

County Manager's Interesting Interview Experience

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Person County

On July 3, 2013 I had an interesting interview in Person County with the County Manager, Heidi York. I asked her numerous questions about her role as County Manager. I was able to receive great detail about the Person County government.

Mrs. York informed me that the county manager's role was to work closely with the Board of County Commissioners, Assistant County Manager, Finance Director (Account Manager) and the county department head from the Community Services, Development Services, General Government, Health and Human Services and Public Safety. The different department heads let Mrs. York know what they need for each department and how much money is needed. She then proposes a budget, which takes six months to put a propose budget together. She, along with the Finance director; comes up with a spending plan. Then Mrs. York interacts and reports to the Board of Commissioners about the proposed budget and spending plan through emails, telephone calls, office visits and two board meetings. The Board of Commissioners does not have their own office. Board meetings are held once in the day and once at night. This process can last for about two months. How the annual budget process works is that after a decision has been made, a public hearing is done to hear the opinions of the public. If all parties are not in agreement then another proposed budget is created. This whole process takes twelve months from July 1st of one year to June 30th of the next year. There are five people on the Board of

Commissioners that are elected every four years. The citizens of Person County elect the Board of Commissioners. The Board of Commissioners elects the county attorney, clerk to the board and the county manager. Mrs. York has about four hundred county employees under her management.

Person county manager position has no time limit for employment. The county manager can hold position until their employment is terminated or if person decides to leave. Elected Commissioners can terminate county manger's position at will, at any time for any reason.

The requirements for this job are a four year college degree. A master's degree and some experience is preferred but not required. This job does not require a lot of travel outside of the County. Mrs. York has a four year college degree and a master's in Public Administration. She has had previous experience in another state. Mrs. York has held this position for five years. Mrs. York truly enjoys her job. When asked the question of whether she enjoyed her job and why, Mrs. York's reply was, "Yes, I enjoy my job. It keeps me busy. This job is very challenging. I like what it offers and I never get bored."

Mrs. York was asked how her experience was when she first started her position as county manager. Her response was that it was nice to be a new employee, to meet new people, and it was a challenging balance because she had to juggle being pregnant and fulfilling her job duties as County Manager.

Aside from the informative interview, Mrs. York was kind enough to give me a tour of the county administrative building. I was able to view the room where the Board of Commissioners meet and the very seats of each participant of the meeting! The second floor of the administrative building houses the County Manager's office, County finance, County Personnel, Human Resources, general services and the Board of Commissioners. The first floor is the County Offices which includes the cooperative extension office, farm services, soil and water

conservation, and the JCPC youth alternatives. Lastly, the ground floor houses the Board of Education central services. The interview I participated in was very interesting, and I learned important information about the process of duties of the County Manager. I look forward to the upcoming Board of Commissioners meeting that I will be attending on July 13, 2013.