

Union County Budget Meeting
May 29, 2012

Present: William D. Rosholt, Chairman
Steve McClure, Commissioner
Mark D. Davidson, Commissioner
Lanny Hildebrandt, Budget Committee Member
Kyle McAndie, Budget Committee Member
Dale Case, Budget Committee Member

Call to Order

Commissioner Rosholt called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Election of Chair

Dale Case was elected as Budget Committee Chair with a motion made by Commissioner Davidson. The vote was unanimous.

Budget Message

Budget Officer Shelley Burgess reviewed the written budget message included in the budget packet materials as well as a brief overview. Shelley explained that all funds are balanced.

Public Works

Doug Wright, Public Works Director, reviewed his written narrative. Commissioner McClure explained that the forest receipts revenue is based on congress approval of the renewal of the rural schools fund. There is no guarantee that these funds will be received, so a conservative approach was taken, reflecting a loss in the forest receipts budget line item. Budget Committee Chair Dale Case expressed concern regarding the tri-county representation on noxious weeds as well as knapweed and star thistle weed control. The program will be continued as in the past, but the Public Works department is planning to reevaluate how these weeds are controlled.

Lanny Hildebrandt questioned that if forest receipt money is received, where will that money be spent. Doug stated that it will be spent on road maintenance and supplies and a short discussion regarding ongoing chip seal improvements followed.

Airport

Doug Wright reviewed his written narrative for the Airport. He stated that the biggest revenue is aviation fuel sales. Fuel sales are based largely on fire season, and the Airport likes to have enough revenue to purchase the fuel required.

Parks

Doug Wright discussed the written narrative on the Parks. There were minimal changes from the previous budget. There were no questions.

MERA (Mt. Emily Recreation Area)

Sean Chambers presented the written narrative for MERA. He discussed the major objectives as well as grant funding purchases.

Union County Weed Advisory Board

Curt Howell, Chairman of the Union County Weed Advisory Board and Allen Gutherage, Secretary of the Union County Weed Advisory Board presented their request for consideration and stated their concerns for weed abatement. Commissioner McClure stated that historically the county has placed weed management as a priority. It is not the intention of the Public Works department to cut services but rather to service more efficiently. Discussions will follow with the Weed Board and the County as well as the Public Works Director to determine the best possible ways to control noxious weeds. Doug stated that it is vital to work together to come to a jointly agreeable solution. Dale Case questioned that there is no line item regarding tri-county weed control, but Commissioner McClure stated that perhaps this will be a contracted service, and would fall under the line description of contractual services.

District Attorney

Tim Thompson, District Attorney, stated that their budget is a status quo budget, with the exception of two items. The first is victim services.

Victim services are mandated by the Constitution, and 1.8 of their office employees are dedicated exclusively to victim services. They are required by statutes and the Constitution to notify each victim of each case of every court appearance or any major event, and are required to consult with the victims regularly, obtain their input and report that to the courts.

They lost a grant this year that funded 25% of the Deputy District Attorney salary and 100% of one of the Victim Advocates salary. They have reapplied for the grant, but will not receive notification until approximately October 1, 2012. Tim is requesting a three month funding of those two positions, and by that time will know if the grant has been accepted or not. By granting the three month salary of the positions, no layoffs would need to occur at this time.

The second item that is not covered under the status quo budget is their case management computer system. Last year, the budget committee established \$10,000 of seed money for exploring a new case management system. Tim stated there is also \$8,000 that has been set aside for new computer hardware. They have explored an upgrade of the DACMS, which is a multiple county, state-wide operation that was started 14 years ago. There was an upgrade to the original system that was to be issued in August 2011, but there has been nothing new completed as far as Tim can tell. The current version the County is using is 14 years old and the server is having problems daily.

Currently, 15 Oregon counties utilize DACMS and 10 counties utilize KARPEL. Tim is suggesting that the KARPEL system be adapted for Union County, which he feels is the most reasonably priced option. Discovery through KARPEL will be done electronically and automatically invoiced creating automatic revenue. The current method for discovery document distribution has been very time consuming, involving staff members spending large amounts of time finding documents and photocopying. With the KARPEL system,

only scanning and emailing will be required for discovery which will save large amounts of time.

Shelley Burgess stated that the District Attorney request for the KARPEL system has been included in the budget being presented and it is balanced.

Lanny Hildebrandt commended the District Attorney's office for doing their due diligence and research to complete this request.

The KARPEL system is hosted and provided online, so no daily in-office backup will be required. The annual hosting fee is \$5,160, which is included in this budget request.

USDA Predator Control

Curt Mattson, USDA Wildlife Services, explained the continuing need for predator control within the county relating to livestock as well as bird predators. Rob Beck who is a local cattle farmer, stressed the importance of predator control and that it is of great financial benefit to the county. He also stated that coyotes have become much more aggressive in current years with regards to the taking of livestock.

Nelson Correll, sheep farmer, stated the financial benefit from the USDA Predator control. When they are transferring their livestock from one location to another, the control of predators such as coyote, has been very helpful. There has been more sheep in the area and predator control has helped with increased production.

Rob Beck also mentioned the importance and financial loss due to lack of bird control. The birds eat the seeds planted in the ground resulting in no stock growing, which is devastating to the farmers.

Commissioner Rosholt asked if USDA and ODFW are increasing their funding sources for the 2012-13 year. Curt Mattson, stated that there would be a slight increase in funding from the USDA and a decrease in funding from the ODFW. The growers and producers last year requested a match of funds, which they are planning to continue this fiscal year.

Commissioner Davidson asked Shelley Burgess about the proposed budget amount of \$40,000, questioning if this was all county funds or if it included some matching funds from the growers. Shelley stated that the proposed amount is what the budget committee had agreed to last year. This includes \$30,000 from the county, and a matching amount of \$10,000 from the growers.

Dale Case wondered about control of antelope, and stated that unfortunately, antelope cannot be hunted in Union County. Curt stated that at this time, there are no plans for the removal of antelope from the county.

Commissioner Davidson asked Rob Beck if the growers group would be able to put up more than the \$10,000 matching funds, as Commissioner Davidson would be in support of additional funds. Rob Beck stated that he would be able to raise additional money to increase the match funding.

Sheriff

Sheriff Boyd Rasmussen went over his budget and narrative. He stated that there was a slight increase in the revenue from the city of Union and a two year contract has recently been renegotiated. There is a domestic violence grant that has been submitted but final approval has not yet been received. There is an increase in expenditures with the reserve deputies due to an increase in contracts with neighboring cities. There is a contract in process with the city of Elgin to provide for two to three deputies. The increase in vehicle expense is due to an increase in fuel costs.

Corrections

Sheriff Boyd Rasmussen reviewed his budget. He stated that the jail is at maximum capacity, with overflow inmates being sent to Umatilla County and Baker City. Additional funding has been granted to allow for an increase in inmates. Low risk offenders will be placed on house arrest and/or work crew and custody units. This will reduce the amount paid to neighboring counties for overflow by allowing the more serious and high risk offenders to be jailed. A small remodel project of dividing the detox cell is being requested for this next fiscal year. This will allow for an additional holding cell for inmates.

A savings has been noted in the nutrition and food portion sizes. While still meeting the minimum nutrition requirements, the department has realized a large savings of approximately \$8,000.

Commissioner Rosholt questioned the reimbursement from Wallowa County reflecting a loss of \$10,000. The reason for this was that Wallowa County contracted for one less bed at the facility.

Lanny Hildebrandt questioned why the line item for the Patrol Sergeant was not used. The Sheriff explained the incorrect line item was being charged but will be corrected on the July 1, 2012 budget.

Center for Human Development

Ricco Weber, CHD Fiscal Manager, stated that CHD is requesting a total of \$241,000, which is a \$10,000 increase over the total of funding received last year. He explained that they are requesting a \$10,000 increase for Veteran Services. The bulk of this increase is reflected in the form of a salary increase. This is based on a salary survey that was completed for Veteran Service Officers in similar sized counties with similar services provided. The results of the survey reported that the Veteran Service Officer for Union County was underpaid. CHD is wanting to keep that position at a competitive salary as well as recognize the skill set Veteran Service Officer Byron Whipple brings to the community.

Ricco stated that the budget requests this year are for Public Health, reflecting a total budget of \$111,534, Alcohol and Drug Treatment to maintain the same funding of \$39,754, Veteran Services reflecting a \$10,000 increase to \$49,712, School Based Health Center of \$20,000, and Health Network for Rural Schools with no change at \$20,000.

Mike Lowry, of Union, Oregon, spoke to the budget committee. He is a Veteran who has an incurable disease received from service in Viet Nam. He has received many medical treatments for this ailment, which could have been very costly. Byron Whipple, Veteran Service Officer provided assistance and support, which alleviated financial problems.

Patsy Clever, of Cove, Oregon who recently lost her husband, spoke to the budget committee. While he was alive, they participated and volunteered in various programs to assist the county. Her experience with contacting Veterans Affairs was difficult until she met and came in contact with Byron Whipple, who assisted with obtaining records, filing paperwork, and helped her to receive financial benefits from the Veterans for her husbands years of service.

Carrie Brogoitti, of Public Health, discussed the many helpful services her department is able to provide, including immunizations, public health authority and the school based health center. The health teacher from La Grande High School submitted a letter to the budget committee regarding the many benefits provided by the school based health center.

Commissioner Davidson asked if the school based health centers are still located in La Grande and Union, which they are. The school districts do not provide financial contributions to the school health centers, but do provide janitorial, internet, telephone and utilities as a helpful contribution.

Community Corrections

Travis Miller, Community Corrections Director, tried to reflect his numbers at the actual amounts spent for the previous year, which actually shows approximately \$200,000 as an increase in spending. The beginning balance fund is currently showing at \$525,700.

The violence against women grant has not been renewed, so money from that funding source is lost. They have reapplied for the grant, but will not receive a decision until October, 2012. Probation officer salary in the amount of .25 of a position may be lost, but when they reapplied, they requested a .50 funding to a probation officer position.

To maintain current status, they are short \$121,000 over what his department receives for salaries. He has not wanted to cut positions because case numbers are up, and he is wanting to maintain the same level of services. They are short one probation officer, as a vacancy from last year has not been filled.

Commissioner Davidson reiterated that the department is dipping into the beginning fund balance and overspending approximately \$50,000 from his start-up money, of which Travis confirmed.

Commissioner Rosholt asked for the case load for each probation officer. Travis explained the perfect case load average is 60 cases per probation officer, but there is a complex scoring matrix to determine with risk assessment. Currently, the County probation officers are servicing approximately 80 - 84 cases of medium to high risk each. In addition to being the director, Travis is also still maintaining approximately 30 cases himself.

Discussion

Shelley explained to the budget committee that she can go over the rest of the funds that were not discussed or the committee could discuss the items that were requested but not included in the budget. There were not many changes from the previous year.

Kyle McAndie questioned the changes to Violence against women grant and the District Attorney's office, wondering if there were extra dollars available to fund an additional staff position. Shelley explained that money is included in the budget to fund the staff positions in question for three months. This will carry them through until news is received as to whether the grant is received or not. Kyle asked that if the grant is not received, will the positions be eliminated? Shelley explained that they should know in August or September, and that each case will be slightly different because some of the positions are only partially funded. Shelley did not include revenues to fund the positions full time past September which would have resulted in nine months of a full time position, and she couldn't find funding to do that. Some of the other positions that are .25 time, the departments may shift their staffing within their budget to prevent eliminating a .25 position, but there isn't any extra funding to cover that loss past the initial three months.

Wind energy has been very helpful in funding various programs as stated by Lanny, but according to Mark, that money will unfortunately go away in 2023-24. Shelley explained that she has tried to use those funds for items that are one time purchases, although she is not always able to do so.

Dale wondered about the change in funding from \$85,000 to the \$100,000 for Commission on Children and Families. Shelley explained that this is for a variety of programs and service providers. There is a number of service providers that are paid from this line item. Commissioner Davidson stated that the direction received from the State of Oregon was that they were not to go out for any new contracts but were allowed to only extend the existing contract with existing providers. CCF is expending the funds that have been set aside by the state for that purpose. The Drug Free Communities grant is in its second year of a five year federal grant that was received.

Dale commented about the Parks fund changing from \$25,000 to \$50,000 in the maintenance fund. Shelley explained that we receive money from the parks and recreation part of the state for the recreational vehicle fees and traditionally we have been carrying forward quite a bit of it. This year we will use parks money to make required improvements at the parks, as well as utilize some match money for the archeology grant on MERA. Park funds can be used on MERA for maintenance.

Dale Case stated that the Sheriff budget is not necessarily balanced, but Shelley said the Sheriff budget is part of the General Fund, which is balanced. Unfortunately, she needs to wait and see what the exact costs will be with regards to the Elgin contract. Shelley entered the line item as revenue as she was suggesting that one of the deputies be funded with the Elgin contract. This will need to be adjusted prior to the final hearing at the end June. Commissioner Davidson stated that up to a 10% change can be done to balance without having to reconvene with the budget committee.

Dale noted a \$20,000 increase in expenses in the extra help line item in Special Accounts. Shelley explained extra help and personnel benefits are the funds that pay the salary of the Vector Control District employees. Vector Control District reimbursement covers the extra help and personnel benefits shown on Special Accounts.

Emergency Services fund was increased but this is reflected in new grant money that shows the increase. Office space rent at \$15,000 is eligible for reimbursement under the operating grant program, which goes into the facilities budget to maintain the facility. Rural addressing, a Title III project, has also been incorporated into the Emergency Services budget.

Dale Case asked for any questions, or adjustments.

Commissioner Davidson requested an adjustment to Wildlife Services to increase our contribution an additional \$5,000 from the County and an additional \$5,000 match from the growers. Commissioner Davidson also requested that CHD request in the amount of the additional \$12,500 be granted to the Public Health budget.

Commissioner Davidson moved to modify the Predator line item with USDA to increase the county's contribution by \$5,000 to match dollar for dollar increased contributions from the stock producers and other growers. Seconded by Lanny Hildebrandt. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Davidson moved to forward the amended budget to the Commission for publication and approval. Commissioner Steve McClure seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Annette Powers
Department Specialist