

MINUTES
DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET HEARINGS
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING, ROOM 113
THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2005
1:00 P.M.

Commissioners Present: Larry Hudkins, Chair
Ray Stevens, Vice Chair
Bernie Heier
Deb Schorr
Bob Workman

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer
Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Dave Kroeker, Budget and Fiscal Officer
Trish Owen, Chief Deputy County Clerk
Melissa Koci, County Clerk's Office

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m..

The County Board agreed to eliminate F³ from the budget list at 2:00 p.m. on May 26th and discuss non-scheduled budgets instead.

County Court (622)

Present was Becky Bruckner, Judicial Administrator, and Judge Jean Lovell.

Judge Lovell gave an overview of the budget, noting a total increase of 2.44% to the budget. Lovell indicated they currently have 8 parking stalls in the budget and they are paying \$6,314 for rent on conference space that is currently being utilized by Community Corrections. She is requesting that the County Court no longer pay for the conference room and use some of the monies to get additional parking spaces. Lovell said the Clerk of the District Court has 22 parking spaces and the County Court would like a total of 22 spaces also.

Commissioner Schorr indicated the Board should get a list from Don Killeen, Building Administrator, of how many parking places each department has, the number of spaces the County is paying for and how many the employees are paying for.

Lovell distributed documentation regarding a Caseload Study which was done by District's in Nebraska (Exhibit A). She said based on the study and the number of caseloads, Lancaster County should have 8.2 judges and they currently only have 6. She said a new courtroom would not be needed if another Judge were appointed in the future.

Bruckner briefed the Board on their requests for Capital Outlay for 2005.

District Court (624)

Present was Judge Karen Flowers.

Flowers noted there was an increase in Court Costs and Legal Services.

Hudkins asked about the number of parking stalls the District Court is paying for.

Flowers said all the Judges park underneath the County-City Building and she believes the Judge's bailiffs and court reporters are parking elsewhere.

Commissioner Heier suggested the Work Release Coordinator be moved to the Community Corrections budget.

Flowers briefed the Board on their requests for Capital Outlay for 2005.

District Court Clerk (621)

Present was Sue Kirkland, Clerk of the District Court, and Simon Rezac, Accounting Supervisor.

Rezac reported the only minor increase is related to repair and maintenance costs on the scanners, which need to be fixed periodically.

Hudkins asked about the conferences Kirkland would like to attend.

Kirkland indicated she deleted the conferences out of her budget last year out of consideration for the budget, but she would like to attend both conferences this year.

Community Mental Health Board (751)

Rezac indicated the only change is to the voice recorder which is used to record mental health hearings. He said it is over 20 years old and they would like to purchase a new digital recorder, which costs around \$1,000.

Juvenile Probation (673)

Present was Lori Griggs, Chief Probation Officer.

Griggs reported one of the increases is the contract with the State Probation Administration which employs 2 probation officers who provide electronic monitoring supervision for youth released from the Juvenile Detention Center pending adjudication or disposition hearings. She also noted that the State Probation Administration realized last year that the County should have been billed for leasing costs in prior years, but the County was not billed. Griggs indicated there is an overall increase of \$17,052 for FY05.

Griggs reported she needs an additional \$2,500 that will either need to be added to the FY05 or FY06 budget for the State Probation contract increase.

Griggs also noted she would like 3 new computers in the amount of \$3,402.

County Attorney (652)

Present was Gary Lacey, County Attorney.

Lacey reported no significant increases, however, he reiterated the need for one attorney position for the traffic violations, mental health and juvenile cases, which are continuously going up.

Workman asked about the increase in autopsies and wondered if anything could be done in the future to lower the costs.

Lacey said he would be more than willing to talk to Douglas and Sarpy County regarding the fees.

Kroeker asked the County Attorney if he still needed the \$87,000 that was budgeted last year for the Case Management System. He said there is currently \$162,000 in the Information Services budget for the new system.

Lacey indicated the original program was budgeted for \$100,000, which has been delayed for the past 4 years.

Community Corrections/Indigent Defense (625, 626)

Present was Kim Etherton, Community Corrections Director.

Etherton distributed documentation regarding the Community Corrections Department (Exhibit B) and an Evaluation of the First Three Years from ISED Solutions (Exhibit C).

Etherton reported there will be an increase of \$11,200 for the Drug Court Probation contract if it is approved.

Kroeker suggested putting the conference room being utilized by Community Corrections into the budget, which amounts to \$6,314. He also asked Etherton to look at incorporating the Work Release Coordinator into her budget.

Kroeker indicated the Indigent Defense's budget is incorporated into the Community Corrections budget.

Public Defender (625)

Present was Dennis Keefe, Public Defender, and Monica Ross, Administrative Services Officer.

Keefe reported the Child Support Enforcement and Paternity Defense contract expires on June 30, 2006 and he would like to hire another attorney in place of the contract to cover most of the misdemeanor cases. He said the misdemeanor cases are down, but the assault cases are going up, which are more serious and require more time.

Kroeker noted he would add \$67,200 for the Susan Ugai contract to the contractual services category, which was not included.

Kroeker asked about the Case Management System and if it could be delayed again if needed.

Keefe indicated the system right now is very slow and doesn't help his attorney's out to the fullest. He said it has been put off for about 4 or 5 years and he believes it could be very useful for his office and the County Attorney's office.

Budget hearings were adjourned at 4:05 p.m..

Bruce Medcalf
County Clerk