

**OSCEOLA COUNTY TAXPAYER ASSOCIATION**

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March 9, 2007

Osceola County Board of Supervisors  
Darwin Beltman, Chairman  
Osceola County Courthouse  
Sibley, IA 51249

Dear Supervisors,

On September 15, 1995, then county attorney Harold Dawson stated in his resignation letter that “..the demands of the County Attorney’s office had increased dramatically and felt it was difficult to serve as County attorney and be involved in private practice.” He then recommended the use of a full-time county attorney. Based on his recommendation Mr. Hansen was hired and a full-time position was established. Recent events point to the possibility that this position may not be serving the needs of our county. At the February meeting of the O’Brien county supervisors they were told that Mr. Hansen was putting in twenty hours per week and that his budgeted salary was \$42,900 for 2007-2008.

The Osceola County Taxpayer Association has recently completed a survey of eleven part-time Iowa county attorneys. Adjusting for the size difference in each of these counties and for the amount of time each attorney (and in some cases their assistants) commits to their official county duties, we found that on average, these eleven county attorneys could complete the official duties of the Osceola County Attorney’s office in 2 days, 3 ½ hours each week. Based on this survey, if the Osceola County Attorney worked at the average pace of these eleven County Attorneys, he should have over 2 ½ days per week of “free time”. Survey results ranged from 1 ¼ to 4 days of free time per week.

Please see the attached report. One of the attorneys reported that he did a time count study of his own, one said it was a “guesstimate”, but most said their percentages were a pretty fair estimate. Our sample of counties was chosen by a random walk through the county list. The only limiting factor was that they were chosen from those counties where ISAC lists their attorneys as part-time. We did not survey any county attorney who was full-time.

The report should be self-explanatory. You will see the average number of days needed to complete the weekly duties in Osceola County found in the middle of the report, on the row labeled (a) on the right of the page. It is 2.41 days, or 2 days 3 ¼ hours, or 48.1% of a 5 day week.

Osceola County taxpayers are being ill-served by paying a part time county attorney a full time salary.

Sincerely,

Kevin Wolfswinkel  
President

# Work-Load Survey Comparison of Part Time Iowa County Attorneys to Osceola County Attorney

County Name	Population	Name of County Attorney	Pct. of Week on Official Duties <sup>(1)</sup>	Work Days a Week Needed <sup>(2)</sup>	Osceola Population as a Pct of Other Population <sup>(3)</sup>	Osceola County Atty Equivalent Work Days in a Week <sup>(4)</sup>	Osceola County Atty Equivalent Free Days in a Week <sup>(5)</sup>
Buena Vista	20,156	Dave Patton	225%	11.3	33.7%	3.79	1.21
Carroll	20,898	John Werden	60%	3.0	32.5%	0.97	4.03
Franklin	10,731	Brent Symens	75%	3.8	63.3%	2.37	2.63
Grundy	12,380	Bradley Harris	75%	3.8	54.9%	2.06	2.94
Hardin	21,188	Randall Tilton	140%	7.0	32.1%	2.24	2.76
Pocahontas	8,112	Ann Beneke	88%	4.4	83.7%	3.66	1.34
Poweshiek	19,036	Michael Mahaffey	135%	6.8	35.7%	2.41	2.59
Winnebago	11,391	Robert Cooper	75%	3.8	59.6%	2.24	2.76
Winneshiek	21,188	Andrew Vandermaaten	100%	5.0	32.1%	1.60	3.40
Worth	7,715	Jeff Greve	60%	3.0	88.0%	2.64	2.36
Wright	13,648	Eric Simonson	100%	5.0	49.8%	2.49	2.51
<b>Osceola</b>	<b>6,791</b>						

**Number of Days Per Week, on Average, These Eleven Other County Attorneys Could Complete the Duties of The Osceola County Attorney's Office**

Standard Deviation

Percent of Work Week

2007-08 Osceola County Atty. Annual Salary  
Effective County Salary if Worked 5 Day Week

Recommended Osceola County `Part-Time' Salary  
O'Brien County Salary (2007-08)

Proposed Total New Salary

Average Iowa County Attorney Salary (2006-07)

Osceola County Attorney's Proposed Combined Salary Compared to State Average

**2.41** (a)

0.80 (b)

**48.1%** (c)

\$66,533 (d)

\$138,210 (e)

**\$32,028** (f)

\$42,900 (g)

**\$74,928** (h)

\$62,656 (i)

19.6% (j)

## Footnotes:

(1) Provided by local county attorney in telephone survey. If additional assistant(s) included in work load, the percent of time in a work week was adjusted accordingly

(2) Five days a week times column 1.

(3) Osceola County population divided by survey County population, to adjust for work load

(4) Column 2 x column 3

(5) Five days a week minus column 4

(a) Eleven county average (column 4) of the number of days it would take these attorneys to complete official duties in Osceola County

(b) Standard deviation of under 1.0 means the sample group (column 4) is pretty tight. The time estimates are not "randomly" scattered.

(c) Row a / five

(d) Osceola County Auditor

(e) Row d / row c

(f) Row d x row c

(g) O'Brien County Auditor

(h) Row f + row g

(i) ISAC

(j) (Row h - row i) / row i