

**MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
DEPARTMENT BUDGET HEARINGS
CONFERENCE ROOM 113
FIRST FLOOR, COUNTY-CITY BUILDING
THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2000
8 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Kathy Campbell, Chair
Larry Hudkins, Vice Chair
Bernie Heier
Linda Steinman
Bob Workman

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer
Dave Kroeker, Budget and Fiscal Director
Susan Starcher, County Clerk's Office

JUVENILE COURT

Present were Judge Tom Dawson, Judge Toni Thorson, Judge Linda Porter and Leslie Lee, Bailiff.

Judge Dawson stated there had been an increase in petitions. He said over the past two years Lancaster County has had more filings than Douglas County and if the trend continues to increase they will need another judge.

Steinman asked Judge Dawson if he had visited with Lori Griggs, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, regarding overcrowding in Juvenile Court and the possibility of diverting juveniles before they get to court.

Judge Dawson stated Griggs had given him documentation regarding diversion services.

Judge Thorson stated she felt one of the reasons they are seeing an increase in petitions is because the City is filing more of them.

Judge Dawson noted he had visited with John McQuinn, Chief Assistant City Prosecutor, who indicated that the City wouldn't be filing smoking tickets in Juvenile Court. They would be filed in County Court instead.

(Hudkins entered.)

Judge Dawson stated they are seeing the largest increase in their budget in the line items for legal services and boarding contracts.

Kroeker distributed documentation from the Public Defender (Exhibit A) noting that Dennis Keefe, Public Defender, figured approximately \$531,000 for Juvenile Court's legal services budget.

Judge Dawson concurred.

In response to a question asked by Campbell, Judge Dawson stated that they have \$8,429.63 in outstanding attorney fees for May which represents fees approved by the Court that haven't yet gone through the system.

Also outstanding is \$82,000 in relation to group homes.

Judge Dawson stated their expenditures would be approximately \$820,000. He said they currently have \$655,000 budgeted and an additional \$82,000 which could be used.

Kroeker asked the judges if they thought they could refer more juveniles to the Office of Juvenile Services (OJS) next year.

Judge Porter indicated she has been referring a lot of juveniles to OJS.

Judge Dawson stated that the Office of Juvenile Services agreed that they would try to attend the dispositional hearing if there was an indication that Juvenile Court would commit the youth to OJS.

Kroeker asked the Board if they wanted to leave Line Item 3060 (Boarding Contracts) at \$689,000.

Judge Dawson stated he would like to try to stay under the \$689,000. He said if OJS continues to be a potential placement the \$689,000 is a realistic figure.

Campbell suggested that the Juvenile Court judges, the County Board and Gordon Kissel, Legislative Consultant, meet on a quarterly basis to discuss options regarding juvenile issues.

Board consensus to decrease boarding contracts to \$600,000 with review at the end of the first quarter and at mid-year.

JUVENILE PROBATION

Present was Lori Griggs, Chief Probation Officer.

In response to a question asked by Heier regarding monies for training/meetings, Griggs stated that the State covers training.

Steinman suggested that the Families First and Foremost program may be able to provide training through a Family and Youth Investment (FYI) worker.

Kroeker referred to Line Item 3076 (Other Contracted Services) and stated it included the hiring of two probation officers for monitoring.

In response to a question asked by Campbell, Griggs stated the detention screening policy is in place.

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Present was Charles Willnerd, Lancaster County Agricultural Society Building Committee Chair and Leon Meyer, Managing Director of the Event Center.

Willnerd gave a brief update regarding the construction of the Event Center noting the following:

- ▶ Approximately \$69,000 is owed to the City for annexation
- ▶ Approximately \$75,000 is needed for water main service

In response to a question asked by Hudkins regarding sales tax, Willnerd stated it would be approximately \$600,000.

Heier asked about total outlay to obtain City services.

Willnerd stated he would put that information together and bring it back to the County Board.

It was noted that a \$54,000 deceleration lane would also need to be constructed on North 84th Street.

Willnerd asked if adjustments could be made to the One and Six Year Road and Bridge Improvement Program to include the blacktopping of Havelock Avenue.

Campbell stated the cost would come from the County's budget, not the County Engineer's.

Willnerd referred to documentation distributed entitled *2000-2001 General Budget Form Worksheet* (Exhibit B). He said they would begin the year with a negative cash balance because they are using monies from the General Fund to pay some overhead expenses for the Event Center project. Willnerd stated they would need to borrow those monies and that there would be some delay in receipt of funds.

Willnerd stated the Finance Committee used a four percent increase in the budget and the total property tax requirement is \$146,495.

As for donations, Willnerd said, they currently have \$410,000, however, they did receive a recent commitment of \$25,000 and a verbal commitment of \$50,000.

Regarding the Building Fund, Willnerd stated they would have approximately \$1,000,000 on deposit and that they would have at least \$1,000,000 in payables on present contracts. He said in order for them to complete Phase I they will need approximately \$3,800,000 which includes parking and additional costs. Willnerd stated it would also include some interest costs.

Workman asked if anyone had visited with the Mayor in regard to diverting funds from the Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD).

Campbell asked how the cost went from 2.5 million dollars to 3.8 million dollars.

Willnerd stated he had to add interest into the 2.5 million dollars.

Campbell asked if the \$3.8 million could be spread out over a period of time, such as a bond issue, or done through a NACO lease.

Willnerd stated he didn't know if they could do a NACO lease or take on bonded indebtedness as an Ag Society. He stated he had visited with National Bank of Commerce regarding the financing of \$3,000,000 and the interest would be approximately \$550,000 per year over a seven year payback.

Campbell stated she would like to see more information.

Kroeker stated if the Ag Society can't issue bonds there would be no market for the bonds because they wouldn't have any ability to service them.

In response to a question asked by Campbell about a NACO lease, Kroeker suggested that the Ag Society contact Bill Giovanni, with Ameritas, to discuss options in the financing area.

Hudkins stated he felt that by entering into a NACO lease they would be postponing debt and incurring interest. He stated the County can borrow cheaper than the Ag Society could.

He said he agrees with Commissioner Workman with regard to diverting \$2,000,000 of funds from the RTSD which was to be used for the Firth viaduct. Hudkins also suggested that the Board review the funding for the rural fire districts to see if it's possible that their budgets could be decreased to allow additional monies for the Ag Society Event Center project.

In conclusion, Willnerd stated the Event Center would return a lot of the money back to the community each year, especially the City of Lincoln.

VISITORS PROMOTION

Present were Mark Essman, Director of the Convention and Visitors Bureau; Paul McQue, President of the Chamber of Commerce, Gary Powell, Accountant for the Chamber of Commerce and Jerry Barnes, Visitors and Promotion Committee representative.

Documentation was distributed regarding the proposed budget for the Convention and Visitor's Bureau (Exhibit C).

Essman stated they tried to budget in areas where there would be a need during the upcoming year. This year, he stated, is the National Roller Skating Championships. There is also a possibility that they may book Americruise for a two year period.

Essman stated their budget reflects a six percent increase, with the exception of employee benefits.

In response to a question asked by Campbell, Essman said they have added approximately 4,000 rooms over the past year. He added that by the end of the summer the count would be approximately 4,400 rooms. Essman said since April he has visited with eight hotel operations who are interested in locating in Lincoln/Lancaster County.

Hudkins inquired about the increase in maintenance, furniture and equipment .

Powell stated they had to purchase computers and that there is the possibility that they may need to purchase more next year. He added that they are also looking at the possibility of purchasing a color printer.

In response to a question asked by Campbell regarding the average occupancy rate, Barnes stated it runs between 62 to 63 percent.

Kroeker inquired about the percentage of increase in revenues.

Barnes stated about 12 to 14 percent.

CLERK OF THE DISTRICT COURT

Present were Kelly Moore Guenzel Handlos, Clerk of the District Court, and Elly Carrico, Chief Deputy.

Handlos stated there were no changes in the budget other than a request for a full-time employee to work with Juvenile Court.

Handlos also stated the budget reflects a decrease in temporary services which may possibly enable her to add a file clerk.

Heier inquired whether split shifts could be created to avoid overtime.

Handlos responded that she has polled her office and no one is willing to work after 5 p.m. because of family responsibilities.

In response to a question asked by Workman regarding a \$31,000 increase in office supplies, Handlos stated the expenditure is for case file orders.

Campbell inquired about the increase in the Conference Budget (page 10).

Handlos explained that she joined the National Association for Court Managers and sits on a national committee consisting of four judges and seven court administrators. She said that she would be attending all meetings and would like the monies to come from the County budget.

In response to a question asked by Workman, Handlos stated the National Association for Court Managers reviews the different courts and prepares comparisons.

Hudkins inquired about bank reconciliations.

Handlos stated everything is reconciled and up to date. She added that the bank reconciliations are completed on a daily basis.

Steinman asked why the revenues are down.

Handlos stated they have not received revenues from Health and Human Services (HHS) since February.

Campbell suggested revising the figure.

Kroeker concurred.

Handlos commented that all salaries for court services staff were increased and two classifications would be created. This would create an adjustment in the line item for salaries.

Kroeker stated he would make salary and revenue adjustments.

MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

Present were Kelly Moore Guenzel Handlos, Clerk of the District Court, and Elly Carrico, Chief Deputy.

Kroeker stated the only change is a \$2,900 decrease in office equipment.

Carrico stated they would like to request a laptop computer and a printer.

Steinman inquired about the line item for an interpreter and stated it was her understanding that the State would pay for those services.

Carrico stated she would research the issue.

Kroeker suggested that a microcomputer request form be completed for the laptop computer and printer and returned to him.

RELIEF/MEDICAL

Present was Susan Klein, Administrator of County General Assistance.

Klein stated there are increases in the following:

- ▶ Hospital (\$50,000)
- ▶ Pharmacy (\$25,000)

Kroeker stated the rent remains the same as last year. He said the General Assistance Monitoring Committee has been looking at the rents, specifically in assisting a single mother. He stated the guideline would likely be increased to 75 percent of poverty level for rental assistance if a single mother has two children or more.

Kroeker distributed documentation regarding projected costs for General Assistance (Exhibit D) and stated that projected expenditures for the primary care clinic located at the Health Department should be \$170,088 instead of \$173,990.

He also noted that the work with Kids Connection would be increased, however, there would be more reimbursement from other sources.

Campbell asked why there was an increase in the social services contract.

Kroeker stated there was an increase because more applications are being taken.

Campbell also inquired about the increase for burials.

Klein stated it would be a new contract year and they don't know if fees will remain the same.

ADULT PROBATION

Kroeker noted a \$16,000 increase in photocopying (Line Item 3302).

Kroeker stated he would obtain more information about the increase.

VETERANS SERVICE

Kroeker commented that there were increases on salaries and rent.

INSTITUTIONS

Kroeker stated there are three unpaid bills for evaluations because they aren't being billed according to law.

He noted that the Institutions Fund could be consolidated into the General Fund.

VETERANS AID FUND

Kroeker stated there would not be any levy.

DEBT SERVICE

Kroeker stated there is approximately \$1,500,000 extra in debt service because they levied for the Attention Center three years prior to the bonds being issued. He added that Dave Johnson, Deputy County Attorney, suggested that Kroeker speak with Lauren Wismer, bond counsel, regarding the matter. Kroeker explained that if the monies can't be used for other purposes he would use the dollars from the Building Fund by transferring them to pay the debt service on the Juvenile Detention Center which would free up dollars that could be levied for a building.

Campbell asked if they would be under the ten year limit if they would build onto the jail.

Kroeker responded yes.

The following projects were noted under Debt Service:

- ▶ Health building
- ▶ St. Mary's building
- ▶ County Engineer building
- ▶ Motor Vehicle Facility
- ▶ Juvenile Detention Facility

DISTRICT COURT

Present was Judge Karen Flowers.

Judge Flowers referred to Line Item 3053 (Data Processing) noting that there is an increase. She explained that she was under the impression that there was a separate computer fund so that when there were computer needs those costs didn't come from the operating budget.

She stated nothing had changed since the budget was prepared to cause her to decrease or increase any of the line items.

In response to a question asked by Kroeker regarding Line Item 3401 (Juror Fees), Judge Flowers stated the switch to the country docket doesn't create more litigation or more jury trials. She added in the four years since she had been on the bench they had come in under budget on that particular line item.

Judge Flowers stated there will be a new judge appointed when Judge Endacott retires. She said whether the appointment significantly impacts the budget will depend on whether that individuals hires new staff or not.

DIVERSION SERVICES

Present was Eric McMasters, Diversion Services.

McMasters distributed documentation entitled *1999 Annual Report and Budget Supporting Materials Fiscal Year 2000* (Exhibit E) and *Summary and Overview of Proposal* (Exhibit F) and gave a brief summary on the following:

- ▶ Fiscal Year 2000 Program Goals/Objectives
- ▶ Bad Check Fee Revenue Estimate
- ▶ Fiscal Year 2000-2001 Public Funding Request
- ▶ Project STOP Public Revenues
- ▶ 1999 Highlights and Outlook for 2000
- ▶ 1999 Program Activity
- ▶ 1999 Revenue/Expenses
- ▶ Fiscal year 1999-2000 Public Funding Request
- ▶ Projected STOP Public Revenues

Bruce Medcalf
County Clerk

