

Atchison Co organizes, approves holiday schedule

(KAIR)--The Atchison County Commission has organized for the New Year.

That happened during Monday's session of the County leaders.

2nd District County Commissioner Jack Bower was the sole nominee to serve as Chairman of the Commission, and was approved unanimously to fill that position.

Eric Noll, the 2018 Chairman, was the sole nominee to serve as Vice-Chairman of the Commission for 2019. His appointment to that position was also approved unanimously.

Noll retained the post during the remainder of Monday's meeting, with Bower to step into the role of leadership during next weeks session, as he begins his first term elected to serve the 2nd District.

Bower has served as Commissioner since May, 2017 when he was appointed to fill a vacancy following the resignation of the previous commissioner.

In November last year, he was elected to fill that role for a full term, defeating his Democratic challenger.

Bower, Monday, was the lone no vote in acknowledging Christmas Eve as a paid holiday for County employees.

December 24 is traditionally handled as a half day, with employees paid only for those hours worked.

Human Resource Director Jamie Madison, during Monday's meeting, pushed for that to change. "You guys have asked different ways to [increase employee morale], and I really think this would be at least one good way to do that," she said during the meeting.

3rd District County Commissioner Bill Pohl told Madison going to an eleven-day holiday schedule, instead of ten, would go against previously agreed to plans. "I can remember pretty good a year ago you came here with eleven days, we said we all agreed, including you, we'd go eleven days this year because the way it fell, and then in [2019] we would go back to ten," Pohl said.

Madison followed his comments, saying, "Whatever you guys choose is fine, I'm just saying you guys have asked ways to improve employee morale, and this is one option I'm saying I think would help."

“I think we did that with the [recent] raise,” Pohl countered.

“So that’s the only thing you think you should do for your employees to make them happy?” Madison questioned.

Earlier this month, the Commission approved a 2% cost of living increase for all county employees and a 2% merit increase for department heads and elected officials.

Following two failed motions, and during discussion by the Commission, Bower voiced his approval for going to an 11 day holiday schedule. “It just seems like we’d make things so much better for our employees. We take care of them, they’re going to take care of our citizens. I think Christmas Eve’s not a stretch,” Bower said.

Ultimately, a motion to approve a 10-day holiday schedule was made, and approved on a 2-1 vote, with Bower voting in opposition.

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