to look for methods to hire social workers more quickly. For example, HR recruits people who are in the last year of their degree program. These candidates are placed on interview lists, complete all pre-employment processes and receive competitive job offers contingent upon completion of their degree. The result is that social workers are able to begin work the day after graduation.*

**Number 5:**

Based on information furnished to the Grand Jury from the Auditor-Controller's Office, the cost of utilizing the QWIZ assessment testing for fiscal year 2002-03, including a \$99 training fee for one employee, was \$510,699. In fiscal year 2003-04, the cost was \$250,000 making the total cost for both years \$760,699.

**Response:****Respondent partially disagrees with the finding. Explanation:**

*The Human Resources Department historically purchased paper versions of tests on a per test basis. Tests are purchased on an as-needed basis. When the department initiated computerized testing, the purchase of tests was on a per-test basis, as had been done with paper tests before. Because the Department was purchasing individual products rather than services, and the cost of the individual purchases was well below the \$100,000 limit, it was determined that no contract would be required.*

*In 2001 the Human Resources Department initiated on-line testing as a project designed to recruit and fill over 300 vacancies that existed in the Probation Department at that time. This was a new venture for the County. Few if any other public agencies had ever utilized the Internet as a vehicle for administering pre-employment assessments. Due to the "unknown" effectiveness of the use of this technology, no software was purchased. Assessments were purchased separately for each candidate from E-Predix, an Internet testing firm. Throughout the project the effectiveness of the assessments was compared to the effectiveness of the written tests formerly used.*

*Riverside County was able to fill the positions quickly and received recognition from the International Public Management Association (IPMA) and other public agencies interested in replicating the project. HR chose a limited number of other tests to evaluate for use. However, the assessments offered "off the shelf" by E-Predix did not assess a wide enough range of skills to make them effective for evaluating candidates for the classifications used County-wide and the cost of purchasing assessments on a test by test basis was determined to be too high (from \$8 to \$30 per test).*

*In January 2002, the Human Resources Department began a search for a vendor that could develop and provide Internet based assessments designed to evaluate a broader range of skills at a lower cost. Pre-Employment Tests must be validated for use by employers as a selection tool, and very few organizations have the resources to produce the robust validation required to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the applicants taking the test. It is common for organizations to purchase "off the shelf" tests for use in qualifying applicants for employment. Validated tests can improve the ultimate "success" and productivity of applicants on the actual job by up to 50%.*

*Bids were obtained from two vendors and evaluated by Human Resources. The two vendors were E-Predix and QWIZ. The bids along with the evaluation completed by Human Resources were submitted to the Purchasing Department for approval. QWIZ, the largest vendor of pre-employment tests in the world, became the approved vendor for the County of Riverside through this competitive process. Unlimited access to several types of on-line tests was purchased at a cost of \$165,000 while the demand for testing was being evaluated. This testing "subscription" was not considered to be a tangible item. (Tangible software was purchased at a cost of \$75,264 earlier in February 2002 for the administration of tests that were installed locally on HR computers for use in the event the Internet failed). An additional 600 tests were purchased for unique needs such as the Call Center Simulation for evaluating 911 operators and Viewpoint which is used to evaluate candidates for Social Work positions. The total expenditure on these limited tests in fiscal year 2001-02 was \$300,426 and included use of the tests for the next fiscal year.*

In December of 2002, QWIZ offered a discount to the County for early renewal of the "subscription" for fiscal year 2003-04. In addition to the significant discount, QWIZ offered unlimited access to all tests for a total cost of \$264,000. HR thus purchased unlimited, as-needed access to full range of tests for one year, and the Purchase Order was submitted to the Purchasing Department as required by County policies.

In fiscal year 2003-04 the Human Resources Department negotiated a lower rate of \$250,600 for unlimited testing through QWIZ for fiscal year 2004-05. As part of the negotiated discount, the County agreed to send one staff person to consult at a conference held by QWIZ at a cost of \$99.00. As in the previous fiscal year, this expenditure was included in the Human Resources budget, approved by the Board of Supervisors.

For fiscal year 2005-06, the Human Resources Department again included an unlimited QWIZ "subscription" of \$250,000 in the fiscal year 2004-05 HR budget, which was approved by the Board of Supervisors. In the last 12 months HR has administered 45,626 tests at an average cost of \$5.48 per test, a significant savings over the previous cost for tests.

#### **Number 6:**

The County of Riverside Board of Supervisors Policy A-18 5(a) Procedures states:

*"Subject to the availability of funds, the department head shall prepare a request for proposal which shall include specifications, conditions and any other requirements deemed necessary for the provision of such services."*

#### PROCEDURES FOR CONTRACTING FOR PROFESSIONAL OR PERSONAL SERVICES

*(f) "Pursuant to Public Contract Code Section 25502.5(a), the County Purchasing Agent may process and execute contracts for personal and professional services which do not exceed, in aggregate, the appropriate statutory limit, currently \$100,000. This policy, however, shall limit such contracting authority of the Purchasing Agent to \$25,000 without prior Board approval if the contract was not competitively bid."*

The Grand Jury could find no evidence that a Request for Proposal (RFP) or a request for purchase had been submitted on a \*\*Form 11 to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

#### **Response:**

#### **Respondent partially disagrees with the finding.**

*The QWIZ purchases were first billed and processed not as personal or professional services, but as individual test purchases for validated employment tests, and subsequently converted to unlimited annual use agreements. The Human Resources Department completed a competitive bid process in early 2002, prior to the first unlimited use agreement, and requested funding authorization from the Board of Supervisors annually with a line item in our budget in 2003-04 and beyond. Departments are not able to pay for services without the issuance of a Purchase Order. HR worked with a Purchasing Agent to ensure that procedures were followed. HR is preparing a Request for Proposals for future years' testing services, and will submit a Form 11 upon completion of the process.*

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Number 1:**

Post a written notice in the employee break room and remind employees at department staff meetings of the importance of updating resumes to ensure an equitable and competitive process.

**Response:**

**Respondent wholly agrees with the recommendation.**

*The Human Resources Department will develop a flyer and distribute it to Departments for posting in a location available to all employees.*

**Number 2:**

Adhere to the established standard recruitment process and comply with County Ordinance 440, Section 6(a.) entitled Employment Procedures, and the Riverside County Employee Handbook (Merit System).

**Response:**

**Respondent wholly agrees with the recommendation.**

*The Human Resources Department continues to comply with the above referenced policies.*

**Number 3:**

The Deputy Director of Human Resources must review all new hires, transfers, and promotions to ensure that each employee has advanced through the proper process.

**Response:**

**Respondent wholly disagrees with the recommendation.**

*All certified hiring lists are reviewed by a Human Resources Services Manager. Adding an additional level of review would slow down the hiring process in exchange for little if any increase in compliance with hiring policies. Given the volume of recruitments required to staff an organization with 17,000 employees, requiring a review by a single individual would not be practical.*

**Number 4:**

Riverside County Human Resources Department develop a procedure to streamline the hiring process for DPSS social workers.

**Response:**

**Respondent agrees in part with the recommendation.**

*The Human Resources Department has streamlined the recruiting process for DPSS social workers and continues to look for ways to hire social workers more quickly.*

**Number 5:**

The Riverside County Purchasing Department follow established County Policy A-18 5(a) and seek comparable testing services to obtain the best value for Riverside County.

**Response:**

**Respondent agrees with the recommendation.**

**Number 6:**

The Riverside County Human Resources Director adhere to County Policy A-18 5(a) and submit a Form 11 to the Board of Supervisors for approval of purchases exceeding \$100,000.

**Response:**

**Respondent agrees with the recommendation.**

*Human Resources will continue to adhere to Policy A-18 5(a), which requires Requests for Proposals when seeking professional or personal services not exempt from the policy. A request for proposals was completed within the department before the vendor was selected. Human Resources agrees to submit a Form 11 to the Board of Supervisors for all future purchases exceeding \$100,000.*