

MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
DEPARTMENT BUDGET MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 22, 2018
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING – BILL LUXFORD STUDIO (ROOM 113)
9:30 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 May 18, 2018.

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

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

The Chair noted the location of the Open Meetings Act and opened the meeting at 9:44 a.m.

1) CORRECTIONS (671, 52)

Appearing were Brad Johnson, Corrections Director; Angela Koziol, Administrative Services Officer; and Nate Atkins, System Programmer.

Corrections (671)

Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer, said Corrections' total budget request is \$24,751,290, an increase of 4.0%.

Brad Johnson, Corrections Director, said 68% of the overall budget and two thirds of the overall budget increase is related to staffing. He said the remainder of the budget is related to operating costs and said he has no control over most of those expenditures, such as service contracts and utilities.

Meyer noted Corrections is budgeting for capital outlay items within the General Fund this year. The Jail Savings Fund was used to cover the capital outlay items the past few years. Johnson said those items total \$157,000 this budget year.

Avery arrived at the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

Schorr inquired about the increase in District Energy Corporation (DEC) costs. **NOTE:** The DEC provides heating and cooling for the Lancaster County Adult Detention Facility (LCADF). Angela Koziol, Administrative Services Officer, explained the DEC is asking for increases on the debt side and said an additional \$63,000 was built into the budget this year. Meyer added they are also putting funding aside for future capital improvements.

Johnson said he is projecting \$31,500 in additional revenue, a 4.8% increase.

In response to a question from Meyer, Johnson said Corrections has had a significant increase in workers' compensation claims and he is using modified duty to try to bring costs down. He noted there is a 16% increase to the workers' compensation charge to Corrections budget.

Meyer inquired about the \$25,000 reduction in the food service contract. Johnson said they based the projection off last year's population.

Meyer also inquired about the hospitalization projection. Johnson said it is also based on historical data.

Wiltgen inquired about the impact if the County must open a civil protective custody (CPC) unit. Johnson said CPC's are only held for a 24-hour period. He said he anticipates that many will be sent to the hospital to be evaluated by a physician on whether they are fit for confinement. He said the majority will receive minor treatment and be cleared and returned to LCADF within a few hours. Wiltgen asked who is responsible for those costs. Johnson said it would be the arresting agency because they are not in custody yet. He said the Corrections would be responsible for costs if an individual has medical issues resulting from acute intoxication after they are placed in the CPC unit and are transported to a hospital. Wiltgen inquired about the overall impact of having to open a CPC unit. Johnson said The Bridge Behavioral Health projects it will admit 3,800 individuals under CPC this fiscal year. He said some of those individuals may be other counties so Corrections numbers may be lower. Johnson estimated the cost at \$1,500,000 annually, based on a two-day average stay if they are brought in on charges. The cost would be less if individuals are brought in with no charges as their length of stay would be limited to 24 hours. He added that medical contract costs will likely increase. It is also recommended that a nurse be posted in the booking unit so Corrections will have to hire additional nurses to staff it on a 24 hour/7-day basis. Wiltgen suggested it may be beneficial to have representatives of the Nebraska Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) talk to Johnson about the impact of their interpretation of regulations regarding CPC. Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer, said he believes there may be a statutory solution to The Bridge's licensing issue.

Meyer inquired about staffing requirements if Corrections must open the J Pod full-time. Johnson said he would request seven correctional officers, one of which would be a transport officer. He estimated that cost at \$400,000 annually. Meyer asked whether the County might have to house some inmates out-of-county as a result. Johnson said it is difficult predict at this point.

Meyer asked Johnson if he has an adequate number of full-time equivalents (FTEs). Johnson said he is comfortable with the number of correctional officers unless it becomes necessary to open the J Pod full-time. He said he has reduced some administrative and clerical positions.

Meyer asked the status of this year's budget. Johnson said he anticipates he will be able to turn back \$100,000, due to a change in the medical contract.

Meyer inquired about technology needs. Nate Atkins, System Programmer, said he believes Corrections is in a good position to move their emails to "cloud computing." Johnson and Atkins also discussed Corrections request to update their security video system. Johnson said the update could

be phased in over five years and would include the purchase of equipment to tie the old system to the new system for a total cost of \$86,000. He said he included \$25,000 in the budget request and has \$15,000 remaining in the current budget that will be applied to the cost. Another option would be to move to a server system now which would save \$8,000 in equipment costs. Atkins said the server system will also allow them to build in redundancy. Schorr asked whether this could be funded through the Jail Savings Fund or Technology Fund. Meyer said he would recommend another use for the Jail Savings Fund. Brinkman asked if they could encumber the \$100,000 in surplus funds from this year's budget for the project. Meyer said he could identify an appropriate fund and transfers those funds out of General Fund and fund the expenditure at the appropriate time.

Jail Savings Fund (52)

Meyer noted a balance of \$678,709 as of April 30, 2018 and recommended it be reserved for the Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) project. Corrections share of the cost is estimated at \$1,000,000.

2) COUNTY ASSESSOR/REGISTER OF DEEDS (605, 606)

Appearing were Rob Ogden, Chief Field Deputy Assessor/Register of Deeds; and Scott Gaines, Chief Administrative Deputy Assessor/Register of Deeds

County Assessor/Register of Deeds (605)

Meyer said the County Assessor/Register of Deeds' overall budget is increasing by 2.5% and their operating and capital outlay expenses have decreased by \$9,388.

Scott Gaines, Chief Administrative Deputy Assessor/Register of Deeds, said personnel costs and building rent comprise 95% of the budget. He said they reduced several areas of the operating budget such office supplies, printing, and Information Services (IS) costs. Gaines said they increased the photocopying and motor vehicle repairs and maintenance line items.

Rob Ogden, Chief Field Deputy Assessor/Register of Deeds, said temporary salaries line item was increased by \$27,000 so they can hire his replacement. **NOTE:** Ogden ran unopposed for County Assessor/Register of Deeds and will take office in January 2019. His replacement will start the fourth quarter of 2018 so they can be trained before the revaluation and preliminary hearings that will take place in January. Wiltgen inquired about the salary. Ogden said it will likely be near the top of salary range.

Meyer inquired about technology needs. Gaines said they are up to date and said they no longer have any servers at IS.

Meyer asked whether they anticipate needing an additional appropriation for this fiscal year. Gaines so no, they are projecting a surplus of \$45,000.

Gaines said they had one retirement this fiscal year and anticipate two more in the upcoming fiscal year. Ogden noted they anticipate up to eight retirements over the next five years (four commercial appraisers, two residential appraisers, and two listing staff). He said many of those individuals are at

the high end of the pay scale and said their replacements will be at the lower end of the pay scale but there will be increased education and training costs. Ogden recommended a classification study of the appraisal positions and an update of the office space to improve efficiencies and security.

Register of Deeds Technology (606)

Meyer explained this budget is set up to spend what they receive. He said it is based off the balance plus projections. Gaines said the revenues are down slightly but did not feel it was a cause for concern.

3) BOARD OF EQUALIZATION (BOE) (618)

Meyer said an additional appropriation is needed for the current year's budget because the costs associated with having Great Plains Appraisal (referee coordinator) assist the County with cases appealed from BOE to the Tax Equalization and Review Commission (TERC) were higher than he had projected. Ogden reported that the number of active cases has been reduced from 400 to less than 100.

4) ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Brinkman moved and Amundson seconded to adjourn the meeting at 11:21 a.m. Amundson, Brinkman, Schorr, Avery and Wiltgen voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.

Dan Nolte
Lancaster County Clerk