

MINUTES

BOARD OF BENTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Special Board Meeting – Budget Workshop
Wednesday, October 22, 2014, 9:00 a.m.
Commissioners' Conference Room
Benton County Courthouse, Prosser, WA

Present: Chairman James Beaver
Commissioner Shon Small
Commissioner Jerome Delvin
County Administrator David Sparks
Clerk of the Board Cami McKenzie

Benton County Employees Present During All or a Portion of the Meeting: Deputy Administrator Loretta Smith Kelty; Auditor Brenda Chilton; Clerk Josie Delvin; Deputy Clerk Elaine Osborne; District Court Administrator Jacki Lahtinen; Teri Holmes, IT Department; GIS Manager Mary Phillips; Treasurer Duane Davidson; Erhiza Rivera and Michelle Simpson, Treasurer's Office; Assessor Barb Wagner; Harriet Mercer and Lisa Overson, Assessor's Office; Paul Schut, Commissioners' Office; Coroner John Hansens; PA Andy Miller and Margaret Ault; District Court Judge Katy Butler; Dixie Jameson, District Court; and Aileen Coverdell, Auditor's Office.

Revenue & Expenditures

Mr. Sparks updated the Board on the proposed 2015-2016 budget and provided a copy of the preliminary Revenue and Expenditures Summary Sheet. He said that Ms. Smith Kelty and Mr. Schut had worked on expenditures to make sure position budgeting and benefits were correct and he worked on revenue. He said he added approximately \$1.3 million to the revenue, however it did not factor increasing the levy rate at this time.

He said they were running a little ahead on sales tax so he factored in a 3% growth the next two years for sales tax and criminal justice tax; made a slight revision on licensing and permits by cutting back and added \$760,000 to charges and services for a total adjustment of \$1.283 million. He said he confirmed all reimburseables were comparable with the base line budget and commented this was one of the best positions the County had been at in a while. He said they had tough union negotiations and had one-time payments but felt that holding the line had proved beneficial.

He stated that most of the adjustments for expenditures were within workers compensation and insurance management and they actually added \$370,000 to expenses and they only put in known salary and benefit increases.

He informed the Commissioners this was a base line budget only with no requests added.

Chairman Beaver asked how they would be addressing the new criminal justice tax because he wanted to be able to articulate to the community what the money was being used for. Mr. Sparks said it was not addressed in this budget but would go into a separate fund with mini budgets within that fund for each department that received money so there was full accountability.

Chairman Beaver said he was not interested in using that money to pay down the bed day rate, as was previously asked by one of the cities. Commissioner Small said he agreed. Mr. Sparks said he saw a problem with that request since all of the money was set to be spent.

Commissioner Delvin asked if Mr. Sparks knew how much of the increase from last budget was from personnel costs and how much was other growth. Mr. Sparks said there was a 6.9% growth in the biennial budget and he wanted to note there were some large increases in the Clerk and Auditor's offices, mostly due to a re-structuring and reformulation of the IT costs and data storage (biggest driver). He said he would get the salary growth and benefit growth information to the Board.

Chairman Beaver said he wanted to know if efficiencies in IT were addressed in this budget. Ms. Smith Kelty said there were one-time costs that were not included yet but there were some capital requests for those efficiencies.

Mr. Sparks said it was a base line budget and did not include capital requests but the capital budget did address some large infrastructure increases that would support their capital requests.

Assessor

Barb Wagner, Harriet Mercer and Lisa Overson presented the Assessor budget. Ms. Wagner addressed her increases, including the salary of one employee that was not reflected and would receive accreditation in February; social security and state retirement not reflected with part-time help and postage that was previously handled by the IT department. Mr. Sparks said the postage was already factored in and the social security was correct; only the \$6,000 for the employee was not yet factored in.

Treasurer

Duane Davidson, Erhiza Rivera and Michelle Simpson presented the Treasurer's budget. Requests included: shifting a Current Expense position 50% to the Treasurer's Investment Pool; \$2,800 increase to services for tax statement service provider to add delinquent tax statements to their service so they were not doing them in-house; Treasurer O & M Fund, requests for FICA and PERS (with revenues in the balance to cover that); REET Technology Fund, \$103,000 for a module that automated tax statements that should have been included in the baseline. Mr. Sparks clarified that if it was a capital request with a signed contract, it should be included in the baseline, however, hardware and software capital requests reset to zero each budget.

Coroner

John Hansens discussed his requests, including salary and benefit increases due to step increases, a vehicle fuel increase because the budgeted amount was exhausted in the first year; autopsies, his largest expense, was remaining the same; and a reduction in Professional Services. Additionally, he discussed his revenue, which included reimbursements from the State for some autopsies and charges to Franklin County for their use of Benton County's autopsy room.

He said he would be approaching the Board for a full-time employee to be paid from the new criminal justice tax. He said the addition of another full-time employee was critical to his office because he was short-staffed.

District Court/Probation Assessment

Judge Katy Butler, Jacki Lahtinen and Dixie Jameson presented the District Court/Probation Assessment budget. Ms. Lahtinen said their requests included: \$15,000 for Judge Pro Tem (there could be funding out of the criminal justice tax - currently they were combining dockets to reduce the pro tem charges); \$8,000 for Publications (all updates for law libraries used by judges and attorneys). Commissioner Delvin said he had sent out an email asking why there were two separate law libraries and Ms. Lahtinen said she would look into that. Additionally, they had several "leave to die" computers that were not in the computer replacement program and they were asking to have those replaced, as well as an increase in Professional Services for interpreter costs.

Commissioner Small asked about the possibility of using hybrid computers and there was also a discussion regarding the "leave to die" computers.

The Probation Assessment fund was self-funded and they were requesting \$15,000 for Judge Pro Tem; replacement of "leave to die" computers; and interpreter services.

Prosecuting Attorney

PA Andy Miller and Margaret Ault presented the Prosecuting Attorney budget. Mr. Miller said they were not asking for any new money but there was an Expert Witness line item added in the amount of \$10,000. He said they continued to work on efficiencies in his department with IT equipment.

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:20 a.m.

Clerk of the Board

Chairman

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Clerk

Josie Delvin and Elaine Osborne presented the Clerk's budget and Ms. Delvin discussed the following: moved funds around to cover shortages; move \$3,000 from temporary help funds into a regular position so this individual could work the front counter (split with collection fund); biggest hit in IT due to data storage. She said she brought her scan team who had scanned about 4 tons of documents and completely scanned OPD documents so they were now completely digital. She was still working on going paperless so she could start destroying documents, however, each year the number of hearings was increasing, as well as cases. She discussed with the Board in-house scanning versus outside scanning and the need for storage. Ms. Delvin indicated they were looking at 3-4 years before they could start to destroy documents.

She indicated she lost her full-time facilitator due to funding and now had an individual come in 3 hours a week on a contract basis. Additionally, she said the State was looking at replacing SCOMIS but local entities were disagreeing with the replacement of the state computer system, however, they were several years down the road at being converted to a new system.

Mr. Sparks asked if they could zero out temporary help if they moved the money to the regular position and Ms. Delvin said yes, in both Current Expense and Collection Fund.

WSU/Benton County Extension

Marianne Ophardt presented the WSU budget and discussed the following requests: new laptop computer that was damaged (it was not due to be replaced); Contract Services due to outreach coordinator position (included request with new position and what it would be without the position; fiber optic cable between WSU Extension and Courthouse for network upgrade (now rely on Wi-Fi); adjustment by moving money from messenger service to postage.

Juvenile

Judge Swisher and Darryl Banks discussed the Juvenile enhancements that centered about safety, security and minimization of liability:

- Security increased with a second armed security person in the Courtroom
- Detention medical services – coverage on weekends and holidays for a few hours
- Training – needed for impact to relief and overtime budgets in detention

Commissioner Small asked about the issue concerning medical services and whether they had had asked what other Juvenile facilities were doing. Mr. Banks said that some facilities had full-time nursing staff but it was an issue across the state.

Superior Court

Pat Austin and Judge Swisher presented the Superior Court budget and the following requests:

- Salaries/benefits – asking the bi-county cola and benefits be negotiated with Franklin County and be comparable with Benton County rates for 2015-16.
- Positions requested – ½ fte guardian case manager (will make contact with Human Services to see if there was an opportunity to get funding for that from for developmental disability funding)
- Staff interpreter – (be changed from contract interpreter to staff interpreter – no new funds would be needed – if approved, it would be moved from contract services to staff and the remaining funds would be used for contract services and freelance)
- Adult Drug Court – want to fund at 30-person level; waiting for prioritization for criminal justice funding for the adult drug court. Mr. Sparks said it was currently funded from Vitrification fund.

Additionally, Ms. Austin said the following would be presented to Franklin County should any positions be funded in 2015 through the criminal justice sales tax: 7th Judge – earliest it could be funded in Benton County was April; .5 FTE Court Commissioner; Adult Drug Court.

Ms. Austin said the Trial Court Improvement Fund was budgeted at \$400,000 (approximate amount of funding to be brought in).

The Board briefly recessed, reconvening at 10:03 a.m.

Sheriff

Sheriff Keane, Undersheriff Hatcher, and Julie Thompson presented the Sheriff's budget requests as follows:

Dept. 118 – Sheriff Administration - moved money around to better manage budget; only request was for Adobe Pro license.

Dept. 119 – Sheriff Clerk & Records - request for Adobe Pro license software and moved positions from other departments into this department.

Dept. 120 – Sheriff Custody - request for license software; moved \$30,000 from line items to replace chairs and Taser replacement.

Dept. 121 - Sheriff Patrol

- Replacement of bullet proof vests
- Swat ammunition – new line item
- Taser replacement
- Training for add'l polygraph examiner (one-time expense)
- WA State criminal justice training commission (academy training)
- Scanner
- Patrol tablets

Dept. 125 – Traffic Control – vehicles

Boat/Canine Patrol

Mr. Sparks said he didn't know if the fund could sustain the expenses related to it and it was not budgeted in Current Expense. He said the Board would have to address it one way or the other. Sheriff Keane said the grant got cut that sustained the fund, however, in order to receive funds for boater registration, they had to have a boat patrol program.

Auditor

Brenda Chilton thanked the Board for the recent remodel and reorganization in Auditor's office and said she was only asking for IT related requests. Ms. Chilton then presented the Auditor's office strategic plan as follows:

- Going forward with display monitors
- Transitioning mail room to Auditor responsibility
- Financial Services – P-card program was becoming a model for other counties
- IRS Audit – payroll returns – no findings
- E-vouchering
- E-time sheeting
- Direct deposit legislation

- Elections – security cameras and webcams; mobile application for election results; a grant for ballot marking tool (overseas/military – electronic voting)
- Technology Summit – State was seeking to go to singular system for voting and tabulation; may require purchase of additional equipment and/programs
- Licensing – expanded quick title program
 - Automated inventory tool
 - State’s business and modernization program - invited to participate
- Recording & Archives – launching credit card services this week; development of archives and records program

The Board thanked everyone for their presentations and commented the requests seemed realistic.

Mr. Sparks said he wanted time to work with Ms. Smith Kelty and Mr. Schut and to talk again with the Board at next Tuesday’s meeting. He said the Board should consider whether it wanted to keep the levy rate the same (it was not included) and whether to consider some of the capital requests (they used the Vitrification fund for some of those). He said they would try to have a list of items and he would talk to some of the departments about questions he had.

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:47 a.m.

Clerk of the Board

Chairman