



Memorandum

TO: County Councilmembers
FROM: Erika Lautenbach, Director
RE: Health Officer Retroactive Confirmation
DATE: JANUARY 2, 2025

- **Background**

In early summer of 2021, our longtime Health Officer Dr. Stern announced his retirement and we initiated a recruitment effort. Since the start of the pandemic, our department had relied upon both a Health Officer and a Deputy Health Officer, and Dr. Stern recommended we recruit for two Co-Health Officers. This was due to the growing needs and complexity of the department as well as the challenge in dividing work and the overnight on-call schedule between a Health Officer and Deputy Health Officer as opposed to two peers in the role.

- **Recruitment**

Human Resources and Health and Community Services (HCS) distributed the job posting widely and nationwide through traditional (Indeed, county website) and targeted (medical associations, public health associations, statewide health officers, local medical and health contacts, etc.) means. Erika Lautenbach (HCS Director) also met with several recommended local physicians to provide them with information about the position and assess their potential interest.

- **Interview and Selection Process**

Because this is unique role in its duties and requirements, we received a low number of applicants, as expected based on historical recruitments locally and statewide. From a physician perspective, even those who make the lowest salaries in a clinic setting take a significant pay cut to work in this role at the county. Two candidates were interviewed and considered for the positions: Dr. Greg Thompson and Dr. Amy Harley.

The HCS Management Team then met with both candidates and unanimously agreed that we should move forward with both.





▪ **Council Process**

While Dr. Stern retired in mid-September and Drs. Harley and Thompson started in mid-August, they remained temporary extra help for several months until Council added the .6 FTE for the additional Health Officer in the 2022 budget.

The Council was made aware of the process, met both Dr. Harley and Dr. Thompson in Health Board and Council meetings, and approved their additional FTE. However, Administration collectively missed the step to formally have Drs. Harley and Thompson confirmed by Council.

This error was identified during the recruitment process for Dr. Thompson's replacement Co-Health Officer. While these series of events occurred concurrently with the ongoing pandemic, which was a notably very busy and overwhelming period for the Executive, HCS, and HR alike, the Administration recognizes the gap in process and wishes to rectify it with a retroactive confirmation of Dr. Harley by Council.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

