

MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
DEPARTMENT BUDGET MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2018
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING – BILL LUXFORD STUDIO (ROOM 113)
10:00 A.M. OR IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE BOARD OF COMMISSINERS MEETING

Advance public notice of the Board of Commissioners meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board and the Lancaster County, Nebraska, web site and emailed to the media on April 20, 2018.

Commissioners present: Todd Wiltgen, Chair; Jennifer Brinkman, Vice Chair; Roma Amundson, and Bill Avery

Commissioners absent: Deb Schorr

Others present: Dennis Meyer, Budget & Fiscal Officer; Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer; Ann Ames, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer; and Nicole Barrett, County Clerk's Office

The Chair noted the location of the Open Meetings Act and opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

1) Adult Probation (674)

Dennis Meyer, Budget & Fiscal Officer, explained that the State pays for Adult Probation employee costs and the County pays for operating and capital costs. Jeff Curry, Chief Adult Probation Officer, provided an overview of the budget noting the population served has increased to 1800-1900 on any given day.

Curry explained that the biggest increase in the budget was printing and copying expenses and they are working to decrease this by going paperless. The biggest decrease in the budget was postage. Wiltgen asked if the printing and copying cost would have increased with the old machines. Curry estimated that it would have. Meyer noted that the Budget & Fiscal Office will be monitoring the printing and copying expenses across all departments.

Meyer asked if Adult Probation has any additional appropriations for this year. Curry responded that he does not foresee any. Wiltgen asked where they project the current budget ending. Curry indicated they are looking at returning approximately \$36,000 based on the Pre-sentence Investigations/Reports (PSI) contract and the \$3,000-\$4,000 in postage savings.

Discussion followed on the PSI contract. **Note:** Lancaster County contracts with the State of Nebraska Administrative Office of Probation for an additional probation officer to conduct PSIs in order to decrease the time needed to complete PSIs for inmates housed by Lancaster County Corrections. Curry noted that the PSI goal for "Average Days to Completion for Defendants in Custody" is less than 40 days. They have met this every month except December, which was 41.37 due to the holiday schedule. March was not reflected on the report but came in at roughly 38 days.

Wiltgen asked if there would be additional savings if the County invested in another PSI officer. Curry opined that the officers are currently at capacity and an additional judge would need to be hired for that to result in cost savings.

Brinkman asked for clarification that the County is receiving \$100 in savings for every dollar invested. Meyer and Curry confirmed that is correct thus far, but it will actually be higher by year end. Curry shared that Douglas County is looking into this PSI model and the option to implement it there.

Meyer reminded the Board that the contract is set up annually and billed in June. Wiltgen stated that it is the Board consensus to continue the PSI contract.

With regard to the microcomputer request, Curry said he would like to replace ten old computers primarily because the software is getting old. He noted that the State is moving forward to upgrade the software on the Department's computers. In response to Meyer's inquiry, Curry stated they have computers for all 68 employees plus six additional in the computer lab. He stated that both he and Information Services (IS) Division feel good about the replacement number of ten. Discussion followed on the computer lab usage.

Curry noted that the biggest change to the Service Based Budget is a shift the Department is seeing in more high risk clients as opposed to low risk clients. Curry responded to Meyer's inquiry about an increase of probation officers by stating that due to Legislative Bill (LB) 605 allocations there is an annual increase for officers. **Note:** LB 605, which was approved by the Legislature in the 2015-2016 Legislative Session, changed classification of penalties, punishments, probation and parole provisions, and provisions relating to criminal records and restitution. This is the last year for the LB605 allocations. The State has not yet told the County how many new officers they will get from the allocation, but their current caseloads are at maximum or above. Curry does not foresee more than two or three officers being added.

Wiltgen noted that this year the Board supported LB977 (Make post-release supervision optional for Class IV felonies) and would consider supporting similar legislation again next year. Curry stated that it would not affect the Department's population. According to its latest analysis, Class IV felonies are the highest risk and a very difficult population.

2) Emergency Management (693)

Meyer noted that the total Emergency Management budget is down 3.6%. Jim Davidsaver, Emergency Management Director, and Mark Hoskins, Emergency Management Chief Deputy, provided an overview of the budget. Davidsaver noted significant savings in the geographic information system (GIS) and automotive liability insurance, as well as an anticipated savings once the Department moves to its new building. Rent in the new location is lower and parking is free.

Discussion followed on the increase in electrical costs for sirens and the benefits of moving to solar powered sirens, as well as the radio system. Davidsaver reminded the Board that a radio system had been budgeted for this year, but it will be installed this summer and should come to full implementation in the 2018-19 fiscal year.

Meyer confirmed with Davidsaver that there will not be any additional appropriations this year and reminded the Board that the Emergency Management budget is a 50/50 split with the City of Lincoln. Revenues were discussed. Davidsaver explained that federal Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) funds first reimburse the County 50% of employee salaries and benefits, then a department can apply for a re-appropriation to cover qualified operating expenses submitted in a timely manner. The latter is contingent on remaining funds after the salaries and benefits allocations are paid. EMPG funds are considered a grant to be spent on emergency management projects. Depending on the amount of money available, his department may be able to use some EMPG funds to pay for the radios and save future budget money. In response to Avery's inquiry, Davidsaver explained that the EMPG funds are discretionary and the Department can entertain any funding requests from local departments as long as the money is tied to emergency management.

Meyer confirmed that Emergency Management does not anticipate any personnel changes.

With regard to the microcomputer request, Davidsaver said he would like to replace three old computers, which would keep the Department on a good replacement rotation.

In regards to the Service Based Budget, Davidsaver said no new budget items have popped up and his department has done a good job of developing the list of services.

Discussion followed on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant funds, specifically the time delays in receipt of funds (up to five years) and the impact on the County.

Other Business

Brinkman said she has received an email from the Nebraska Association of Counties (NACO) regarding the passage of LB760 (Change the Volunteer Emergency Responders Incentive Act). The Board is required to supply a verified list of county emergency volunteers that qualify for income tax credits within 30 days. Davidson stated the data is available with attendance records; he will compile it.

3) Juvenile Probation (673)

Meyer noted that the Juvenile Probation and Drug Court budgets are set at a 4.9% increase. Lori Griggs, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, and Autumn Crable, Office Manager, provided an overview of the budget and what is driving those numbers. They pointed out that the budget is solely operating costs with no personnel expenses. Griggs noted they have requested work station tack boards, but stated that request could be delayed until later if necessary. She said the Department is prioritizing computer requests and has a five-year rotation plan.

Griggs provided a quick overview of the Juvenile Drug Court and expenditures for specialty items such as graduation.

Meyer inquired about the number of Juvenile Probation employees. Griggs said the staffing level has stayed the same following the 2013-14 transition year when they took responsibility for the truancy youth from the Office of Juvenile Services (OJS) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The truancy counts have been reduced from 200 to 64. This is attributed to the prevention

and early diversion efforts made by Sara Hoyle, Human Services Director, and Bruce Prenda, Chief Deputy County Attorney, which have helped to keep formal filings out of the Court. The overall number of cases has been reduced from about 800-600, which has resulted in a much better caseload.

In response to Meyer's inquiry regarding the current budget, Crable stated they will make the budget or end the fiscal year about \$4,000 under.

Discussion followed about the office equipment budget request, specifically tack boards, with Griggs providing an explanation of the work spaces and current needs. Wiltgen inquired about the ability to fund this request out of the Building Fund. Meyer agreed to move it to the finalized Building Fund budget. The quote from Office Interiors & Design (OID) for \$9,718.02 includes installation, labor and materials. Meyer asked Griggs if the Department needs any budget request in the Office Equipment line item after the tack boards are moved to the Building Fund. Griggs stated that they would like to keep \$1,000 in the budget in the event something breaks. She also noted that the Purchasing Department is aware that they were getting the quote.

With regard to the microcomputer request, Griggs said she would like to replace eight old computers and six Chromebooks. The Department has been using notebooks from 2009-2010 and would like to replace them with Chromebooks that have Microsoft Office installed for better functionality and cost effectiveness. Additionally, the Department needs two laptops. Crable explained the previous acquisition of the old computers and the IS recommendations. In response to Meyer's inquiry, Crable stated that the software update requests will not get the Department fully current, explaining they have developed a five-year rotation to do so. Like Adult Probation, the Juvenile Probation Department is part of the discussion to have the State upgrade computer software in the future. Crable stated the Department has 72 total computers (67 for employees and five in conference rooms). Meyer said the rotation may need to increase in the future to more than eight per year.

In regards to the Service Based Budget, Griggs stated that the Department staff is statutorily based.

Other Business

Griggs invited the commissioners to attend the Broad Stakeholder Presentation by the Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice on April 25, 2018 at 2:30 p.m. on the third floor of the 605 Building (605 South 10th Street). Brinkman, Amundson and Avery indicated plans to observe the presentation. There will be a written executive summary available to be shared after the session.

Wiltgen noted that future Budget Meetings will be held on Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. or immediately following the County Board of Commissioners Meeting.

4) Adjournment

MOTION: Brinkman moved and Amundson seconded to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 a.m. Avery, Brinkman, Amundson and Wiltgen voted yes. Schorr was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

Dan Nolte
Lancaster County Clerk