

REGION

Gratiot selects new county administrator

By Linda Gittleman

Special to the Sun

From a slate of five candidates, Gratiot County Commissioners have chosen a former U.S. federal court clerk from Grand Rapids as their new administrator.

Contract negotiations with Tracey Cordes will begin soon, said Commission Chair George Bailey.

It's possible that the board could officially approve the contract at their Oct. 18 meeting, he added.

Cordes appears to be extremely qualified.

A graduate of Michigan State University, she has her law degree from Northwestern School of Law of Lewis and Clark College.

She's held a variety of jobs including county counselor in Oregon, along with trial court administrator and deputy county administrator, before ending up as Clerk of Court/ Court Unit Executive, U. S. District Court, Western District of Michigan.

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She held that position from 2009 until 2015, with a salary of more than \$160,000 a year.

Gratiot however, is offering a salary of \$80,000 to \$85,000 a year.

In her letter to the board, Cordes outlined why she is willing to accept a significantly lower salary.

“At this stage of my career, however, I am looking for challenges without regard to the climb,” she wrote.

“I have reviewed my career and identified that which I found most satis-

fyng. This reflection points me directly at service in my community, much like the work I did for Coos County Oregon, in local trial courts, and in my volunteer work.

“I do not require, nor expect, a six figure salary in order to serve,” she wrote.

Bailey said the county’s staff liked her.

“She’s a team player,” he said. “She’ll be a leader or manager.”

Indeed, some of the highlights mentioned in her resume were her collaborative leadership and inclusive management styles.

According to Bailey, the interview last month at the county courthouse was her first trip to Gratiot County.