



**Kent County Levy Court Business
Meeting Notice and Agenda
555 Bay Road , Dover, DE 19901
Levy Court Chamber - Room 203
Tuesday, January 13, 2026**

7:00 PM, BUSINESS MEETING

Location: Levy Court Chamber, Room 203

The public is welcome to attend in person, via WebEx, or by phone.

To join via WebEx go to:

<https://kentcountyde.webex.com/kentcountyde/j.php?MTID=mb5be1b37cbbf8809edf94daf921c9a4b>

or by phone: 1-408-418-9388; Meeting Access Code: 2342 429 6539; Password: #

Call to Order

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Moment of Silence for our Troops and First Responders

Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

Adoption of Agenda

Public Comments on Agenda Items

- *Note: Public Comments for Public Hearing Item(s) will be during their public hearings.*

Consent Agenda 26-01

- *(Item(s) on the Consent Agenda are considered routine and/or non-controversial and will be acted upon by a single roll call vote of the Levy Court. There will be no separate discussion of this/these item(s) unless a Commissioner so requests, in which event the item(s) shall be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately under New Business.)*

Approval of Levy Court meeting Minutes from Tuesday, December 16th, 2025

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Tributes to Eagle Scouts from Troop 135:
 - Eagle Scout Landen Swank
 - Eagle Scout Dominic Haas

2. Presentation to Honorable Allan F. Angel

INTRODUCTIONS

PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Angel:

1. Ordinance LC25-30, An Ordinance repealing the current Chapter 68, Personnel Policy and replacing it with a NEW Chapter 68, Personnel Policy

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Hertz:

Appointment to the Board of Adjustment

Mr. Pepper:

OTHER BUSINESS

- Move to go into Executive Session immediately following the Business Meeting for preliminary discussion on site acquisition for a publicly funded capital improvement; legal strategy session regarding collective bargaining or pending or potential litigation; and personnel matters pursuant to 29 Del.C. 10004(b)(2), (4), and (9)

INFORMATION ITEMS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

EXECUTIVE SESSION, if needed

- Immediately following the Business Meeting.
Caucus Room
For preliminary discussion on site acquisition for a publicly funded capital improvement; legal strategy session regarding collective bargaining; pending or potential litigation; and personnel matters Pursuant to 29 Del.C. 10004(b)(2), (4), & (9)

ADJOURN

Posting Info:

Posted: 1/6/26

Revised: 1/8/26*

Posted by: L.Tanaka

Time: Noon

Take down: Upon Replacement or on 1/14/26

**Revised following the Workshop discussion for Paramedic Trainee Salary Funding of 1/6/26, to add Introduction of*

Ordinance LC26-02 for Public Hearing on 1/27/26.

29 Del.C. §10004(e)(2). The Agenda items as listed may not be considered in sequence. This Agenda is subject to change to include additional items including Executive Sessions or the deletion of items including Executive Sessions, which arise at the time of the meeting.



Item Cover Page

LEVY COURT BUSINESS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

DATE: January 13, 2026

SUBMITTED BY: Lorri Tanaka, Administration

ITEM TYPE: Consent Agenda

AGENDA SECTION: **Consent Agenda 26-01**

SUBJECT: *Approval of Levy Court meeting Minutes from Tuesday, December 16th, 2025*

ATTACHMENTS:
[20251216Min.pdf](#)

**MINUTES OF THE KENT COUNTY LEVY COURT
COMBINED BUSINESS MEETING
KENT COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX
555 BAY ROAD, DOVER, DE
LEVY COURT CHAMBER, ROOM 203
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025**

Call to Order

The Business meeting of the Kent County Levy Court was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Masten.

Invocation

The Invocation was led by Commissioner Pepper.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Angel.

Moment of Silence for our Troops

A moment of silence was observed for our Troops and led by Commissioner Sweeney.

Roll Call

Allan F. Angel	Commissioner
Jeffrey W. Hall	Commissioner
Paul Hertz	Commissioner
Terry L. Pepper	Commissioner
Robert Scott	Vice President
George W. Sweeney, Sr.	Commissioner
Joanne Masten	President

There are seven (7) Commissioners present at Roll Call.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

M-25-233 **Motion** to adopt agenda as presented made by Mr. Scott; seconded by Mr. Pepper; carried by Roll Call vote seven (7) yeas.

Public Comments on Agenda Items other than Public Hearing Items

Note: Public Comments for Public Hearing Item(s) will be during their public hearings. - None

Consent Agenda 25-16

(Items on the Consent Agenda are considered routine and/or non-controversial and will be acted upon by a single roll call vote of the Levy Court. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Commissioner so requests, in which event the items shall be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately under New Business.)

Approval of Levy Court Business Meeting Minutes from December 9th, 2025

Action items from December 9th Workshop:

- 2026 EMS Vehicle Procurement
- Extension of GIS Professional Services Contract

M-25-234 **Motion** to approve Consent Agenda 25-16 made by Mr. Scott; seconded by Mr. Angel; carried by Roll Call vote seven (7) yeas.

PRESENTATIONS

Resolution 4137, Meritorious Service Medal Award

Mr. Pepper read the following into the record:

Kent County Medal for Gene Vanderwende

WHEREAS Gene Vanderwende has devoted his life to public service, serving as the Field Coordinator for Tax Ditch/Drainage Assistance with the Kent Conservation District since May 5, 1983. His career has been defined by unwavering dedication to supporting landowners, promoting the health of our land, and advancing the prosperity of our agricultural community; and

WHEREAS Gene Vanderwende has made a lasting impact on economic vitality and long-term sustainability of Kent County's farming industry. With a primary focus on addressing the critical issue of drainage, Gene's decades of service have supported improvements benefiting more than 15,400 parcels across 77 tax ditch watersheds in Kent County,

encompassing a total of 206,876 acres of tax ditch drainage areas; and

WHEREAS Gene Vanderwende has been a crucial partner to the 77 Tax Ditches in Kent County. He has worked tirelessly with Tax Ditch Officers and their associations to ensure these vital drainage systems are properly maintained. This is a monumental effort that requires intricate knowledge of local waterways, dedicated coordination, and a steadfast commitment to problem-solving. His work in this area has helped prevent widespread flooding, protect property, and preserve the integrity of our local watersheds; and

WHEREAS Gene Vanderwende has been recommended for a Kent County Medal in accordance with the provisions of Kent County Levy Court policy and the requirements thereof.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Kent County Levy Court does hereby recognize, commend, and award Gene Vanderwende of Harrington, Delaware with a Kent County Medal for Meritorious Service on this the 16th day of December 2025.

M-25-235 **Motion** to approve Resolution 4137 made by Mr. Pepper; seconded by Mr. Scott; carried by Roll Call vote seven (7) yeas.

Mr. Pepper: Now if Gene knows that he was to come here tonight to get a tribute from Kent County Levy Court, we kind of kept it a secret as to what a big deal this is. This is a medal of meritorious service, which we don't just hand those out willy nilly. I mean you really have to have done something that will greatly impact the majority of residents in Kent County. And with you being the tax ditch coordinator for Kent County for all these years, you think about all the residents that, especially ones who live on the west side in Commissioner Hertz's district, their quality of life has been better because of the quality of the land that they live on because of the drainage that you've maintained over all these years. And I know that it's got a lot of tax ditch folks on boards, on committees that represent those different tax ditches, but you've been the glue to hold all of them together all these years. You've been the one to get all the phone calls. You've been the one to get all the complaints about flooding and all that, all things like that, farmland flooded, hunting land flooded and things like that, but because of you and your determination and just keeping everything moving forward and having a can-do attitude towards everything, because of that, we at Levy Court have decided that you deserve this medal. And like I said, this is not something that we give out willy nilly. Since its inception, you are the 39th person in the county to have received this medal. So, we're...I'm extremely proud to be able to bring this forth and have it approved and be able to present it to you this evening. And I'm sure the other commissioners would like to have a few words too, but we have Tim Riley here, the district coordinator that would also like to have...give a few words to explain this a little bit further.

Tim Riley, District Coordinator, Kent Conservation District: Thank you so much. I will cry a little bit. This is what it is with me. I want to thank you all so

much for this. Gene did not know he was getting this medal tonight. Gene thought he was coming here for a typical reading of a tribute. From my estimation, Gene has had two mentors in his career. One of them was a gentleman named Bill Eisenbray that he affectionately calls pops. The other one is a gentleman named Frederick T. Mott, and our building is actually named after Frederick T. Mott. And Frederick T. Mott received this medal right after his last retirement and retirement from our board. So, Gene, you're in great territory with one of your true mentors with Fred Mott. There's just no question, Gene says affectionately I'm his spokesman because he doesn't like to do speeches so, there's no question about what Gene has meant to all of us at the district. I'm sure just about every one of you, if I were to say Kent Conservation District, the first thing you're going to think is Gene Vanderwende. Those of you who have been here a while, you know that we submit every year for the community service grant that gets our 3921 funds and stuff, and I always give you the numbers of the drainage and what we've done, all the jobs and all that stuff. Here's the guy, I put it on his desk at four in the afternoon, and by the time I come in the next morning at seven it's already done and filled out and handed to me. This is that gentleman. I just...I won't belabor this too long. I want to thank his family for coming this evening. His friends, our other district employees, the board members, district board members. Thank you for showing up. I told everybody...because they didn't even know he's getting this medal tonight. There's only like maybe two of us, there are three of us that knew this was what you were doing tonight. They all thought he was getting a typical read tribute. So, thank you all for falling for it and showing up. What I told them is we see the recording of this, and people get a tribute read and then you pan out and there's six people and I said Gene deserves better than that. So really, really, really thank them for coming and being here. I'll just throw out just an amazing stat real quick and then I'll be done. Just since 2011, we don't have...we didn't have the records to go back past...beyond that, but when they when they clean out a ditch, it's called a dip out for those who don't know, and Gene was the one who would go out and put the stakes out for the excavator operator to know exactly what the cut was going to be per stake and based on the number of footage that he laid out since 2011 of dip outs and he puts a stake every 100 feet, he pounded in the ground over 427,000 stakes just for those dip outs. And I can tell you it went back many years beyond that, and that's why he wears a tennis brace on his elbow for tennis elbow, so thank you, thank you all so much.

Mr. Sweeney: Gene, congratulations. If half the county knew what you did for them, half the county would be here recognizing you. Congratulations on this award and we appreciate everything you've done.

Mr. Angel: Yes, Gene, thank you very much. When I first got elected, my first two years I served on Kent Conservation District and I learned a lot from the whole committee as well as you, which you did. And Mr. Mott too. I know he'd be looking down at you now smiling because as Tim said, he's the first one that got the award, so, you're in good company. But thank you sir, for your due diligence and your service and let's do another 4,000.

Mr. Scott: Gene congratulations and extremely well deserved. So, thank you for everything and all your years of service.

Mrs. Masten: There's not too much left that could be said but I think I got cheated because I got your name for the first time to help me and now, you're bailing out on me. But at any rate, I think our Commissioner Pepper said it all in the resolution as well as what other people had to say and I just wish I had gotten an opportunity to really work with you, but I wish you the very, very best of luck in all that you do and thanks again for all you've given to the county.

Mr. Hertz: Well, this is like a little mini family reunion. Lindsay and Alice, ain't seen you in forever, but I really...he's known me all my life, but I really found out how powerful he was when I was running for office and I've got the biggest and best district with all the farmland and early on I was at this farmer's house and I was struggling because I've never campaigned before and something come up about tax ditch and I said, well, hell Gene Vanderwende's my cousin, and that farmer's eyes lit up and I found out how powerful he was. So, I started using that. Hey, I'm friends with Gene, and I'm telling you, the moment I mentioned his name, they were my best friends, so he is well respected. He's helped me in my three years cause I've had a lot of questions over tax ditches, and I call him up and give an address, oh, that's that tax ditch, that's who mows it. And he knows it all just rattles it right off. So, congratulations Gene.

Mr. Hall: Yeah, thanks for all you've done for Kent County. This is well deserved, and we appreciate it.

Mr. Sipple: Congratulations, Gene on your retirement, 47 years, that's quite...42? Okay, 42 years, still a lot of years out there in the weather and dealing with these tax ditches and congratulations on your medal here.

Resolution 4140 – A Resolution Proclaiming January as National Blood Donor Month

John Tinger, Public Safety Director: Thank you, Madam President. So, just a little over a year ago, November 2024, Kent County EMS started carrying whole blood on their trucks. To date, we've given 23 units of whole blood to individuals who needed blood pre-hospital. Back then in November, we partnered with the blood Bank of Delmarva to do blood drives and to really support this program that we've actually started back in November. For the tribute Resolution I'd like to invite Deputy Chief Conrad. When he was Captain Conrad, he started this program from its infancy so, the success of this program is basically on him and all the hard work that he's done, so I'd like to introduce Assistant Director Conrad, Deputy Chief to read the resolution into the record.

The following was read into the record by Justin **Conrad**, Assistant Director of Emergency Services.

**In Recognition of National Blood Donor Month, Kent County
Declares January as Blood Donor Month**

WHEREAS the gift of blood is a lifesaving act that helps patients in need of transfusions due to accidents, surgeries, cancer treatments, chronic illnesses, and other medical emergencies; and

WHEREAS the month of January has been designated nationally as National Blood Donor Month to recognize the vital contributions of volunteer blood donors and to encourage more individuals to participate in this lifesaving effort; and

WHEREAS Kent County joins with the Blood Bank of Delmarva, the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, hospitals, emergency responders, and community partners in highlighting the ongoing need for blood donations; and

WHEREAS Kent County acknowledges the dedication of local donors, medical professionals, and volunteers whose commitment ensures that blood is available when needed most; and

WHEREAS increasing awareness and participation in blood donation strengthens the health and resilience of our community and saves countless lives each year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent County Levy Court hereby proclaims the month of January 2026 as National Blood Donor Month in Kent County, Delaware, and encourages all residents who are eligible to consider donating blood and supporting this lifesaving initiative.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be and hereby is incorporated into the official minutes of the December 16, 2025, meeting of the Kent County Levy Court.

M-25-236 **Motion** to approve Resolution 4140 was made by Mr. Scott; seconded by Mr. Pepper; carried by Roll Call vote seven (7) yeas.

Employee of the Year for 2025

Trudena Horsey, Director, Human Resources: Good evening, commissioners. I have the distinguished honor of introducing to you Mr. Jonathan Stewart who received the 2025 Employee of the Year Award. And I am going to read his certificate of recognition into the record, and then we'll allow Mr. Stewart to have some comments after the commissioners.

**Kent County Levy Court
Certificate of Recognition**

Jonathan C. Stewart

On this, the 16th day of December 2025, the Levy Court of Kent County, State of Delaware, does hereby recognize **Jonathan C. Stewart** as the 2025 Kent County Employee of the Year.

The prestigious award recognizes his outstanding dedication, skill, and hard work as the Recreation Program Supervisor III in the Department of Community Services-Recreation Division on behalf of the citizens of Kent County. Congratulations Jonathan.

Jonathan, if I might add, your technological advances that you're bringing to the community services department is beyond compare. We are so thankful for your dedication to the department, to your office, and what you bring to the table. So, thank you so much and this award couldn't have gone to a better individual and we're so thankful and happy that you won it, so congratulations.

*Inaudible (microphone was not used)

Employee of the Month - January 2026

Ms. Horsey: Now we'll ask Ms. Sarah Keifer to come down to introduce the Employee of the Month for January 2026.

Sarah Keifer, Department of Planning Services Director: Good evening, commissioners. It is my pleasure to present to you the Employee of the Month for January '26, is Jacob Yoder, who is a Building Inspector in I&E within the Department of Planning. Jacob joined us just over a year ago in November of '24, and he's been doing a fantastic job, but early in November, in particular, it came to his supervisor's notice who came immediately to me, we had a tremendous influx of demand for inspections, but we were down two inspectors, and our third-party contractor wasn't available. It was the beginning of deer season. Jacob unbeknownst to us actually went to our permit techs and said, give me extra inspections, I don't want to fall behind. I don't want our customers to fall behind. On one particular day he had 18. He was out and about in the county, and his county cell phone died. They use those to do the inspection results. Called into the office, we managed to get him a spare. We called Verizon; Verizon said bring it into our shop, in Dover, and we'll fix it for you. They couldn't, it's a commercial account. Jake still went, tried to get it fixed, walked away without it being fixed, had the spare, went back out to do inspections. A couple of hours later, he called in, his truck was dying. So, an hour later, he managed to nurse it back to the building and we got him a spare. And then he went back out, and he

finished all the inspections for the day. What is notable is not just that he gladly took on extra work, so our customers didn't have to wait, it was a terrible day where everything went wrong, and he could not have handled it with more grace and good humor, and that more than anything is invaluable in our department. So, I am I'm very pleased to present him as the January Employee of the Month.

The January 2026 Employee of the Month tribute was read into the record by Ms. Horsey.

Kent County Levy Court President, Joanne Masten read the following into the record:

**Declaration of a Special Holiday in Observance of the
Christmas Season**

Whereas the Christmas season is a joyous time best spent in the company of family and close friends in celebration of this holiest of days; and

Whereas the employees of Kent County Levy Court are hardworking dedicated individuals worthy of an extra day off to enjoy the blessings of family, country, and God; and

Whereas Kent County Levy Court Policy grants the President of Levy Court authority to declare special holidays when it is in the best interest of the government and/or citizens to do so.

Now, therefore, I, Joanne Masten, President of Kent County Levy Court, do hereby declare Wednesday, December 24, 2025, a

SPECIAL HOLIDAY

as that term is applied by Kent County Levy Court Policy and order Kent County offices to be closed so that eligible employees may spend the day with family during this most joyous holiday season. Merry Christmas to all!

INTRODUCTIONS – None

PUBLIC HEARINGS – None

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Masten:

Recreation Center Officials Room Renovation Bid Award

Michael Rigby, Assistant Director, Community Services: As you have the memo, we're proposing to convert our officials rooms into a break room/meeting room. As you know, if you've been into the rec center, the current meeting room that we have, you can fit four or five people in there comfortably. This meeting room is going to be twice as large, as our current one, maybe even three times as large, and it's going to have a breakroom to allow our employees to get out of the office to eat their lunches and relax for a while during their lunch break and their afternoon and morning breaks as well. So, the officials room was originally built, thinking that the officials would come in and change their clothes and get ready to officiate the basketball games, the soccer games, lacrosse games, et cetera but it didn't work out that way. One room is kind of a makeshift breakroom with a little table and a microwave in there and the other room is basically storage. So, we're proposing to convert those two rooms into the breakroom/kitchenette/meeting room. There are a few other amenities to that that are added to it such as tables and chairs, a large screen monitor, microwave, and I believe the icemaker as well. So, most of the costs are here. The additional cost...for the allocation of the additional costs is on there as well. The original project was bid out. We had 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 bids submitted and as you read, Kent Construction was eliminated due to lack of documentation that was required, and so it went to the next highest bidder...next lowest bidder, which is Conventional Builders Incorporated at the cost of \$85,952.00. So, along with the additional cost to outfit that room, I believe the total would be \$85,000.00...nope, that's that bid. I don't have that total there, but it's in the midst of \$95,000.00 I believe, so.

Mrs. Masten: Mr. Rigby, you said the total would be what, 95?

Mr. Rigby: It would be plus \$10,000.00 so it's like \$94,000.00 pushing...

Ms. Masten: Thank you.

Mr. Rigby: Sorry, it will be \$95,000.00, yes.

M-25-237 Ms. Masten: **Move** to award the bid for the Recreation Center Officials Room Renovation project to Conventional Builders Inc. of Houston, DE in the amount of \$85,952.00; approve an additional \$14,000 in capital funding from the "Community Services Parks & Recreation Capital Project Contingency" to complete the fit-out of the room, and further authorize the President of Levy Court to sign the contract with Conventional Builders Inc.; seconded by Mr. Hertz; carried by Roll Call vote six (6) yeas; one (1) (Pepper) absent.

Mr. Hertz:

1. Pump Station #3 Upgrade Project – Professional Services Contract Approval

Sam Bautista, Director of Public Works: Good evening, Commissioners. This item is with regards to Pump Station No. 3, the Influent Screen Improvements project. An assessment was conducted on Pump Station #3, which evaluated the new influent screen to analyze the wet weather emergency storage for sizing and location. Staff did identify the immediate need to implement a new influent screen and requested the county's consultant JMT to provide a proposal to prepare construction documents for the screen and any associated improvements that will be publicly bid. The new influent screen would help prevent large pieces of debris from clogging the system, which could cause overflows, which we don't want, right? So, the wet well sizing and wet weather emergency storage evaluation recommendations will be addressed in a future scope of work and will be brought to Levy Court at a later time. Staff did review the scope of work and cost proposal and found it to be very reasonable. Staff recommends approving the contract for Engineering Services in the amount of \$129,592.00.

M-25-238 Mr. Hertz: I **Move** to approve a contract for the Pump Station #3 Influent Screen Improvements Engineering Services in the amount of \$129,592.00. Funding is from FY26 Sewer Fund Contingency and Authorize the President of Levy Court to sign the contract subject to Attorney concurrence; seconded by Mr. Scott; carried by Roll Call vote six (6) yeas; one (1) (Pepper) absent.

2. Hedgerow Hollow Septic Elimination Project – Professional Services Contract Approval

Mr. Bautista: So, Public Works staff selected Davis Bowen and Freidel to provide engineering services for a septic elimination project at the Hedgerow Hollow Mobile Home Park in Smyrna. The consultant has provided a proposal for the next phase to perform the engineering services necessary for submitting funding applications, design, permitting, bidding, and construction. The department has reviewed their proposal and found it acceptable. This project is funded through the State of Delaware Revolving Fund Loan and the department does recommend approving this contract for Engineering Services in an amount not to exceed \$220,000.00 and that's my short presentation. I'll answer any of your questions.

M-25-239 Mr. Hertz: I **Move** to approve a contract for the Hedgerow Hollow Septic Elimination Project engineering services to Davis Bowen & Freidel Inc. in the amount not to exceed \$220,000.00. Funding will be through Sewer Fund operating revenues, DNREC funding and other specific project funds as budgeted or amended, and move to authorize the President of Levy Court to sign the contract subject to County Attorney concurrence; and

move to authorize the Director of Public Works to pursue funding from state and federal agencies and complete necessary funding applications; seconded by Mr. Scott; carried by Roll Call vote six (6) yeas; one (1) (Pepper) absent.

3. Computerized Maintenance Management System Software – Professional Services Contract Approval

Mr. Bautista: President and commissioners, this is an item that is dearly...very needed at the Public Works Department so, I'm just going to give you a short presentation regarding the Computerized Maintenance Management Software System Software. So, what is a CMMS? Well, the Computerized Maintenance Management System is a centralized system that will help staff schedule and document everything that we do at the department. Staff will be able to access and track anything; your asset history, standard operating procedures, photos, videos, everything will be accessible with the computer and on your phone. We are trying to migrate away from paper records because paper records do get lost, and this would be able to save and retrieve historical data easier. So, why do we use it? Well, adopting to a CMMS will make it more efficient and make a more efficient team by helping the staff plan ahead with inventory, tracking and preventive maintenance. Previous...this was previously identified in an organization maturity assessment as an area of improvement to modernize and streamline maintenance and asset management operations. It also will serve as a central hub for tracking and managing the equipment, vehicles, inventory and hard assets across the wastewater treatment facilities, pump stations, and the collection and transmission system. And this slide just shows you what are the objectives and, you know, we've been...what I heard when I got here is we want to be more proactive, and this is what is going to happen, is we'll be...we'll know what we have, and we'll know where the deficiencies are, and we can get ahead of any of these problems because we'll have the tools to budget ahead and plan ahead. So, the main thing...one of the main items here is track maintenance labor, equipment, downtime and material usage in real time. That's important so that we as staff know what our priorities are. That has of course enhanced the transparency, data accuracy, operational accountability. So, we want to make sure that we're doing our job, and you see the fruits of our labor. So, when we went...when we started this, this effort, we did reach out to six CMMS providers, and we've been working with them in the past six months and we assessed their capabilities, their integration potential and their responsiveness, and we narrowed it down to three finalists. Limble (SHI), OpenGov, and Brightly Solutions. And we ended up interviewing these finalists to determine how compatible their systems were with our current software. And based on that staff recommends with going with Limble. We found that their integration with our current GIS and our Tyler Munis system it was very robust, user friendly, when we went through these interviews, we had our staff sit in, they did demonstrations, interactive demonstrations, and we were able to, you know, enter work orders, and our staff was able to kind of have a say in what was very user friendly. So, you know we want to make sure that our staff uses this tool on a daily basis, and that's why we have tablets and phones, and we can directly connect with this program and enter all our data right from the tablets and phones. So, user friendly designed to optimize maintenance operations, asset tracking and work order management.

You know, our staff, they're all over of the county and when we have all these work orders, it's really tough to track where they are, what they're doing. So, this will help us actually just go down and, you know, check everything that we're doing and make sure that everybody's accountable. We wanted a system that had a robust customer service support. So, they are...this...Limble is open 24/7. Rapid implementation was another factor, so in terms of schedule we're looking at inputting our own data that we have now, and it will take us about six months to get all that data in and then from six to twelve months is where we'll be, where our staff will be starting to use it and starting to implement, putting data and you know and get comfortable with being out there with the software. And then of course we also looked at future expansion modules, you know, whether we wanted to make sure that, you know, it was...this program wasn't just work orders. We wanted to see what else it could do, and what other modules we could bring in. So, project management is pretty big especially for our engineering team so that we can document, you know, our projects as they go along. We have a central location to put our project pictures, documents, and readily, you know, bring them up when we need to. That's something that we don't have; we just use Excel and so this is a database that's pretty much on steroids and could provide us with all the information that we need as it ties into our GIS and we could provide better customer service to our residents. So, for the first year, the first-year cost is approximately \$49,000.00, however, the sewer fund operating revenues have...there have been funds budgeted and approved in previous fiscal years for the purchase of this software. So, we, you know, we will be negotiating with Limble for the future years, but in this first year, as I said, it's implementation and being able to collect data and be comfortable with going out in the field and just gathering and implementing. So, with that, I will answer any questions.

Mr. Sweeney: So, Mr. Bautista, can this track trouble calls, of the community calling in saying I'm having problems with my connection and then track that connection as an asset?

Mr. Bautista: So, well, it's going to be based on sewer connections, right?

Mr. Sweeney: Right.

Mr. Bautista: So, right, so what we can do is we can, we will track the county owned asset and from there it's, you know, it's GIS based, location based, so we can track that asset and all the type of work that's been done on that asset after it's...after the initial input.

Mr. Sweeney: Okay. So, because this is being paid for out of sewer funds, it'll only be the sewer infrastructure fund, not the rest of Public Works, which there's a lot going on in that side of the house too.

Mr. Bautista: Right, so yes, initially it's going to be for the sewer, but we've been kind of thinking about, you know, that expansion of how do we incorporate other branches of Public Works, whether it's a streetlight or...and it's, you know, this...we have GIS data for streetlights, we have GIS data for our garbage collection. So, those parts, those bits of data can be input right into Limble, and we could, you know, we could actually add another tab. So, it would be pretty easy to add those assets into our system.

Mr. Sweeney: Okay, thank you.

M-25-240 Mr. Hertz: I **Move** to approve a professional services contract with SHI International Corporation to purchase and implement Limble's CMMS in the amount of \$48,730.04. Funding is Sewer Fund Operating Revenue as budgeted in FY20, FY21, FY22, and FY23, and Authorize the President of Levy Court to sign the contract subject to Attorney concurrence; seconded by Mr. Scott; carried by Roll Call vote six (6) yeas; one (1) (Pepper) absent.

Mr. Scott:
Rank and Restructuring, EMS Division Union Contract

Chief Tinger: Thank you, Mr. Vice President. Commissioners, tonight before you is the next step, I know last business meeting you guys voted on the CBA with the union from the EMS and then approved that. I know the memo states that this was addressed in the actual CBA, the clarification to that is it was discussed during negotiations for the unit contract, but the actual ranking structure that we're proposing was not specifically in the contract or was agreed upon by all parties. So, before you tonight is a request to add three additional rank pay grades for the paramedic rank structure. On page two is a chart of our existing four positions, and what we're doing is that we're looking to insert the next rank structure in between our current existing to create a seven-step rank structure. And it was a while ago I came before you asking for an increase in the sign on bonuses to address the recruitment. This part I'm coming before you to address the retention problem that we've had, and this is definitely step one to make sure that we're taking care of those employees that have been remaining with Kent County and give them an ability to rise through the ranks over seven ranks instead of four. Any questions?

Mr. Scott: Chief Tinger, just wanted to reiterate a little bit with the, with the word getting out of the possibility of this rank structure, I think we had three previous seasoned paramedics that have looked and entertained the idea of coming back, correct?

Chief Tinger: That is correct. And I think that was part of the sign on bonus, which was definitely attractive to them, but yes, it was the promise of this and the expansion of the new buildings. Everything that Levy Court is doing is definitely recruiting and bringing back those that left for previous reasons.

M-25-241 Mr. Scott: I make a **Motion** to approve the creation of the three (3) new Paramedic rank positions/classes (Paygrades 2119, 2121, and 2123) and authorize Human Resources/Finance to complete the administrative setup required to implement the updated Paramedic rank structure; seconded by Mr. Angel; carried by Roll Call vote six (6) yeas; one (1) (Pepper) absent.

OTHER BUSINESS - None

INFORMATION ITEMS -- None**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Tracey Miller, 52 Chanticleer Circle, Wyoming, DE: Good evening, Madame President, commissioners. Thank you for the space here tonight to address you. My name is Tracey Miller, as you heard. I am the chair emeritus of RD 34, the Democratic Party of Kent County. I'm also the chair emeritus of the Kent County Democratic part...vice chair of the Kent County Democratic Party where I served alongside Jody for the last four years before he stepped down as treasurer, where he served, I believe, Jody that was 15 years? Okay, I'm here tonight because I, you may have seen a piece that came out in the paper not long ago and I wanted to make sure it was read into the record because I think it's very important. I'm here to represent the current chair, Joe Zingaro, he couldn't be here this evening, he was at a choral concert for his grandchildren, so we thought that was more important. Madam President, I thought it was important that we talk about the fact that you had every legal right as president to make the decision to remove Commissioner Sweeney from his duties as commissioner and reprimand him, for whatever you felt that he had done wrong. That is every chair or president's right to do from Congress all the way down to the smallest commission on earth. I would...would a reprimand have been effective in sending Commissioner Sweeney a message, an opinion if you will, about what he says or does, had that, had it been a better option to do it in private versus in a public forum in front of everyone? I'm not sure exactly what the point of that was except for humiliation. He is an elected official. He is elected by me in District 5. He is, we are the ones that hold him accountable. What's the goal of the decision to, I mean, it's your decision to take his commissions and his liaisons away from him, that's 100 %. I'm not sure what the goal was for you to ask everyone on Levy Court to vote because it's not a votable thing. It's your decision. You take him off or you leave them on. So, to ask people to vote on that was a complete and utter public humiliation of someone who served this county for 30 years.

Mrs. Masten: Mrs. Miller, unfortunately you're at 3 minutes. I'm sorry.

Ms. Miller: Okay. I just would appreciate the fact that we understand that you really did publicly humiliate someone who's dedicated their life to this county and District 5, and that's too bad.

Gloria Ho, 89 Peach Blossom Lane, Camden, DE, I'm also a constituent of District 5 and a proud lifelong resident of Kent County: So, I'm deeply troubled by Levy Court's decision to strip Commissioner Jody Sweeney of all committee and liaison assignments. This action is just disproportionate

and punitive, and it ultimately harms the residents who elected him to serve.

Commissioner Sweeney's values and political ideology have never been a secret. He believes strongly in free speech, dissent, and challenging power, sometimes in ways that are blunt and uncomfortable. Voters knew this when we elected him. Disagreement with an elected official's tone or political views does not justify stripping them of their ability to fully represent their constituents. Removing Commissioner Sweeney from every committee and liaison role is not accountability, it is punishment, and it comes at the expense of District 5 residents. Committees are where real work happens, where policy is shaped, budgets are influenced, and community partnerships are built. And a vote on Levy Court without committee participation is not meaningful representation. Commissioner Sweeney has already taken steps to address concerns by stepping back from public social media. The response by Levy Court leadership was excessive and sets a dangerous precedent, that a majority can sideline an elected official simply for being outspoken or unpopular. In a democracy, elections are how we hold officials accountable. Not internal actions that diminish the voice of your voters. As a lifelong Kent County resident, I want my elected representative fully empowered to do the job that voters elected him to do. I urge this body to restore Commissioner Sweeney to his committee assignments. Kent county residents deserve full representation and nothing less. Thank you so much.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Mr. Angel: This has been a very difficult task for all of us, so. And my freedom of speech...I'm going to speak tonight too on what I see and what is...what we have dealt with. There are things I will not speak of because there are facts you don't know that made us...led us to that decision. So, respect and trust is got to be one of the biggest things elected official has to deal with. Freedom of speech comes to the very heart of our being however, as elected official, we are held to a higher standard. That standard has been stretched or severed occasionally. When the commissioner was contacted over thirty times on our behalf to set up a meeting and discuss, we were denied. Leadership never got to talk to him. The only thing we could do was the advice of our lawyer, which we took, which we pay him handily for that and for what we do. It's not a punishment. Let me get that out first. This is not a punishment. We need to know that the team player is playing with all ...within the boundaries. We ask him to do something, there's a reason behind it. Something that may cost us money that we don't want to go down that travel...that road, it has happened. However, when you can't discuss, communicate, and hope for some common sense in this whole debacle, the only thing we can do is what we did. Having taken Colin Powell's leadership course, when we have...what I learned from him was when you have somebody that's not

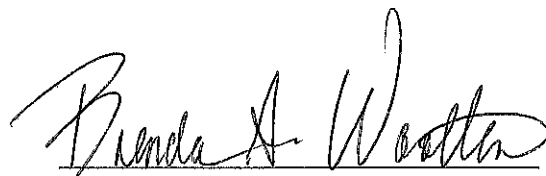
falling in line, if you will, to work along with you, you try to do so, which we tried, you remove that person until you can get them on track. Can't change anybody, it's like a drug addict. You can't change anybody unless they want to get changed. So, I'm just throwing that out there, the way I see it, not as a...not from Levy Court. That's my personal view of what I'm saying.

M-25-242 **Motion** to adjourn; carried by six ayes; one (1) (Pepper) absent.

Mrs. Masten: Before I forget, I wish you all a very, very Merry Christmas and thank you all for your support this year. It's really appreciated.

Mr. Hertz: Merry Christmas to you all too.

Mr. Hall: Merry Christmas.


Brenda A. Wootten
Clerk of the Peace
Kent County



Item Cover Page

LEVY COURT BUSINESS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

DATE: January 13, 2026

SUBMITTED BY: Lorri Tanaka, Administration

ITEM TYPE: Presentation

AGENDA SECTION:

PRESENTATIONS:

SUBJECT:

1. Tributes to Eagle Scouts from Troop 135:
 - Eagle Scout Landen Swank
 - Eagle Scout Dominic Haas

ATTACHMENTS:

[Tribute Landen_Swank_Eagle_Scout.pdf](#)

[Tribute Dominic_Haas_Eagle_Scout.pdf](#)

KENT COUNTY LEVY COURT

T R I B U T E

Kent County Levy Court Tribute to
Eagle Scout
Landen Swank

It is a distinct honor and privilege to present this Tribute today,
Tuesday, January 13, 2026, to **Landen Swank**, in recognition of achieving the
Scouting America's highest rank of **Eagle Scout**.

Landen began his Scouting journey in 2016 as a Wolf Scout with Pack 135 and has spent
the past eight years demonstrating exceptional dedication, leadership, and character. He
earned 31 merit badges and served Troop 135 in key leadership roles, including Outdoor
Ethics Guide, Librarian, Assistant Patrol Leader, two terms as Patrol Leader of the Spartans,
and ultimately Senior Patrol Leader.

For his Eagle Scout Project, Landen designed and constructed a Gaga ball pit for Providence
Creek Academy, benefiting current and future students—including his younger brother.
The project required extensive planning, three days of preparation, one day of installation,
and the coordinated efforts of eight Scouts and five adults. His work reflects his
commitment to service, teamwork, and community improvement.

May God add a special blessing to this noble accomplishment!

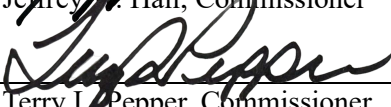

Joanne Masten, President

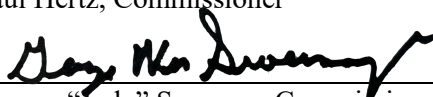

Robert J. Scott, Vice President


Allan F. Angel, Commissioner


Jeffrey M. Hall, Commissioner


Paul Hertz, Commissioner


Terry L. Pepper, Commissioner


George "Jody" Sweeney, Commissioner

KENT COUNTY LEVY COURT

T R I B U T E

Kent County Levy Court Tribute to
Eagle Scout
Dominic Haas

It is a distinct honor and privilege to present this Tribute today,
Tuesday, January 13, 2026, to **Dominic Haas**, in recognition of achieving the
Scouting America's highest rank of **Eagle Scout**.

Dominic began his Scouting journey in 2016 as a Bear Scout with Pack 135 and has since distinguished himself through eight years of dedication, earning 31 merit badges and serving in key leadership roles, including Assistant Patrol Leader of the Bullfrogs, Instructor, Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, and ultimately Senior Patrol Leader of Troop 135.

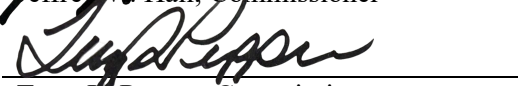
For his Eagle Scout Project, Dominic designed and constructed a memorial bench and concrete pad honoring a Smyrna-Clayton Little League player who tragically lost his life.

His year-long project involved reclaiming and restoring bench legs from John B Moore Middle School, fabricating new supports from angle iron, and incorporating baseball bases and wooden bats into the seat and backrest. This thoughtful and skillful work now stands as a lasting tribute to a young life and a meaningful contribution to his community.

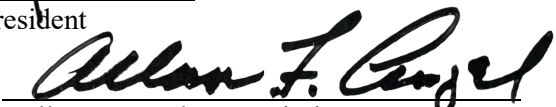
May God add a special blessing to this noble accomplishment!


Robert I. Scott, Vice President

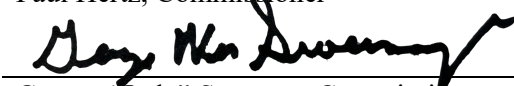

Jeffrey W. Hall, Commissioner


Terry L. Pepper, Commissioner


Joanne Masten, President


Allan F. Angel, Commissioner


Paul Hertz, Commissioner


George "Jody" Sweeney, Commissioner



Item Cover Page

LEVY COURT BUSINESS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

DATE: January 13, 2026

SUBMITTED BY: Lorri Tanaka, Administration

ITEM TYPE: Presentation

AGENDA SECTION:

PRESENTATIONS:

SUBJECT: 2. Presentation to Honorable Allan F. Angel

ATTACHMENTS:
[Angel Presentation.pdf](#)



Public Service Award



THE LEVY COURT OF KENT COUNTY DELAWARE PROUDLY RECOGNIZES AND HONORS:

Honorable Allan F. Angel

IN APPRECIATION OF HIS TWENTY YEARS OF EXEMPLARY PUBLIC SERVICE TO THE RESIDENTS OF KENT COUNTY, DELAWARE.

THROUGH STEADFAST LEADERSHIP, DEDICATION, AND COMMITMENT TO THE PUBLIC GOOD, THE HONORABLE ALLAN F. ANGEL HAS FAITHFULLY SERVED AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL, DEMONSTRATING INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM, AND AN UNWAVERING DEVOTION TO THE PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC SERVICE. HIS CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE STRENGTHENED COUNTY GOVERNMENT AND POSITIVELY IMPACTED THE COMMUNITY HE SERVES.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, THE SIGNATURE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE KENT COUNTY LEVY COURT IS HEREBY AFFIXED THIS 13TH DAY OF JANUARY 2026.

Jaane Master

PRESIDENT, KENT COUNTY LEVY COURT



Item Cover Page

LEVY COURT BUSINESS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

DATE: January 13, 2026

SUBMITTED BY: Lorri Tanaka, Human Resources Office

ITEM TYPE: Ordinance

AGENDA SECTION: Mr. Angel:

SUBJECT: 1. Ordinance LC25-30, An Ordinance repealing the current Chapter 68, Personnel Policy and replacing it with a NEW Chapter 68, Personnel Policy

ATTACHMENTS:

[Ordinance LC25-30 Amend Ch 68 Repeal.docx](#)
[Personnel Policy 12.02.25 Clean Version.docx](#)
[HR Policy Review Summary for Kent County Levy Court.pdf](#)

INTRODUCED BY: Commissioner Allan F. Angel
DATE INTRODUCED: December 9, 2025
PUBLIC HEARING DATE: January 13, 2026
HEARING TIME: 7:00 P.M.
ADOPTION DATE: _____
EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

ORDINANCE LC25-30

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING THE CURRENT CHAPTER 68, PERSONNEL POLICY AND REPLACING IT WITH A NEW CHAPTER 68, PERSONNEL POLICY

WHEREAS, the Kent County Levy Court deems it advisable to amend the Kent County Code to update the Personnel Policy to reflect more contemporary methods and provisions;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE LEVY COURT OF KENT COUNTY, DELAWARE, HEREBY ORDAINS:

Section 1. CHAPTER 68 of the Kent County Code is hereby amended by deleting and repealing the chapter in its entirety.

Section 2. Chapter 68 of the Kent County Code is hereby amended by adding thereto a new chapter, to replace Chapter 68 here in above repealed, to be Chapter 68, Personnel Policy, to read as follows:

§ 68-1.	Purpose.	§ 68-14.	Disciplinary action.
§ 68-2.	Applicability; categories of employment service.	§ 68-15.	Tenure of service.
§ 68-3.	Definitions.	§ 68-16.	Procedure of appeals.
§ 68-4.	Administration.	§ 68-17.	Resignation and reemployment.
§ 68-5.	Classification.	§ 68-18.	Records.
§ 68-6.	Compensation.	§ 68-19.	General prohibitions.
§ 68-7.	Vacancies, recruitments and	§ 68-20.	Holidays.
		§ 68-21.	Sick leave.

NOTE: Actual text of this chapter is attached to this document.

Section 3. This Ordinance is adopted pursuant to the powers conferred upon the Levy Court of Kent County, Delaware, in the Delaware Code, Title 9, Section 4110.

Section 4. The provisions of this Ordinance are severable and if any of its provisions or any

sentence, clause, or paragraph shall be held unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, the decision of such court shall not affect or impair any or the remaining provisions.

Section 4. This Ordinance shall take effect July 1, 2026.

ADOPTED BY THE LEVY COURT
OF KENT COUNTY, DELAWARE

President, Kent County Levy Court
This _____ day of _____, 2026

ATTEST: _____
Clerk of the Peace

SYNOPSIS

This ordinance amendment updates the policy with more contemporary methods and provisions.

Suggested motion: I move to approve Ordinance LC25-30, An Ordinance Repealing the current Chapter 68, Personnel Policy and replacing it with a New Chapter 68, Personnel Policy as presented.

Chapter 68

PERSONNEL POLICY

§ 68-1.	Purpose.	§ 68-14.	Disciplinary action.
§ 68-2.	Applicability; categories of employment service.	§ 68-15.	Tenure of service.
§ 68-3.	Definitions.	§ 68-16.	Procedure of appeals.
§ 68-4.	Administration.	§ 68-17.	Resignation and reemployment.
§ 68-5.	Classification.	§ 68-18.	Records.
§ 68-6.	Compensation.	§ 68-19.	General prohibitions.
§ 68-7.	Vacancies, recruitments and appointments.	§ 68-20.	Holidays.
		§ 68-21.	Sick leave.
§ 68-8.	Eligibility lists.	§ 68-22.	Vacation leave.
§ 68-9.	Probation.	§ 68-23.	Family and medical leave.
§ 68-10.	Transfers, promotions and demotions.	§ 68-24.	Military leave.
§ 68-11.	Attendance policy; hours of work.	§ 68-25.	Compassionate leave.
§ 68-12.	Training and higher education.	§ 68-26.	Special leaves of absence.
§ 68-13.	Performance evaluations.	§ 68-27.	Incorporation of certain policies.
		§ 68-28.	Effective date.

[HISTORY: Adopted by the Levy Court of Kent County 12-22-1998 by Ord. No. 98-22. Amendments noted where applicable.]

GENERAL REFERENCES

Code of Ethics — See Ch. 41.

County Employees' Retirement Program — See Ch. 83.

Grievance procedure — See Ch. 46.

§ 68-1. Purpose.

- A. This chapter shall amend and supersede that certain ordinance adopted in two sections on July 15 and December 9, 1975, entitled an "An Ordinance to Establish a Personnel System in Kent County Government," as amended. This chapter is adopted pursuant to and in compliance with 9 Del. C. § 4110. It shall be known as the "Kent County Personnel Ordinance of 1998."
- B. It is hereby declared the personnel policy of Kent County that:
 - (1) Employment in the County government shall be based on merit and fitness, free of personal and political considerations, and free of bias based on a legally protected status.
 - (2) Just and equitable incentives and conditions of employment shall be established and maintained to promote efficiency and economy in the operation of the County government and within the County's ability to do so.

- (3) Positions having similar duties and responsibilities shall be classified and compensated on a uniform basis; however, non-discriminatory variances may exist due to bona fide reasons, such as key experience or credentials.
- (4) Appointments, promotions and other action requiring the application of the merit principle shall be based on systematic tests and evaluations and other objective factors that may be necessary from time to time.
- (5) Tenure of employees covered by this chapter shall be subject to the satisfactory performance of work, necessity for the performance of work, the availability of funds and compliance with this chapter and all other applicable policies and regulations approved by Kent County Levy Court.

§ 68-2. Applicability; categories of employment service.

- A. Employment in the Kent County government shall be divided into four services: excluded, elected, unclassified and classified.
- B. Employees in the excluded service shall not be subject to the provisions of this chapter, except that the County government shall keep appropriate personnel records on the persons in this service, and they shall be ineligible for any employee benefits, except as required by law. The excluded service shall include the following: **[Amended 2-22-2022 by Ord. No. 22-03]**
 - (1) Contractual employees, except where noted.
 - (2) Members of appointed boards, commissions and advisory committees.
 - (3) Contractors hired by the County government to perform services on a fee or fixed cost basis, including County Attorney(s) and other contracted professionals or consultants.
- C. Employees in the elected service shall not be subject to the provisions of this chapter, except as prescribed by this chapter in a management role, but shall be eligible for specific employee benefits as determined by Levy Court. The elected service shall include all elected officials and their appointed deputies and/or chief deputies provided for in Delaware law.
- D. Employees in the unclassified service shall be appointed by Levy Court, and therefore exempt from provisions of this chapter requiring competitive examinations or other appointment/selection requirements. Notwithstanding the foregoing, employees in the unclassified service shall be subject to all provisions of this chapter and other policies and regulations approved by Levy Court; their positions shall be in accordance with the approved classification plan; their remuneration shall be administered by the Human Resources Director, who shall use the most current pay plan officially approved by Levy Court as the basis for wage and salary decisions. Employees in the unclassified service shall also be eligible for such employee benefits as are in effect during the time of their employment. **[Amended 6-27-2000 by Ord. No. 00-16; 2-22-2022 by Ord. No. 22-03]**
 - (1) The unclassified service shall include the County Administrator and Director of Finance.
 - (2) Employees in the unclassified service shall by the nature of their positions be exempt administrative, executive or professional employees as defined under the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act receiving a fixed salary and shall not be required to account for partial day absences.
- E. Employees in the classified service are subject to all provisions of this chapter; their positions shall be in accordance with the approved classification plan; their remuneration shall be administered by

the Human Resources Director, who shall use the most current pay plan officially approved by Levy Court as the basis for wage and salary decisions; and they shall be governed by all policies and regulations approved by Levy Court. The classified service shall include all County employees not included under Subsections B, C and D(1) above.

- F. The class in which each employee shall have status shall be determined in the manner provided in § 68-5.
- G. At Will employees of the County are not elected and do not have a written agreement stating otherwise. This means that either Levy Court or the employee can end the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause and with or without notice. While Levy Court seeks to provide pre-termination hearings for employees facing termination, such hearings do not alter the at-will nature of employment.

§ 68-3. Definitions.

The following words used in this chapter are defined as follows:

BOARD — The Personnel Administration Board.

COMPENSATORY TIME — Paid time off earned by nonexempt employees at their time-and-a-half rate in lieu of actual cash payment to be used at the request of the employee, provided that the workplace will not suffer an undue hardship.

DEPARTMENT HEAD — Includes those County officers who have been designated by the Levy Court or by Delaware law as having primary responsibility for the operation of a County office. For the purposes of this chapter, Row Officers are considered Department Heads.

EXEMPT — Those employees exempt from overtime pay as provided in the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act.

FLSA — The Federal Fair Labor Standards Act.

CONTRACTUAL EMPLOYEE — Temporary employee hired on an occasional basis to provide services for a specific reason or event.

NONEXEMPT — Those employees that receive overtime pay as provided in the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act.

OPEN RECRUITMENT — Advertising position vacancies to the general public.

OTHER APPROPRIATE STANDARD — Consist of skills, knowledge, education and experience criteria as defined for each position's description and/or as requested on an employment application.

REGULAR EMPLOYEE — Employee satisfactorily completing a six-month or more probationary period and therefore entitled to the right to appeal disciplinary actions to the Personnel Administration Board. Regular employees are not entitled to lifetime employment and are subject to termination as provided in this chapter.

Regular part-time employees are not entitled to lifetime employment and are subject to termination as provided in this chapter.

PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEE — Employee at initial employment serving a six-month or more introductory period and therefore not entitled to the right to appeal disciplinary actions or termination to the Personnel Administration Board.

RELATIVE — Father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, husband, wife, grandparent, aunt, uncle, first cousin, niece, nephew, grandparent-in-law, great-grandparent, great-grandparent-in-law or other such person, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, half-sister or grandchild. The relationship of in-law ceases at such time as an employee divorces their spouse or at such time as the spouse of an employee should die.

SEASONAL EMPLOYEE — Temporary employee hired for a limited term to perform specific duties, usually during the summer months.

SERIOUS HEALTH CONDITION — An incapacity or treatment, including pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions, that involves inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider.

STANDARDIZED COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION — An examination administered by the Human Resources Director and created in consultation with the employing department or office that fairly evaluates the abilities of an applicant or applicants for a particular position.

TEMPORARY EMPLOYEE — Employee hired by a department head or the Human Resources Director for a limited term to perform certain duties at a specified rate of pay and without benefits of any kind. Temporary employees may be hired without examination or competitive recruitment or provided by an employment agency, and may be terminated without cause or notice.

WORKING DAYS — Monday through Friday and excludes Saturday, Sunday and holidays recognized by Levy Court. Employees working under a collective bargaining agreement may have different working days and should refer to their agreement.

§ 68-4. Administration.

- A. The personnel system established by this chapter shall be administered by the Director of Human Resources (Human Resources Director). The Human Resources Director shall take such actions as may be necessary to ensure that all appointments, promotions, demotions and reductions in force concerning employees in the classified service are made solely on the basis of merit principles and in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.
- B. The Human Resources Director shall perform any additional duties which may be required and/or are authorized by this chapter or the Levy Court.
 - (1) The Human Resources Director shall work closely with the department heads in carrying out their duties.
 - (2) The Human Resources Director shall:
 - (a) Administer and interpret the provisions of this chapter.
 - (b) Maintain appropriate employee and other records as provided for herein.
 - (c) Recommend revisions and amendments to this chapter and to personnel-related policies and regulations approved by Levy Court.
 - (d) Counsel and advise employees and Levy Court on personnel-related issues.

- (e) Maintain, update and review the position classification and pay plan provided for herein.

- (f) Prepare, administer and recommend employee benefits to the Levy Court.
 - (g) Prepare and distribute to every employee of the County general information pertaining to position title, policies, evaluations, discipline, terminations and other personnel-related matters.
 - (h) Resolve payroll and pay-related disputes in consultation with the appropriate department head and the County Administrator.
- (3) Legitimate written complaints received from the public involving classified employees shall be directed to both the employee's department head and the Human Resources Director. The Human Resources Director shall ensure that the complaint is properly investigated and appropriate disciplinary action is taken by the department head as provided in this chapter. Complaints received from the public involving unclassified employees shall be directed to the County Administrator, who may direct the Human Resources Director to investigate and report the findings to the Levy Court for its consideration.
- (4) The Human Resources Director may exercise the authority and responsibility of any department head, whenever the department head is unable, unavailable or unwilling to perform the duties or requirements of this chapter. The County Administrator or designee may exercise the authority and responsibility of the Human Resources Director in their absence.
- (5) Department Heads who disagree with the Human Resources Director's decision on a matter listed above should refer to the Chain of Command policy for additional steps.
- C. A Personnel Administration Board is hereby established in accordance with the provisions of 9 Del. C. § 4151. The Personnel Administration Board shall consist of seven members.
- (1) The members shall be appointed for a term of four years to be served at the pleasure of a majority of the Levy Court Commissioners. The names of qualified appointees shall be submitted by Levy Court Commissioners for their individual districts for consideration and confirmation by a simple majority of the Levy Court.
 - (2) The term of all confirmed members shall expire with the term of the Levy Court Commissioner in whose district the appointee resides; provided, however, that in the event that no new appointment is made after expiration of the term, then the member shall continue to serve until reappointed or replaced.
 - (3) During the term of the appointment, a member must maintain primary residency within the Levy Court district from which appointed.
 - (4) Persons appointed to the Board shall be individuals with knowledge of and experience in dealing with personnel problems and issues.
 - (5) At the time of appointment and for the duration of the term, members shall be neither County employees nor candidates for, candidates-elect for or incumbents of an elective federal, state or County office.
 - (6) Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as in the case of regular appointments.
 - (7) The Levy Court shall establish a rate and the conditions under which members shall be compensated in the Board's bylaws.
 - (8) One of the members of the Personnel Administration Board shall be elected Chair and one member shall be elected Vice Chair by the members of the Board. Meetings and other proceedings shall be in accordance with rules adopted by the Board, which shall be consistent

with the provisions of this chapter. A simple majority of the constituted Board shall be required in order to conduct any hearing or carry any motion. Four members shall constitute a quorum.

§ 68-5. Classification.

- A. The Human Resources Director shall cause an analysis to be made, as directed by Levy Court from time to time, of the duties and responsibilities of all positions in the classified and unclassified service and shall recommend a job classification plan with pay ranges and pay rates for each grade that reflect fairly the compensation for comparable positions in other places of public and private employment. Each position shall be assigned to a job class or pay grade on the basis of the kind and level of its duties and responsibilities, and the same pay scale. The classification plan and all revisions thereto that involve the addition or deletion to classes shall be submitted to the Levy Court for review. Revisions may consist of the addition, abolishment, consolidation, division or amendment of existing classes.
- B. Within 60 days after receiving the classification plan and pay study from the Human Resources Director, Levy Court shall approve a classification plan, and the Human Resources Director shall thereafter allocate each classified position to its appropriate class and pay range.
- C. An employee may apply for reclassification of their position by submitting a written request for reclassification to their department head. The department head may forward the request for reclassification with a recommendation as part of the annual budget development process to the Human Resources Director. The Human Resources Director shall submit the request and recommendation of the department head, together with their recommendation to the County Administrator for consideration in the formulation of a proposed budget to be presented to Levy Court.

§ 68-6. Compensation.

- A. The Human Resources Director, in consultation with the County Administrator, shall annually prepare a pay plan establishing the pay range for each grade and any employee pay adjustments approved by Levy Court.
- B. The Human Resources Director shall submit to Levy Court an annual report of the suitability of the pay plan. Amendments either through the adjustment of rates or by reassignment of job classes to different pay ranges may be proposed at any time during the year. All amendments shall apply uniformly to all positions within the same class.
- C. Generally, a new employee shall be paid the minimum rate for the class or grade. Exceptions to the starting salary may be granted under certain circumstances by the Human Resources Director upon written request of the department head.
 - (1) The minimum rate for each class is based on the assumption that a new employee meets the minimum qualifications stated in the class specifications. If it becomes necessary to appoint a new employee of lesser qualifications, but who demonstrates the potential to become a good and effective employee, the person may be hired as an intern with a rate 5% below the minimum rate for the class.
 - (2) If a new employee exceeds the minimum qualifications stated in the class specifications, the person may be hired with a higher rate of up to, but not to exceed 5% above the minimum rate for the class.
 - (3) The beginning rate for a new employee in excess of 5% above the minimum rate for any class

must be authorized by the County Administrator not to exceed 8%.

- (4) All employees hired after January 1, 1997, shall be compensated for completed work one pay period in arrears and said payroll check shall be electronically transferred to the employee's personal bank account or other acceptable account on a regular pay day determined by Levy Court.
- D. Any temporary vacancy may be filled by an existing employee. If an existing employee filling a temporary vacancy is presently in the same or lower pay grade than that of the vacant position or if they must perform the duties of a current and a temporary position, their rate of pay shall be increased to the minimum rate of the temporary position, or up to but no more than 8% above the present salary, whichever is higher, for the duration of the temporary vacancy and upon written approval from the Human Resources Director. An employee filling a temporary vacancy shall be returned to their former position and former rate of pay when the temporary position is filled or eliminated.
- E. Employees performing additional or extra duties on a regular basis and for a specific purpose as approved by Levy Court may be compensated up to an additional 8% above their current rate of pay. When the additional or extra duties are no longer performed, the additional compensation shall cease.
- F. Unclassified employees and those classified employees designated as exempt under the Federal Fair Labor and Standards Act shall not be entitled to additional compensation for hours worked over 40 hours per work week and shall not be eligible for compensatory time off. While exempt employees have a general work schedule, they are expected to work the hours necessary to complete their duties.
- G. Those classified employees designated as nonexempt or hourly shall be entitled to overtime compensation at one-and-one-half times their regular rate of pay, payable as compensatory time off. The Human Resources Director may authorize payment of accumulated compensatory time at their discretion and may suspend accrual of compensatory time for specific or all employees in favor of payment for overtime hours worked.
- H. Nonexempt classified employees working at times other than normal working hours on a regular or temporary basis shall receive additional compensation in the form of an hourly shift differential at a rate determined by Levy Court.
- I. Nonexempt classified employees required to be available at times other than normally scheduled working hours on a regular basis to respond to emergencies or other unusual situations shall receive additional compensation in the form of on-call pay at a rate determined by Levy Court.
- J. Regular Employees shall annually receive a longevity award in the amount of \$1,000 for five to nine years of continuous County service; in the amount of \$1,500 for 10 to 14 years of continuous County service; in the amount of \$2,000 for 15 to 19 years of continuous County service; in the amount of \$2,500 for 20 to 24 years of continuous County service; in the amount of \$3,000 for 25 to 29 years of continuous County service; in the amount of \$3,500 for 30 to 34 years of service; in the amount of \$4,000 for 35 to 39 years of service; in the amount of \$4,500 for 40 to 44 years of service; and in the amount of \$5,000 for 45 and more years of continuous County service. Said longevity award shall not vest automatically, but shall instead be awarded, accrued and distributed in equal installments with each pay period throughout the ensuing year, or the Levy Court may direct that the requisite longevity award be conferred lump sum annually on each employee's employment anniversary date. **[Amended 6-27-2000 by Ord. No. 00-16; 7-27-2004 by Ord. No. 04-16¹]**

1. Editor's Note: This ordinance also provided that it shall be effective retroactive to 6-1-2002 upon adoption.

§ 68-7. Vacancies, recruitments and appointments.

- A. When vacancies occur in the classified service, the Human Resources Director and the department head shall carefully evaluate the continued need for the vacant position to determine if it should be eliminated, combined with another position, enhanced with additional duties or reclassified. If a position remains vacant for a period of two fiscal years, it shall be considered eliminated. All applicants for vacant positions shall, in addition to other documents noted, complete a Disclosure of Immediate Relatives form and return it with their application. In addition, all employees of Kent County are required to submit a Disclosure of Immediate Relative form if they discover that an immediate relative has been hired into their department.
- B. Appointments to vacancies occurring in the classified service shall be based on merit as determined by qualifications set forth in the classification plan and approved position description. Appointments to vacancies occurring in the unclassified service shall be made by Levy Court. Compensation for new appointments shall be as required by the assigned pay range.
- (1) Employees shall be selected without regard to political considerations and shall not be required to contribute to any political purpose as a condition of employment.
 - (2) There shall be no discrimination against any person seeking employment or employed in the service of Kent County because of political or religious affiliation or belief, national origin, race, color, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions), age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, military or veteran status, disability, genetic information, housing status, or any other class protected under applicable federal, state, or local law, which may change from time to time.
- C. When a position becomes vacant, recruiting shall be carried out in the following manner:
- (1) Announcements used to recruit candidates shall be advertised in either newspaper(s), journal(s), electronic media and/or employment center(s) in order to inform a maximum number of sectors of the labor force about the vacancy. Any examination requirement shall be included in the job announcement.
 - (2) At the discretion of the Human Resources Director in consultation with the Department Head, open competitive recruitment advertisement and position posting need not be used for recruiting if any of the following conditions are met:
 - (a) There is at least one person who is already employed by the County who submits a transfer request to be considered for the vacant position and who meets the minimum qualifications designated in the position description;
 - (b) There is an existing eligibility list; or
 - (c) Recruiting has been designated as promotional. Promotional recruiting shall consider qualified employees of the County using competitive examination or other appropriate standard to determine qualification. If an employee is promoted to a position in a higher class and voluntarily requests demotion, the employee shall not be reconsidered for promotion for a period of one year from the date of voluntary demotion.
 - (3) Open competitive recruiting shall consider all eligible candidates, including employees of the County, and shall be accomplished pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.
- D. Appointment to vacancies in regular full-time and regular part-time positions shall be based on merit as determined by competitive examination or other appropriate standard.

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- (1) Examinations and other standards shall be in such form as will fairly measure the abilities and aptitudes of candidates for the duties to be performed and may not include any inquiry into or consideration of the political or religious affiliation or belief, national origin, race, color, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions), age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, military or veteran status, disability, genetic information, housing status, or any other class protected under applicable law of any candidate.
- (2) Candidates who qualify for employment shall be reviewed and categorized by the Human Resources Director according to examination scores and/or qualifications.
- (3) Veteran's preference shall be granted to qualified persons who have been members of the Armed Forces of the United States and who seek to enter the service of the County within five years immediately following their honorable discharge from military service. Such preference shall be in the form of points added to the final grades of such persons, provided that they first achieve a passing grade. The preference shall be 2 1/2 points for nondisabled veterans and five points for persons currently receiving compensation from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for service-incurred disabilities. The order of rank for persons receiving preferential credit among other eligibles shall be determined on the basis of their augmented rating. Such veterans' preference shall be given for entrance examinations but not for promotional purposes.
- (4) When required or appropriate, a standardized competitive examination shall be uniformly administered by the Human Resources Director to all candidates for the same position. Examination shall be in such form as will fairly test the knowledge and capabilities of candidates for the duties to be performed and will be performed at the same point within the selection process and for all candidates who reach that point.
- (5) Candidates must submit to and pass a substance use test for illegal and illicit drug use, misused prescription drugs and abusive consumption of alcoholic beverages, and to the extent permitted by applicable law, marijuana will be included in testing. This testing will occur after an offer of employment has been extended, usually on the first day of employment. If the selected candidate fails to pass the test or a second confirming test, if applicable, the offer of employment shall be withdrawn and they shall be ineligible for any appointment for a period of one year.
- (6) Candidates must submit to a criminal background investigation after an offer of employment has been extended, usually on the first day of employment in order to establish qualification for public trust and to protect fellow employees from potential harm. Those candidates found to have a criminal record must undergo an additional review process conducted by the Human Resources Director and County Administrator before beginning employment. During the review process, the relevance of the criminal record shall be examined to determine if it will have an adverse impact on performance or place the County or its citizens at potential risk. If it is determined that a potential risk exists or performance will be adversely affected, the offer of employment shall be withdrawn. Assessments of a criminal record will be conducted in a non-discriminatory manner and in accordance with guidance from the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).
- (7) Male candidates born after January 1, 1960, shall have registered with Selective Service and shall certify such registration on the County employment application form. Failure to certify Selective Service registration or show proof of such, if requested, shall render the candidate ineligible for County employment, or if already hired, the employee shall be subject to termination. **[Added 10-24-2000 by Ord. No. 00-27]**

- E. Upon the written notification from an employee that they are vacating their position with the County, and upon proper notification from the department head that recruitment is exempt from posting, the Human Resources Director shall post a notice of the position vacancy for the information of employees of the County. Regular part-time and full-time employees of the County may request to be considered for the vacant position as prescribed in this chapter. A vacancy notice shall be posted no less than six County

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working days prior to open competitive recruitment. Pending the availability of an eligibility list as determined by the Human Resources Director to be appropriate for the position, a vacancy may be filled by temporary appointment. Such an appointment shall have a maximum duration of six months and shall be terminated as soon as is practical after selection of a candidate for the position. This appointment shall be known as "temporary status."

- F. Applications for employment by the County shall be kept on file for a period of one year and may be updated any time within the one-year period. Applications may be made available upon request by the applicant for a vacant position in accordance with the provisions of this chapter. Kent County is not obligated to review past applications for current openings, so applicants should ensure that they apply for any position for which they believe they are qualified.
- (1) The application shall require of a candidate only that information necessary to establish name, contact information, references, job-related qualifications and any other relevant information. Applicants who misrepresent their qualifications or commit any act of dishonesty in connection with either the application, the examination or the interview will be excluded from the eligible list or if already hired, shall be subject to termination.
- G. When an appointment is to be made to a vacancy, the Human Resources Director shall submit to the department head the names of at least three persons ranked highest on an eligibility list in the order as provided in this chapter. All of the names on a higher priority eligible list shall be exhausted before selecting names from a lower priority list. The department head may ask the Human Resources Director to submit an additional three names from an appropriate list. The department head shall interview each applicant on the list and submit their recommendations to the Human Resources Director who then may appoint this individual to the position, provided that all requirements of this chapter and applicable policies or laws are met. The Human Resources Director shall be advised of and may participate in the candidate interviews.
- H. No candidate who is a relative of a member of Levy Court, the County Administrator or the Personnel Director is eligible for appointment or employment in any County position. No candidate who is a relative of a department head or other elected official is eligible for appointment, employment, promotion or transfer to a position within the department of which the department head or elected official exercises jurisdiction or control. No employee shall lose his/her position as a result of marriage or election of a spouse, but the lower paid spouse in a direct supervisor/subordinate relationship shall be subject to transfer to a like position at a like rate of pay as soon as such a position may become available.

§ 68-8. Eligibility lists.

- A. Eligibility lists, in the order of their priority, shall be reemployment lists, promotional eligibility lists and original appointment eligibility lists.
- (1) Reemployment lists shall contain the names of regular employees laid off, in good standing, for lack of funds or work.
- (2) Promotional eligibility lists and original appointment eligible lists shall be created as provided in this chapter.
- (3) Original applications shall be maintained for six months. The applications will be available in the Human Resources Director's office and may be reviewed for consideration should the position for which the applicant originally applied becomes available within six months of applying, and the applicant was considered qualified.

- B. Probationary employees laid off for lack of work or lack of funds or who resigned in good standing may have their names restored to the eligibility list from which their appointment was originally made upon request to the Human Resources Director.

§ 68-9. Probation.

- A. All employees appointed from original appointment eligibility lists shall be subject to an introductory period of probation. The regular period of probation shall be not less than six months. The department head may request from the Human Resources Director an extension of the probationary period in individual cases, but no probationary period shall extend beyond 12 months.
- (1) A written statement establishing the conditions and length of the probationary period shall be provided by the Human Resources Director to each employee at the time of initial employment.
 - (2) In cases of a promotion or transfer, a department head may initiate a probationary requirement for employees who have worked at least six months for Kent County as a regular part-time employee or in a temporary capacity.
 - (3) Certain positions have testing requirements that must be met before being moved to regular status, and the probationary period will be extended until the employee receives a passing grade. Employees in this category will be limited to the number of times they can take the test, and if they do not pass the test after the final opportunity, their employment will be terminated.
- B. The work and conduct of probationary employees shall be subject to review and evaluation, and if found to be below standards satisfactory to the department head, and with the approval of the Human Resources Director, the probationer may be terminated, reduced in grade or rank or replaced on the eligibility list. Such removal or demotion may occur at any time during the probationary period and shall not be subject to appeal to the Personnel Administration Board.
- (1) The department head shall notify the Human Resources Director in writing of their recommendation for approval or denial of regular status at least 10 days prior to the expiration of the employee's probation status. The Human Resources Director shall act upon the recommendation and notify the employee of regular status or termination within five working days of the decision.
 - (2) After successful completion of the probationary period and a recommendation of approval by the department head, the employee shall be put on regular status.

§ 68-10. Transfers, promotions and demotions.

- A. The Human Resources Director may transfer an employee to another department or another appointment involving similar qualifications, duties and responsibilities after consultation with the department heads affected by the transfer. Said transfer is nongrievable and not subject to appeal or review by the Personnel Administration Board.
- (1) A transfer to like duties in other departments does not constitute a promotion.
 - (2) An employee request for transfer must be submitted in writing to the Human Resources Director identifying the requested position and listing qualifications, with a copy to the department heads affected by the transfer.
 - (3) Any existing County employee who requests a transfer must be interviewed and extended preferential consideration if the employee meets the minimum qualifications as set forth in the

position description and has been certified by the Human Resources Director as qualified to fill the vacant position.

- (4) Probationary employees shall be eligible to transfer to another department. However, upon transfer, the employee shall be required to serve an additional six-month probation period in the department to which they have transferred, beginning with the date of transfer.
 - (5) The pay rate of an employee who transfers to another department and position classified in the same grade as they presently hold shall remain unchanged. Prior to the effective date of the transfer, the department head shall evaluate the employee for the time served in their department, append their comments to the evaluation, and submit them to the head of the department to which the employee is transferring. During the annual evaluation period, the employee shall be evaluated by their present department head. All evaluations conducted on the employee during the evaluation year shall be reviewed and signed by the department heads under which the employee worked.
 - (6) When the Levy Court abolishes a position as a result of a department merging with the state government, due to contracting positions to a private firm, or any other reason, the employee(s) affected by the abolishment of the positions will be terminated from County payroll and benefits and shall have one year from the effective date to apply for transfer to any vacant posted County position for which they are qualified. The affected employee(s) requesting transfer shall submit the request, in writing, to the Human Resources Director with a copy to the department heads affected by the transfer.
 - (7) Any employee may be reassigned by the department head to an existing or new position within their current department for which they are qualified and shall be required to assist in the training or transition of a new or other employee into their former position. Said reassignment is nongrievable and not subject to appeal or review by the Personnel Administration Board.
- B. Any advance in pay grade or increase in pay rate beyond the limits defined in the rules for the administration of the pay plan shall constitute a promotion. The pay rate of an employee who is promoted to a position in a higher pay grade shall be increased to the minimum range of the higher pay grade and, if such an increase does not result in at least an 8% increase, the pay rate of the promoted employee shall be increased by 8% above the employee's present rate of compensation.; If it becomes necessary in the judgment of the department head to promote an employee with less than minimum qualifications, the employee may be offered the promotion with an "intern status" at 5% below the minimum rate for that class. (If the intern status employee's current pay rate is above minimum rate, it will not be changed.) The department head and Human Resources Director will establish the requirements and time frame by which the promoted employee must meet the minimum requirements for that position. Once the employee meets those requirements to the satisfaction of the department head, the employee will be given the minimum pay rate for the higher grade .
- C. The department head may demote an employee whenever in the judgment of the department head the total performance of the employee or their conduct so warrants, whenever there is a lack of funds or whenever the employee requests a demotion and is qualified for the lower pay grade position. A reduction in pay grade or a decrease in pay rate below the minimum rate of a pay grade shall constitute a demotion. When the department head determines to demote an employee, they shall follow the procedures outlined in § 68-15, except for requested demotions.
- (1) If an employee is demoted from one classification to another due to poor performance or misconduct, their pay rate shall be reduced by 10% or to the maximum rate for the new classification, whichever is lower.

- (2) If an employee is demoted from one classification to another due to lack of funds, their pay rate shall be reduced to the maximum rate for the new classification or by 5%, whichever is lower.
- (3) If an employee requests demotion to a position in a lower classification, their pay rate shall be reduced by 5% or to the maximum rate for the new classification, whichever is lower. If an employee requests demotion to a previously held position in a lower classification, their pay rate shall be reduced to the salary previously received for the requested position.
- (4) The pay rate of a demoted employee shall be reduced effective with the next pay period following the demotion.

§ 68-11. Attendance policy; hours of work.

- A. The standard work week for employees shall be that which is established by the Levy Court, based upon recommendations of the Human Resources Director. When the needs of the County and/or department will be best served, the Department Head in consultation with the Human Resources Director may assign certain positions or classes to a work schedule which differs from that considered to be standard for the remainder of the employees.
- B. Part-time employment shall include all employment for less than the standard work week designated for that position or class. Part-time employment shall be performed only according to the schedules established by the department head in consultation with the Human Resources Director as may be required to accomplish the assigned functions of that department.
- C. All full-time employees shall be entitled to a lunch break and such rest periods as are determined by the Human Resources Director. Employees who are nursing will be entitled to lactation breaks in accordance with the law.

§ 68-12. Training and higher education.

- A. The Human Resources Director shall encourage the improvement of service by providing employees with appropriate opportunities for job-related training.
- B. Training programs may be made available in order to:
 - (1) Provide an employee with training to enhance skills and knowledge required to achieve optimum performance and/or certification in their current or next higher position.
 - (2) Acquaint an employee with rules, regulations, ordinances, policies, practice and standards of County service.
 - (3) Provide an employee with appropriate training to develop skills and knowledge required for a position within the same discipline to which they may desire to advance.
- C. Employees participating in approved training courses, sessions, conferences, workshops or seminars or any other similar job enhancement activity approved by the department head shall have normal working hours, traveling expenses, lodging, seminar or conference fees, tuition and similar expenses incurred during such approved activity paid by the County. Nonexempt employees shall be compensated for actual time participating in and commuting to such training courses based on the requirements of the FLSA.
- D. To be eligible for payment or reimbursement of a specific job-related training course, a written request must be submitted to the department head prior to commencement of course(s). The department head will evaluate the request and approve or deny payment for the course. If approved, the employee must provide evidence of satisfactory completion (certificate or passing grade) to

their department head and the Human Resources Director for inclusion in the employee's personnel file, at which time the employee will be reimbursed for the course and any books or specific materials required for the training course, ownership of which shall be retained by the County. If an employee attends such a training course(s) and resigns from their position with the County within a one-year period from the time of completion of the course(s), they may be required to reimburse the County for any funds paid for such course(s). For the purpose of this section it shall not be considered a resignation if the employee takes another position with the County.

- E. Employees shall be encouraged to achieve higher education to improve skills specifically related to their position. Limited tuition cost sharing may be offered to employees pursuing and successfully completing degree requirements, but shall not include books or class materials.
- F. Regular full-time employees achieving professional certification or an advanced educational degree in their field of responsibility with the Levy Court shall be eligible for an increase in pay up to 5% upon request of the department head and verification of award. The Human Resources Director and department head shall develop and maintain a rating point system and a corresponding percentage for pay increases based on the relative difficulty of achieving an advanced educational degree or professional training certification.

§ 68-13. Performance evaluations.

- A. Evaluation of the performance of each employee on probation shall be completed at least semiannually and on each regular employee at least on an annual basis, which is herein described as the evaluation year. The evaluation year shall begin and end as designated by the Human Resources Director. All evaluations shall be conducted with an official evaluation form authorized by the Human Resources Director.
- B. All such evaluations shall be conducted by the appropriate supervisor, reviewed and approved by the appropriate Department Head, if not the supervisor, and shall be signed by the employee upon completion of the evaluation.
- C. Performance evaluations are nongrievable and not subject to appeal or review by the Personnel Administration Board.
- D. Performance evaluations for each employee shall be filed with their personnel record and available for review by the department head.
- E. Evaluations shall be completed on a more frequent basis if it is determined by the Department and Human Resources Director to be in the best interest of the County to do so. Any employee receiving a less than satisfactory evaluation will be evaluated again by the supervisor or department head within 90 days to ensure correction of deficiencies. If deficiencies are not corrected within 90 days, the employee may be reassigned, demoted or terminated.
- F. The annual performance evaluation of unclassified employees shall be conducted by the County Administrator, who shall in turn be evaluated by the Levy Court. The evaluation form shall be individually reviewed and shall be signed by the unclassified employee upon completion of the evaluation. A report and copies of the evaluations shall be submitted to the Levy Court for its information and consideration.

§ 68-14. Disciplinary action.

- A. **Progressive Discipline:** Deficiencies in the performance of an employee based upon the position classification and description or misconduct committed on the job shall be remedied by a procedure for progressive disciplinary action as follows:
- (1) For a first offense, the department head or supervisor of the employee shall give an oral warning and maintain written documentation of the same.
 - (2) For a second offense, the department head or supervisor of the employee shall issue a written reprimand to the employee within five working days of learning of the offense, outlining the offense and serving a warning that subsequent offenses may result in demotion, suspension and/or termination. The employee shall have an opportunity to review, comment upon and sign the reprimand before it is sent to the Human Resources Director for inclusion in the employee's personnel file. If the employee refuses to sign the notification, the refusal shall be duly noted and witnessed. The employee should be informed that refusal to sign the notification does not alter the expectations outlined in the notification.
 - (3) A third offense shall constitute just cause for suspension, with or without pay, pursuant to the provisions of this chapter, after the employee is afforded a pre-suspension hearing. Such hearing shall be scheduled within five working days of learning of the offense.
 - (4) Subsequent offenses shall be just cause for further suspension, demotion or termination of employment pursuant to the provisions of this chapter; provided, however, that in the event of further suspension or termination, the employee shall be afforded a pre-suspension or pre-termination hearing, whichever is appropriate. Such hearing shall be scheduled within five working days of learning of the offense and held at a time and date selected by the Human Resources Director.
 - (5) If, in the County Administrator's and Department Head's judgement, disciplinary action needs to be escalated, such as when an employee has multiple offenses, the Human Resources Director has the discretion to bypass any of the steps above to recommend suspension, demotion or termination.
- B. **Immediate Discipline:** Serious deficiencies in the performance of an employee; gross misconduct that is committed on the job; repeated violation(s) of/or disregard for any rules, directives or procedures approved by the department head or policies or ordinances adopted by Levy Court; absence without leave; or conviction of a felony or Class A misdemeanor shall be just cause for:
- (1) Immediate demotion pursuant to the provisions of this chapter;
 - (2) Immediate suspension with or without pay pursuant to the provisions of this chapter, or
 - (3) Immediate termination of employment pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.
- C.
- D. **Pre-suspension hearing.** Prior to suspending a regular employee, the department head shall issue written notification to the employee of the intent to suspend with or without pay. Said written notification shall state the reason(s) why the employee is being suspended and shall include the date, time and place of a pre-suspension hearing before the department head or designee in order to afford an opportunity for the employee to respond to the stated reasons for the suspension. Said notification shall be drafted in consultation with and a copy sent to the Human Resources Director, who may also attend the hearing.
- E. **Pre-termination hearing.** Prior to terminating a regular employee, the department head shall issue written notification to the employee of the intent to terminate. Said written notification shall state the reason(s) why the employee is being terminated and shall include the date, time and place of a pre-termination hearing before the department head or designee, in order to afford an opportunity

for the employee to respond to the stated reasons for termination. Said notification shall be drafted in consultation with and a copy sent to the Human Resources Director and County Attorney, both of whom may also attend the hearing.

- F. Any employee may be placed on administrative leave with pay by the Human Resources Director during a continuing investigation as provided in this chapter.
- G. The imposition of progressive or immediate disciplinary action shall be based upon the severity of the infraction or conduct as well as other relevant factors as determined by the offending employee's department head or the Human Resources Director.
- H. Exempt employees shall not be suspended without pay for periods of less than one week.
- I. Nothing in these disciplinary procedures shall alter the at-will nature of employment.

§ 68-15. Tenure of service.

- A. The tenure of every regular employee shall be based on standardized evaluation reports prepared by the department head and reviewed and maintained by the Human Resources Director in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.
- B. Whenever there is lack of work or lack of funds requiring a layoff or reduction in the number of employees in a department, a reduction may be made in such job class or classes as the department head may designate, provided that within the designated department employees shall be laid off in inverse order of their relative length and quality of service, as determined by evaluation reports and records maintained by the Human Resources Director. Within each affected job class, temporary employees shall be laid off before probationary employees, and probationary employees shall be laid off before regular employees.
- C. Any employee may be demoted when, in the judgment of their department head, the employee's work performance justifies action short of termination. The demotion shall be to the next lowest available position for which the employee is qualified. The department head shall indicate the substantial reasons for the action in a written notification, discuss the decision with the employee, and shall file final copies of the notification with the employee and the Human Resources Director. The employee shall have an opportunity to comment upon the notification of demotion and forward any additional written comments within five days to the Human Resources Director and department head. The notification shall be signed by the employee indicating that they have reviewed it and understand its contents. If the employee refuses to sign the notification, the refusal shall be duly noted and witnessed but does not alter the demotion.
- D. An employee may be suspended by their department head with or without pay following a pre-suspension hearing. A suspended employee may not request a hearing before the Personnel Administration Board unless the suspension is for more than three working days, or unless the employee has already received a previous suspension within one year immediately prior thereto.
 - (1) When an employee has been suspended by a department head following a pre-suspension hearing, the department head shall within two working days of the hearing file with the employee a written notification containing a statement of the reason(s) for the action. The employee shall have an opportunity to see and comment upon the notification of suspension before it is sent to the Human Resources Director. The notification must be signed by the employee indicating that they have reviewed it and understand its contents. If the employee refuses to sign the notification, the refusal shall be duly noted and witnessed but does not alter the suspension.
 - (2) Upon receipt of a notification of suspension, the Human Resources Director shall review its contents to

determine whether the reasons for the action indicated by the department head are consistent with the provisions of this chapter. If the Human Resources Director determines that the suspension is not justified, the Human Resources Director may modify or rescind the suspension after consultation with the appropriate department head, or as provided in this chapter initiate a hearing before the Personnel Administration Board.

- E. Any regular employee may be terminated by their department head following a pre-termination hearing. When the department head decides to take such final action following a pre-termination hearing, they shall, within two working days of the hearing, file with the employee a written notification containing a statement of the reason(s) for the action. The notice shall inform the employee that they shall be allowed five working days to file a written request for modification to the Human Resources Director. If the Human Resources Director determines that the termination is not justified, they may modify or rescind the action following consultation with the appropriate department head.
- F. Progressive or immediate disciplinary measures may be imposed for a number of reasons, including but not limited to:
 - (1) Unauthorized use of working hours. This shall include pursuing any non-job-related activities during work hours without the permission of the department head.
 - (2) Unacceptable attendance, including an unreasonable amount of lost time or abuse of sick leave; absence without leave; or excessive tardiness.
 - (3) Unacceptable conduct by an employee. This shall include the following: conviction of a felony or Class A misdemeanor; insubordination; inefficiency and incompetency; knowingly giving false statements to any County employee or the public; acceptance of undisclosed gifts, gratuities or loans for personal benefit from organizations, business concerns or individuals with whom one has official relationships on business of the County government in return for special consideration; threatening, harassing or intentionally inflicting harm or distress to a County employee or member of the public while on County property or in the performance of one's official duties; two consecutive years of less than satisfactory performance evaluations; harassment, including sexual harassment; profane, obscene, insulting words or gestures toward the public or any County employee.
 - (4) Unfitness for work. This shall include the following: consumption of intoxicating beverages or illegal or nonprescription narcotic drugs while in the scope of employment, on County property or in County-owned vehicles; being under the influence of intoxicating beverages or illegal or nonprescription narcotic drugs while in the scope of employment, on County property or in County-owned vehicles; possession of or offering to others intoxicating beverages or illegal or narcotic drugs while in the scope of employment, on County property or in County-owned vehicles.
 - (5) Abuse of County property or the use of County supplies, materials, equipment or other property for personal purposes or securing the same for others.
 - (6) Gambling on County property or in a County-owned vehicle. This shall include the following: possession on County property or in a County vehicle of any device under any denomination by which any game of chance played for anything of value, or any other gaming device whatsoever; possession on County property or in a County vehicle of any books, device, apparatus or paraphernalia for the purpose of receiving, recording or registering bets or wages for personal profit.
 - (7) Violation of federal or state statutes, County ordinances, administrative regulations or department rules.

- (8) Loaning of money at interest to other County employees.
 - (9) Unlawful political activity or other activity as provided in this chapter.
 - (10) Any other conduct that the County deems unacceptable of a County employee. This includes off-duty conduct that may pose a threat to the workplace, such as harassment or threats of violence.
- G. The County Administrator shall be responsible for taking disciplinary action, up to but not including termination, against classified employees when deemed appropriate and as provided in this chapter. Unclassified employees may be terminated by Levy Court as provided in Delaware law.
- H. Whenever an employee is unable to work due to physical or mental incapacity or disability, the Human Resources Director may place the employee on a disability leave of absence for up to one year. If continued incapacity or disability prevents the employee from returning to work at the conclusion of the leave of absence, the employee shall be terminated. The County complies with all laws concerning disabilities, accommodations, and leaves of absence.

§ 68-16. Procedure of appeals.

- A. A regular employee may appeal a disciplinary demotion, a suspension of greater than three days or a termination any time within two calendar weeks after being notified that they are the subject of the adverse personnel action and a request by the employee for modification by the Human Resources Director has been denied. The appeal is to be filed in writing with the Human Resources Director, who will transmit it to the Personnel Administration Board. It should consist of an original and 10 copies (one copy to the department head, one copy to the County Attorney, one copy to the legal counsel for the Board, and seven copies for the Personnel Administration Board), and it should set forth the facts and reasons why the demotion, suspension or termination was unwarranted.
- (1) If the employee files an appeal and the Board has jurisdiction, the Human Resources Director in consultation with the Chair of the Personnel Administration Board shall schedule a hearing within a reasonable amount of time after receiving the appeal request notice. At the discretion of the employee, the hearing may be private or open to the public. A transcript of all proceedings during the hearing may be made should the employee be willing to bear the full cost of the preparation of such transcript. Otherwise, a general record of proceedings shall be prepared by Human Resources staff for the Board.
 - (2) The burden of proof in any hearing before the Board shall rest upon the department head or Human Resources Director, whichever may be applicable. All testimony shall be given under oath, and each side shall have a right of cross-examination. Witnesses may be sequestered in a different room upon the request of any party to the proceeding. Witnesses shall be assured freedom from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination and reprisal.
- B. If the Board finds the adverse personnel action is erroneous as a matter of law, arbitrary and capricious or otherwise unsupported by substantial evidence, the employee shall be reinstated to their former position without loss of pay.
- C. The Board's finding of facts and decision shall be made in writing within 10 working days after the conclusion of the hearing, and shall be forwarded to both sides promptly thereafter.
- D. Unclassified employees desiring to appeal termination shall do so in the manner as provided in Delaware law.

§ 68-17. Resignation and reemployment.

- A. An employee may resign by filing a letter of resignation with the Human Resources Director and their

department head. To resign in good standing, an employee should give advance notice of at least two calendar weeks. Failure to provide the requested notice may result in denial of reemployment.

- B. An employee resigning in good standing may be rehired or reinstated without advertisement or examination to any position in the same class if there is need for their services within two years after the date of resignation. Such employees will still be required to submit to a background check and drug and alcohol screening as part of their reemployment.

§ 68-18. Records.

- A. The Human Resources Director shall maintain adequate records of the proceedings of the Personnel Administration Board, their own official acts, the examination record of every applicant and the employment record of every employee. Employee records shall be kept in the Human Resources office and they shall remain confidential, except as provided by law.
 - (1) Employees may review personal employment records, including performance evaluations, by appointment and a reasonable number of copies shall be provided upon written request.
 - (2) Department heads may review individual employment records, including performance evaluations, for those employees working within or requesting transfer to their respective departments.
- B. The Human Resources Director shall maintain appropriate medical/health records and related insurance records separate from employment records and they shall remain confidential. Such records shall not be available for review by department heads and may be used only as provided by law.
- C. The Human Resources Director shall maintain appropriate records of a confidential nature separate from employment and medical records. Such records shall not be available for review by department heads and may be used only as provided by law.
- D. Records of disciplinary action shall be removed from an employee's personnel file and placed in the employee's confidential file after a three-year period.

§ 68-19. General prohibitions.

- A. No employee shall be appointed or promoted to, or demoted or dismissed from, or in any way favored or discriminated against with respect to employment because of their political or religious affiliation or belief, national origin, race, color, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, military or veteran status, disability, genetic information, housing status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.
- B. No person shall seek or attempt to use any political endorsement in connection with any appointment to a position in the classified service.
- C. No person shall use, directly or indirectly, any official authority or influence, whether possessed or anticipated, to secure for any person an appointment or advantage in appointment to a position in the classified service, or an increase in pay or other advantage in employment in any such position, for the purpose of influencing the vote or political action of any person, or for any consideration.
- D. No employee in the classified service or unclassified service shall be demoted, suspended, terminated or otherwise discriminated against in respect to their position because of refusal to pay, or promise to pay any assessment, subscription, or contribution, or perform any service for any political party, or solicit or take any part in soliciting any such assessment, subscription, contribution or service of any

employee.

- E. No employee shall, during working hours, take any part in the management of affairs of any political party or in any political campaign, except to exercise their right as a citizen, privately, to express their opinion and to cast their vote.
- F. No employee shall use their position as a means of implementing or promoting any political or personal gain.
- G. No person shall make any knowingly false statement, certificate, mark, rating or report with regard to any test, certification or appointment made under any provision of this chapter or in any manner commit or attempt to commit any fraud preventing impartial execution of this chapter.
- H. No person shall, directly or indirectly, give, render, pay, offer, solicit or accept money, service or other valuable consideration for, or on account of any appointment or proposed appointment, promotion or proposed promotion to, or any advantage in, a position.
- I. No person shall defeat, deceive or obstruct any person in their right to examination, eligibility, certification or appointment under this chapter, or furnish to any person any confidential information for the purpose of affecting the rights or prospects of any person with respect to employment in the classified service.

§ 68-20. Holidays. [Amended 9-22-2009 by Ord. No. 09-23; 11-23-2021 by Ord. No. 21-13]

- A. All nonexempt non-represented position classified employees, unclassified employees, and elected employees, except part-time employees and temporary employees or other excluded employees, shall be eligible for the day off on the following official Kent County holidays, with the specific date of observance to be determined annually by the County Administrator, and receive holiday pay equal to their regular rate of pay for eight hours, or seven hours as assigned:

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Presidents' Day
Good Friday
Memorial Day
Juneteenth
Independence Day
Labor Day
Election Day in even-numbered years
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Day
Day after Christmas

- B. When any holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding business day shall be considered the official Kent County holiday.
- C. When any holiday falls on a Sunday, the following business day shall be considered the official Kent

County holiday.

- D. If efficient operations require a nonexempt non-represented position employee's services to be performed on any official Kent County holiday, the employee shall be compensated at a rate double their regular hourly rate for any work physically performed on a Kent County holiday and receive holiday pay as provided in Subsection A, or in lieu of holiday pay may accrue equivalent hours of vacation leave if the employee requested such in advance on a calendar year basis. Whenever June 19 (Juneteenth), July 4 (Independence Day), November 11 (Veterans Day), December 25 (Christmas), or January 1 (New Year's Day) fall on a Saturday or Sunday on the calendar, a nonexempt non-represented position employee shall accrue vacation leave equal to any hours physically worked on these specific dates.
- E. For the nonexempt employee to be eligible for holiday pay, the eligible nonexempt employee must have worked on the last scheduled workday prior to and the next scheduled work day after said holiday unless the employee is on approved absence with pay in accordance with this chapter, or absent with pay with prior approval of the department head.
- F. If December 25 (Christmas) or December 26 (Day after Christmas) fall on a Saturday or Sunday on the calendar, the President of Levy Court can by declaration adjust the day on which the official Day after Christmas holiday is observed to the business day before or after the day Christmas is observed.

§ 68-21. Sick leave.

- A. Sick leave shall be granted to regular full-time employees for the following reasons:
 - (1) Personal illness or physical incapacity.
 - (2) Illness in the household of the employee requiring quarantine as certified by a physician or public health officer.
 - (3) Medical, dental or optical appointments which cannot be scheduled for after duty hours.
 - (4) Illness requiring care of the employee's child, spouse or parent.
- B. Full-time employees shall accrue sick leave at the following rate:

35-hour workweek employees	8.75 hours per month
40-hour workweek employees	10.00 hours per month

 - (1) Unused sick leave for full-time employees may accumulate up to a maximum of 120 working days.
 - (2) Full-time employees earning more than 120 work days of sick leave shall be credited one day

of vacation leave in exchange for each additional three days of sick leave earned.

- (3) Full-time employees achieving perfect attendance during any one calendar year shall be credited with one additional day of vacation leave for the following year.
 - (4)
- C. In the event of extended illness beyond accumulated sick leave and vacation, upon the recommendation of the department head, the County Administrator may grant an unpaid leave of absence (with or without employee benefits) or paid administrative leave in response to extraordinary circumstances and when in the best interest of the Levy Court and of the employee. Leaves will be considered in accordance with any legal requirements.
- D. After an absence of three consecutive working days, the Human Resources Director or department head will require the employee to present a statement from a licensed practicing healthcare provider certifying that the employee's condition prevented them from performing their duties. Sick leaves in excess of three days without medical documentation shall be charged to vacation leave, unless waived by the Human Resources Director.
- (1) An employee who is absent the day prior to or the day after a County-observed holiday may be required to provide the Human Resources Director or department head with a statement from a licensed practicing healthcare provider certifying that the employee's condition prevented them from performing their duties.
 - (2) An employee may be required to present a statement from a licensed practicing healthcare provider for absences less than three consecutive working days if the Human Resources Director or department head suspect abuse of sick leave.
 - (3) Sick leave documentation for routine sick absences should not include a diagnosis. However, for absences in conjunction with a medical leave of absence or as an ADA accommodation, extra information may be required so that the County can accommodate any restrictions and leave requirements.
- E. When absent on sick leave, it is the responsibility of the employee to promptly report their inability to be on duty. Except in cases of emergency where the employee is unable to do so, failure by an employee to notify their supervisor or department head prior to the time established for beginning work may result in loss of pay for that day or other appropriate disciplinary action.
- (1) Absence by classified employees for a fraction of a day that is chargeable to sick leave in accordance with these provisions shall be charged in increments not smaller than 15 minutes.
 - (2) An employee absent from work on a County-observed holiday while on sick leave, vacation leave, workers' compensation, or other authorized leave shall continue to accumulate sick leave and vacation leave at the regularly prescribed rate during such absence as though they were on duty.
- F. Sick leave entitlement shall include any accumulation and the days earned, computed as of the first day of illness. Thereafter, employees on sick leave can use sick time as it accrues but may not use sick time before it accrues.
- G. Sick leave shall be used concurrently with any allowable absence mandated by the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, as amended.
- H. Upon retirement from active service, layoff, or in the event of death, the employee or their estate will be compensated for 50% of unused sick hours to a maximum of 45 working days. If an employee leaves service for any other reason, the employee will not be reimbursed for unused sick leave.

- I. Individual balances of all sick leave credit and use shall be maintained as part of the payroll records of the County.
- J. Full-time nonexempt employees in the classified service are eligible to take up to three working days per calendar year of personal leave for undisclosed reasons, which shall not be charged against accrued sick leave. Personal leave hours may be used as follows:
 - (1) The employee must have completed the probation period prior to requesting personal leave hours.
 - (2) The employee must apply for personal leave hours to their department head at least 48 hours in advance, in writing, except in the case of an extreme emergency and only if such leave will not interfere with the proper operating efficiency of the County.
 - (3) Personal leave hours may be used consecutively.
 - (4) Personal leave hours shall be used in increments of not less than 15 minutes. Individual records of all personal leave hours used shall be reported to the payroll office by the department heads. Personal leave hour balances shall be maintained as part of the payroll records of the County. All personal leave must be taken during the year accrued. New classified employees shall receive a prorated allocation for the remainder of the year.
- K. Exempt employees are eligible to take five personal days annually for undisclosed reasons, which shall not be charged against accrued sick leave. Personal leave must be requested in writing at least 48 hours in advance to the department head, except in the case of an extreme emergency and only if such leave will not interfere with the proper operating efficiency of the County as determined on a case-by-case basis. Unclassified employees must request approval for use of personal leave from the County Administrator. All personal leave must be taken during the calendar year accrued. New exempt or unclassified employees shall receive a prorated allocation for the remainder of the calendar year.
[Amended 6-27-2000 by Ord. No. 00-16]

§ 68-22. Vacation leave.

- A. Vacation leave shall be granted to classified and unclassified employees according to the provisions of this chapter. Requests for vacation shall be submitted to the department head on approved forms provided by the Human Resources Director. Approval of vacation requests is at the discretion of each department head subject to the provisions of this chapter and verification by the payroll office that the employee has sufficient accumulated vacation time to cover the period requested.
- B. Eligibility for vacation with pay shall begin on the date of hire. Accruals will be applied at the end of each month.
- C. Accrual of vacation time shall be as follows:
 - (1) Regular employees beginning from their date of hire through their ninth year of continuous service, inclusive, shall accrue paid vacation at the rate of 8.75 hours per month for thirty- five-hour-workweek employees and 10 hours per month for forty-hour-workweek employees.
 - (2) Regular employees beginning their 10th year of continuous service through their 14th year, inclusive, shall accrue paid vacation at the rate of 10.5 hours per month for thirty- five-hour-workweek employees and 12 hours per month for forty-hour-workweek employees.
 - (3) Regular employees beginning their 15th year of continuous service through their 19th year, inclusive, shall accrue paid vacation at the rate of 12.25 hours per month for thirty- five-hour-workweek employees and 14 hours per month for forty-hour-workweek employees.
 - (4) Regular full-time employees beginning their 20th year of continuous service through their 24th

year, inclusive, shall accrue paid vacation at the rate of 14 hours per month for thirty-five-hour-workweek employees and 16 hours per month for forty-hour-workweek employees.

- (5) Regular full-time employees beginning their 25th year of continuous service and any consecutive years thereafter shall accrue paid vacation at the rate of 15.75 hours per month for thirty-five-hour-workweek employees and 18 hours per month for forty-hour-workweek employees.
 - (6) If a person is terminated or laid off, or in the event of death, the employee or their estate will be compensated for accrued vacation up to the maximum amount permitted in this chapter. In the event of voluntary resignation, two weeks' notice of intention to resign is required in order to be eligible for this payment in lieu of vacation. The aforesaid vacation allowance shall not, under any circumstances, be considered as regular wages used as the basis for calculating an employee's pension benefits or compensatory time.
- D. A maximum of the following hours of vacation may be accumulated: **[Amended 6-27-2000 by Ord. No. 00-16]**
- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| 35-hour-workweek employees | 210 hours |
| 40-hour-workweek employees | 240 hours |
| Exempt employees | 480 hours |
- E. Department heads shall schedule vacation leaves with particular regard to the operating requirements of the office, seniority of employees and employee requests insofar as the latter are practical. The scheduling of vacation periods is always subject to be changed at the discretion of the department head in the event of changing circumstances or emergency needs. Responses to requests for vacation shall be made promptly by the department head.
- F. Individual records of vacation leave shall be maintained as part of the payroll records of the County. All employee records of vacation leave shall be available to the employee and supervisor(s) with whom the records are concerned.
- G. To recruit candidates for all department head positions, the County Administrator, in collaboration with the Human Resources Director, may adjust vacation leave for candidates with prior years of service from another local, state, or government agency.
- (1) Upon receiving written confirmation of the candidate's active employment history and applicable experience, the County Administrator may grant the new hire a one-time accrual adjustment of up to, but to exceed, 120 hours of vacation leave at the start of employment only, at the County Administrator's discretion.
 - (2) This allotment does not increase the new hire's monthly accrual rate, which will stay consistent with the County's normal accrual schedule.

§ 68-23. Family and medical leave.

- A. After completion of 12 months of service (over a period of 7 years; the 12 months need not be consecutive) and working a minimum of 1,250 hours during the 12 months immediately preceding a leave, an employee shall be entitled to 12 workweeks (except in the case of leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness) of unpaid leave or a combination of paid and unpaid leave per rolling twelve-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any eligible leave as provided in the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), as amended, when taken as follows: **[Amended 11-13-2012 by Ord. No. 12-18]**
- (1) For the birth of the employee's son or daughter, and to care for the newborn child;

- (2) For the placement with the employee of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care, and to care for the newly placed child;
 - (3) To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition;
 - (4) For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of his or her job; and
 - (5) For any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in support of a contingency operation.
- B. With certain exceptions, upon return from FMLA leave, an employee shall be restored to their original position or to an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits and other terms and conditions of employment. To the extent permitted by law, if, on the day following the expiration of leave, an extension has not been requested and granted, and the employee has not returned to their position, the employee shall be considered to have resigned.
- C. Restoration of employment may be denied to a key employee if restoration of the employee to employment will cause substantial and grievous economic injury to the operations of the County. For purposes of FMLA, a key employee is a salaried (exempt) employee who is among the highest paid 10% of all employees in the County.
 - (1) Written notice shall be given to any key employee at the time FMLA leave is requested or when FMLA leave commences, if earlier, if the County intends to deny restoration to employment on completion of the FMLA leave. The notice will explain the basis for the finding for substantial and grievous economic injury will result, provide a reasonable time considering the circumstances in which the key employee is to return to work, and the urgency of the need for the key employee to return to work.
 - (2) If the key employee does not return to work in response to the notification of intent to deny restoration, the employee is still entitled to all rights under FMLA. These rights will cease when the key employee gives notice of intent not to return to work or at the conclusion of the twelve-week leave period.
- D. Employees on FMLA leave will continue to receive all benefits provided to other employees for the twelve-week leave period, and the County will continue pay for its portion of those employee benefits. Normal deductions will continue from payments of accrued sick and/or vacation leave for eligible dependent or other coverages. The employee must pay all premiums and other costs not covered by accrued sick and/or vacation leave in advance or upon return the costs will be deducted from the employee's pay, based on the employee's preference.

- E. Employees must contact their supervisor at least once per month while on FMLA leave and indicate their intention to return to work as scheduled; depending on the anticipated period of leave, an employee may be required to contact their supervisor more frequently. Employees choosing not to return to work at the end of the FMLA leave period shall reimburse the County for all insurance premiums paid by the County on the employee's behalf during the unpaid portion of the FMLA leave. However, the employee will not be liable to reimburse the County if the reason the employee does not return to work is due to the continuation, recurrence or onset of a serious health condition (either affecting the employee or a direct family member) that would entitle the employee to FMLA leave or does not return to work due to other circumstances beyond the employee's control.
- F. Seniority, vacation leave, sick leave and longevity shall accrue during FMLA leave. FMLA leave shall not be considered a break in employment for pension or other reason.
- G. Employees must provide 30 days advance notice to the department head when the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable or as soon as practicable. The employee must provide timely medical certification to support the request for leave, and recertification may be required in accordance with the law. Said certification must provide at a minimum the information suggested by the U.S. Department of Labor, so that eligibility for leave can be sufficiently established. If leave is taken due to serious health condition of the employee, a fitness-for-duty certification must be provided by the employee's physician prior to returning to work.
- H. Employees requesting and eligible for FMLA leave for a reason which would be allowable under another section of this chapter must use all applicable accrued sick leave concurrently with and during the FMLA leave period. At the employee's option, one week of sick leave may be retained.
- I. Employees on FMLA leave may not hold employment elsewhere unless approved by the department head.

§ 68-24. Military leave.

- A. Any employee of the County who is either inducted or who volunteers for active military service in the United States Armed Services shall be granted a military leave of absence without pay. Such employee shall be entitled to be restored to the position which they vacated without loss of seniority, provided that application for reemployment is made with the Human Resources Director within the period of time established by applicable law after honorable discharge from military service and provided that the employee is physically and mentally capable of performing satisfactorily in the position.
- B. In the event that a position vacated by a person entering the armed services no longer exists at the time they qualify to return to work, such person shall be entitled to be reemployed in another position of the same class in the County service.
- C. Any regular employee who is a member of the National Guard or an organized military service of the United States is entitled to full pay while on a military leave of absence not to exceed a total of 20 scheduled working days (or shifts for those whose working hours cross over a calendar day) in any one calendar year for the purpose of military training or special duty. Other employees will be granted leave in accordance with the law but will not be paid, but employees may choose to use any earned vacation leave. Unless military necessity makes advance notice impossible, the employee must request military leave at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the leave and submit their

request to the department head and Human Resources Director with a copy of the orders assigning them to active duty for training. **[Amended 4-8-2008 by Ord. No. 08-11]**

- D. Military training or special duty leaves of absences shall not be deducted from vacation leave or in any other way result in loss of seniority, accumulated sick leave or any other benefits provided to County employees. Military training regularly scheduled on the weekend may be deducted from the annual 20 days of military leave, vacation leave or taken without pay as the discretion of the employee, if they are normally scheduled to work on weekends. **[Amended 4-8-2008 by Ord. No. 08-11]**
- E. Any employee who is a member of an organized military reserve of the United States or the National Guard and who is ordered to perform emergency duty under the supervision of the United States Government or the State of Delaware shall be granted a leave of absence during the period of such activity. Regular employees shall receive the pay differential in the amount by which the employee's normal wages, calculated on the basis of a standard work week, exceeds any pay received as a result of performing duty. A copy of the employee's military pay voucher shall be submitted with his/her request for pay differential compensation.

§ 68-25. Compassionate leave.

- A. Compassionate leave time of five working days shall be granted to an employee upon the death of a lawful spouse or domestic partner, child, stepchild, foster child, parent or stepparent. This is paid time and does not require the use of vacation, sick or personal leave.
- B. Compassionate leave of three days shall be granted to employees upon the death of any other relative or other person with whom the employee resides at the time of death. This is paid time and does not require the use of vacation, sick or personal leave.
- C. Additional leave for the above relationships or for any other relationships may be charged to personal leave and/or vacation.
- D.
- E. Compassionate leave shall be granted only to employees who actually attend or personally plan the relative's funeral service. Employees may be required to submit a copy of the relative's obituary.
- F. Unclassified employees shall be granted compassionate leave without loss of pay, vacation, sick leave or personal leave to attend funeral services, memorial services or a viewing for subordinates, coworkers, professional associates, colleagues, elected officials and dignitaries.

§ 68-26. Special leaves of absence.

- A. Any County employee whose place of employment is in a town wherein they are a resident, active volunteer firefighter may, with the approval of their department head, be permitted to respond to fire

calls during their regular hours of employment without loss of pay, vacation leave, sick leave or personal leave. This time will not, however, count as hours worked.

- B. Any employee may be placed on an administrative leave of absence with pay by the Human Resources Director in consultation with the Department Head for such time as is required to conduct an investigation into alleged misconduct, performance deficiencies, repeated violation of rules, policies or procedures approved by the department head or Levy Court or arrest for a felony or Class A misdemeanor; to review documents or documentation; to evaluate job-related qualifications; to research charges or claims; or any other reason. While on administrative leave, the employee shall be prohibited from engaging in any job responsibilities or visiting the work site unless specifically directed in writing. Administrative leave shall not be construed as an adverse disciplinary action, and the employee shall continue to receive all employee benefits. Placement on administrative leave during a continuing investigation shall extend as necessary the amount of time permitted for the Human Resources Director or department head to take disciplinary action, if applicable.
- C. Any employee may apply for, and the Human Resources Director may grant, a leave of absence without pay for personal and/or undisclosed reasons for a period or periods not to exceed 30 days in any calendar year. Such leave of absence requests shall be submitted to the department head for consideration by the Human Resources Director. Employees must have used all accrued vacation before applying for a personal leave of absence.
- D. Any employee ordered to serve as a juror or witness in a court of law shall be permitted a leave of absence during their regular working hours for this purpose. Regular full-time employees will be granted this leave without loss of pay. Employees scheduled to work at times other than normal working hours shall be afforded a rest period of at least eight hours before a scheduled appearance in a court of law as a juror or witness. Employees are expected to return to work, if so scheduled, upon completion of their obligation to the court of law. Leave under this policy applies to those subpoenaed as a juror or a witness to another individual's case. It does not apply to those charged with an offense or who have filed a case of their own. In these situations, employees may use any available vacation leave.
- E. Upon the recommendation of the department head, the County Administrator may grant an unpaid leave of absence (with or without employee benefits) or paid administrative leave in response to extraordinary circumstances and when in the best interest of the Levy Court and of the employee. Leaves will be considered in accordance with any legal requirements. **[Amended 9-26-2023 by Ord. No. 23-21]**
- F. Leaves of absence without pay may be granted up to 12 months, and may be approved by the Human Resources Director if the employee proposes to embark upon a course of study or training for improving the quality of his/her service. Such leave of absence requests shall be submitted to the department head for consideration by the Human Resources Director.
- G. Any employee is entitled to a leave of absence for up to seven working days to serve as a bone-marrow donor and/or up to 30 working days to serve as an organ donor without loss of or reduction of pay, leave to which otherwise entitled, credit for time or service or performance appraisal evaluation. **[Added 10-10-2000 by Ord. No. 00-24]**

§ 68-27. Incorporation of certain policies.

Except as specifically provided herein, any personnel-related policy duly adopted by the Kent County Levy Court, as amended from time to time and to the extent not inconsistent herewith, shall be and is hereby incorporated into this chapter.

§ 68-28. Effective date.

This chapter shall become effective on July 1, 2026.



Human Resources Policy Review for Kent County Levy Court

November 2025



Gallagher

Insurance | Risk Management | Consulting

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Introduction

Background and Engagement Overview

The Levy Court was originally established in 1655 due to taxing requirements on landowners in Delaware, and Kent County was formally established in 1683 with evolving responsibilities over the centuries. Today, the County has 326 positions to meet the needs of the County's population of just under 200,000.

In February of 2025, Kent County Levy Court contracted with Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. to conduct a review of its employment policy documents. In some cases, policies had not been updated in thirty years, and even where the law itself has not necessitated policy updates, best practices that impact policy language regularly evolve.

Approach

Charlotte Jensen, Senior HR Consultant with Gallagher, worked with Kent County's Human Resources Director, Trudena Horsey, to identify all applicable policy documents. To date, over 200 pages of policy documents have been reviewed.

To capture recommended edits to policies, Gallagher used "track changes" and comment boxes within the policy documents themselves so that Kent County could directly see the impact of changes on policy language and to accept or reject changes with ease, leaving the County with a clean document upon completion. Because of the age of the documents, formatting issues persist on the revised documents; however, the system the County uses for managing policy documents will perform as required to eliminate the formatting concerns.

As of the date of this report, Ongoing meetings between Ms. Horsey and Ms. Jensen continue as recommendations are discussed, and meetings with key stakeholders occur as needed to ensure recommended changes align with actual practice and meet the needs of both the County and its employees. For purposes of this report, "key stakeholders" are members of the leadership team, including the County Administrator, Human Resources Director, Director of Administration, and most department heads and row officers.

Gallagher also has identified policies that the County does not currently formally have and will be assisting the County with developing language for those the County would like to add.

This summary report is specific to Chapter 68 – Personnel Policy. Additional reports will be provided as appropriate for subsequent policy documents.

Chapter 68 - Personnel Policy Review and Recommendations

General Changes

- As a point of modernization, in most cases, the word “Personnel” was exchanged for “Human Resources,” as the function is known as today. This change was not made in a few distinct areas, such as policy titles and the naming of the Personnel Administration Board.
- Another change for modernization was replacing “permanent employee” with “regular employee.” There have been a number of court cases where words like “permanent” were used against an employer because such words suggest to an employee that they can never be terminated. The use of “regular” keeps with the spirit of permanent by indicating the position is regularly staffed and isn’t temporary or interim, while removing the suggestion that the incumbent themselves is permanent.
- Gender specific language (him/her; his/hers; Chairman) was replaced with gender neutral language (them/their; Chair), in alignment with federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidance.
- Key stakeholders recommended condensing language that said “classified and unclassified employees” when the policy pertained to both. Those specific policies now just say “employees.”
- “Temporary, contracted, intermittent and seasonal employees” are now referred to as “contractual.”
- Defining family members as either “relative” or “near relative” has been merged into a single definition of “relative.”

Key Changes

68-6 Compensation

In letter C, the County Administrator is capped at 8% in how far above the minimum rate a new hire can be paid.

In letter J, stakeholders requested longevity awards be increased by \$500 per level.

68-7 Vacancies, Recruitments and Appointments

Background check processes have been updated to reflect the County’s actual practice, which is to initiate the background check on a new employee’s first day of employment. While this is not ideal – best practice is to not let a new hire begin employment until those processes are complete in order to minimize potential risk – the process the County must follow is time-consuming and could deter individuals from accepting job offers if their wait time to begin employment is too long.

Proposed language for the employment of relatives has been added to this section and the prior language has been revised to clarify the requirements when screening, hiring, supervising or promoting immediate relatives.

Language regarding marijuana has been added to drug testing provisions.

69-9 Probation

Language adjusted to align with the County's actual practices regarding probation, which includes when a department head can initiate a probationary period of a current employee and when probationary periods may be extended for those who have testing requirements that must be met before moving to a regular status. Absent this necessary extension, the formal probation period an employee can be subjected to was reduced from 18 months to 12 months. Anything beyond 12 months is rare and is usually not of value to either the County or the employee.

68-14 Disciplinary Action

Letter A now clarifies that it is related to progressive discipline, which follows a general process of verbal counseling to written warnings, to more significant actions, ultimately ending in termination. Letter B now specifies that it covers situations where immediate demotion, suspension or termination may be warranted. This better distinguishes the County's right to take disciplinary action as it deems appropriate to avoid "promising" employees that specific steps in a specific order will always be taken. Absent this distinction, it opens the door for employees to claim wrongful termination if they believe the County did not follow prescribed steps.

68-21 Sick Leave

The cap on use of sick leave to care for family members has been removed, as caps like this are not common and greatly reduce an employee's ability to use sick leave in ways that support their individual needs. To offset this, "immediate family" has been changed to specify that the use of sick leave is limited to child, spouse and parent.

Allowing non-exempt employees to charge personal leave to sick leave has been removed.

Advancing additional sick leave has been removed. The policy now reflects the County's newer "extraordinary leave" policy that will extend leave on a case-by-case but does not necessarily provide pay during the extension.

68-22 Vacation Leave

Gallagher researched current data regarding how much vacation leave an employee receives, and this research included the public sector as well as the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast corridors. Overall, the County's current accrual rates are consistent with market data but was low for new hires. As such, stakeholders removed the lower accrual rate for employees with 0 – 4 years of service. The 5 – 9 year accrual rate is now applicable for 0 – 9 years.

Additionally, the County Administrator will have the right to award a new hire Department Head a one time allotment of additional vacation upon hire, not to exceed 120 hours. This is to recognize years of service and experience at other government entities, is a one-time allotment, and does not alter the new hire's regular monthly accrual.

68-23 Family and Medical Leave

Language has been added that employees may not be employed elsewhere while on leave with the County, unless approved by the department head.

68-24 Military Leave

This policy has several updates to align with federal law. As written, leave was only granted to employees who had 90+ days of service with the County (the law applies to all employees) and allowed employees up to 90 days to apply for reemployment with the County (the 90-day timeline only applies to leaves that exceed 180 days; shorter leaves have shorter timeframes).

Letter C was modified to clarify that the County only pays employees up to 20 days of military leave, and after 20 days, an employee can choose (but cannot be required) to use vacation leave.

68-25 Compassionate Leave

Stakeholders agreed to the following changes Gallagher recommended:

- Policy broadened to not limit employees to leave solely for purposes for attending a funeral.
- Policy no longer has a distance requirement to determine how many days of leave an employee may take for non-immediate family members.

Changes with Budgetary Impact

Several recommended changes by key stakeholders referenced above would have an effect on the County's budget, as follows:

Longevity Awards

Longevity Awards		
Length of Service	Current Award	Proposed Award
5 – 9 years	\$500	\$1,000
10 – 14 years	\$1,000	\$1,500
15 – 19 years	\$1,500	\$2,000
20 – 24 years	\$2,000	\$2,500
25 – 29 years	\$2,500	\$3,000
30 – 34 years	\$3,000	\$3,500
35 – 39 years	\$3,500	\$4,000
40 – 44 years	\$4,000	\$4,500
45+ years	\$4,500	\$5,000

Vacation Accruals

Vacation Accruals (Per Month) for 35-hour Workweeks		
Length of Service	Current Accrual	Proposed Accrual
0 – 4 years	5.83 hours	8.75 hours
This proposed accrual rate change represents the current accrual rate for employees with 5 – 9 years of service. The change would have the accrual rate be effective for 0 – 9 years of service.		

Vacation Accruals (Per Month) for 40-hour Workweeks		
Length of Service	Current Accrual	Proposed Accrual
0 – 4 years	6.67 hours	10 hours

This proposed accrual rate change represents the current accrual rate for employees with 5 – 9 years of service. The change would have the accrual rate be effective for 0 – 9 years of service.

Sick Leave vs. Personal Leave

Sick Leave vs. Personal Leave		
	Current Approach	Proposed Approach
Non-exempt employees can use some sick leave as personal leave	Up to 3 sick days per year can be used as personal time	Remove this from sick time and have the 3 personal days be an additional , separate bucket

Accrued Leave Usage

Accrued Leave Usage	
Leave Type	Usage Allowances
Sick Leave	Sick leave shall be granted to regular full-time employees for the following reasons: (1) Personal illness or physical incapacity. (2) Illness in the household of the employee requiring quarantine as certified by a physician or public health officer. (3) Medical, dental or optical appointments which cannot be scheduled for after duty hours. Illness requiring care of the employee's child, spouse or parent.
Vacation Leave	Requests for vacation shall be submitted to the department head on approved forms provided by the Personnel/Human Resources Director. Approval of vacation requests is at the discretion of each department head subject to the provisions of the Chapter 68 Ordinance and verification by the payroll office that the employee has sufficient accumulated vacation time to cover the period requested.
Personal Leave <i>All personal leave must be taken during the year accrued. New classified employees shall receive a prorated allocation for the remainder of the year.</i>	Non-Exempt Employees are eligible to take up to three working days per calendar year of personal leave for undisclosed reasons, which shall not be charged against accrued sick leave. Personal leave hours may be used as follows: (1) The employee must have completed the probation period prior to requesting personal leave hours. (2) The employee must apply for personal leave hours to their department head at least 48 hours in advance, in writing, except in the case of an extreme emergency and only if such leave will not interfere with the proper operating efficiency of the County. Exempt Employees are eligible to take five personal days annually for undisclosed reasons, which shall not be charged against accrued sick leave. Personal leave hours may be used as follows: (1) Leave must be requested in writing at least 48 hours in advance to the department head, except in the case of an extreme emergency and only if such leave will not interfere with the proper operating efficiency of the County as determined on a case-by-case basis. (2) Unclassified employees must request approval for use of personal leave from the County Administrator.



Item Cover Page

LEVY COURT BUSINESS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

DATE: January 13, 2026

SUBMITTED BY: Lorri Tanaka, Administration

ITEM TYPE: Appointment

AGENDA SECTION: **Mr. Hertz:**

SUBJECT: Appointment to the Board of Adjustment

ATTACHMENTS:
[Ethan_Simpson_Nominee's Biographical Information.pdf](#)

NOMINEE'S BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I am recommending that the Levy Court appoint the below-named individual to serve on

the Board of Adjustment
(Name of Committee, Board, Commission)

Your term will continue until either I or my successor makes another appointment. This appointment will be confirmed by the Levy Court at their next scheduled business meeting.

NAME: Ethan Alexander Simpson **Phone:** 302.363.3941 Home
Work
esimpsoncontracting@gmail.com **E-mail**

MAILING ADDRESS OF PRIMARY RESIDENCE (including development or subdivision):

7 Reese Ave Harrington DE 19952

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS VOLUNTARY

EDUCATION: Auctioneering graduate
Lake Forest High School Graduate 2013
Mendenhall School of Auctioneering Graduate 2014

VOCATION:

Owner Ethan Simpson Contracting - Light Construction Work, Demolition, Conduit Installation, Grading, Driveway Installation

FAMILY:

Wife: Lauren Simpson
Children: Ella Simpson

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

City of Harrington Planning and Zoning Board member
Harrington Volunteer Fire Company
Active Calvary Wesleyan Church Member

QUALIFICATIONS SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO APPOINTMENT:

Self Employed / Property owner

Is it O.K. to Contact you
at your place of employment: ☒ ☐
(yes or no)

Paul Hertz, Commissioner 6th Dis
LEVY COURT COMMISSIONER