

MAY 23, 1991, CONTINUED

he would like to form a committee to research ideas on this subject and bring a proposal to the Board for a revision in the policy. Rudd agreed to work with Tallent.

Chairman requested a recess at 10:05 a.m.

The meeting was resumed at 10:10 a.m.

Mr. Dave Renfro, Commissioner of Labor, and Mr. Gerald Edwards from the Tulsa office, were present to talk with the Board. Commissioner Renfro assured the Board of his desire to work closely with county governments and to establish a good working relationship. He talked about safety and continuing education to assist in that area. He noted in Oklahoma an accident occurs in the work place every three and one-half minutes.

Harris reported on the Board's efforts with safety training and on-going preventative programs such as safety shoes and hazardous materials training.

Renfro and Edwards asked that the Board notify them of any problems or request any assistance the Department of Labor could provide.

In a lengthy discussion of employee education assistance benefits, the Board debated whether or not graduate courses and other areas of study, such as law school, should be included in the tuition reimbursement program. Edwards and Tallent, two members of the Education Review Board, which makes a recommendation on approval of courses to the Board, both felt that law school should not be a part of the reimbursement program. However, it was noted that the Board has routinely approved graduate courses in the past and the Review Board has no problem with those courses.

Harris stated he was absolutely against approving assistance for graduate courses and that he did not believe that was the intent of the program. Selph remarked that we should encourage our employees, particularly those in certain fields, to obtain master degrees, and that he was supportive of the program. Dick noted that an important point to consider is that any course approved must be applicable to the employee's job for reimbursement. He also noted that we have some employees who are functionally illiterate and that we should do everything possible to assist these employees.

Another issue concerning tuition reimbursement benefits concerned the different amounts charged by different schools. It was the recommendation of the Education Review Board that the County reimburse employees for only 75% of the maximum amount approved by the Regents for Higher Education for State supported schools.

The Board concurred with this recommendation.

Motion by Dick, seconded by Harris, to approve limiting the reimbursement of tuition to 75% of the maximum amount approved by the Regents for Higher Education for State supported schools. Upon roll call, Dick, yes; Selph, yes; Harris, yes. Motion carried.