

Union County Budget Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 18, 2020

Joseph Building Annex Conference Room

Present: Donna Beverage, Union County Commissioner
Paul Anderes, Union County Commissioner
R. Matthew Scarfo, Union County Commissioner
Alex McHaddad, Budget Committee Member via Teleconference
Gene Hardy, Budget Committee Member
Stacey Candlish, Budget Committee Member
Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer and Budget Officer
Allison Moore, Senior Department Specialist

Call to Order

Commissioner Anderes called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Election of Budget Committee Chair

Gene Hardy made a motion to elect Stacey Candlish as the Budget Committee Chair. Alex McHaddad seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Presentation of Budget Message

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented the budget message to the committee.

The fiscal impacts the COVID-19 pandemic will have on Union County are unknown at this time. It is probable that impacts will be felt in the form of reduced state shared revenues, reduced transient room tax collections, reduced fuel sales at the airport, and reduced food and beverage sales at the Buffalo Peak Golf Course.

The proposed budget for FY 2020-21 includes 47 funds that are balanced as presented totaling \$46,735,694. The proposed budget is approximately \$10,000,000 higher than last fiscal year primarily due to the \$7,000,000 runway improvement project grant at the La Grande/Union County Airport, increases in available funds for the Public Works Department due to the Secure Rural Schools Act extension. Other items include new grant funding for a Behavior Court, additional funding for public health and a grant funded fuel break project on the Mt. Emily Recreational Area.

The general fund budget totals \$12,366,130 and is the largest of all the funds accounting for the provision of services by twelve county departments. Primary general fund revenues are property tax (48%) and PILT (payment in lieu of taxes) (10%). Other general fund revenues come from state shared revenues, fees for service, and state and federal grants.

The budget is prepared and presented utilizing the same format and basis of accounting as previous years. All 47 funds are balanced as presented.

General Fund Department Presentations

Assessment/Taxation

Cody Vavra, Assessor/Tax Collector, addressed the budget committee with his budget message from the Assessor's office.

Mr. Vavra reported that the County Assessment Function Funding Assistance (CAFFA) Grant for his department is at approximately \$180,000 this year. Union County's portion of the CAFFA Grant is estimated to be \$190,000; with the Assessor/Tax Collector's portion approximately \$180,000. The balance of the CAFFA Grants is apportioned to the Clerk, Treasurer and the Information Services Department based on the expenditures for assessment and taxation.

Mr. Vavra provided a Summary of Expenditure to the Commissioners. There was a \$1,000 increase in Postage, \$600 for Dues, \$400 Copying, and \$300 in Publications. There were decreases in Advertising by \$250, Cartography by \$2,000, and \$500 in Motor Vehicle Maintenance.

Accounting/Treasurer

In the absence of Donna Marshall, Treasurer/Accounting Manager, Shelley Burgess, provided the budget proposal to the budget committee.

Mrs. Burgess relayed in the budget narrative that there will be an increase in staffing. Currently there is an elected Treasurer who is a half-time Accounting Manager, who will be retiring this year, leaving the Accounting Manager position open. Mrs. Burgess' proposal is to increase the Accounting Manager position to a full-time position, and the Treasurer position will remain at half-time.

There is an increase in Personnel Services to allow for the increase in the Accounting Manager position. Materials and services are similar to last years. There will be a slight increase in travel to accommodate two employees, as the Treasurer will need to attend meetings and the Accounting Manager will need to attend finance trainings.

Clerk – General, BOPTA & Elections

Robin Church, County Clerk, provided the proposed budget for the Clerks Office to the budget committee.

There have not been any significant changes made to the County Clerk's budget, besides personnel and postage costs. Due to COVID-19, there will reflect a decrease in passport revenue, as citizens aren't traveling at the moment. At this point, they have lost \$5,000 in passport revenue.

The loss of passport revenue is offset slightly, recording fees are up over \$300 compared to the same time last year.

Ms. Church relayed to the budget committee that the ballot tally machine stopped operating. There was a spare machine in the archive room until they are able to purchase a new machine.

Commissioner Scarfo asked Robin how much a ballot machine cost. Ms. Church relayed she received a quote for a 2018 model at \$56,255.89.

Commissioner Anderes asked if neighboring counties would be willing to share a reserve machine to Union County should this happen again. Mr. Church relayed that Union County held the spare for Union, Wallowa and Baker counties. If the spare machine goes down, it would require Union County to wait for another county's election completion before we could use their ballot tally machine, after the 14-day challenge period.

Mrs. Burgess asked Ms. Church if the tally machine was looked at to see if it was repairable. Ms. Church relayed that it had been looked at, and the initial assessment is it is beyond repair, however they did take it for further reviews.

Chair Candlish inquired with Ms. Church how often the tally machines are purchased. Ms. Church relayed that the machine was approximately 13 years old.

Board of Commissioners

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, provided the Commissioner's budget message to the budget committee.

Material and Services line items reflect an increase of \$2,000 in travel partially offset by a reduction of \$1,000 in office/operating supplies. The increase in travel will allow for continued engagement by the Commissioners in the activities of the Eastern Oregon Counties Association, Association of Oregon Counties, and the Oregon Legislature.

There were not any significant changes to the Commissioner's budget. There was an office equipment line item increase in the amount of \$2,000 for the replacement of two PC's.

Facilities

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, provided the proposed budget for the Facilities Department to the budget committee.

The budget request includes funding to replace the roof on the law enforcement annex building, significant leak problems and patching is no longer effective. Roof repair is also needed on the main Joseph Building. Smaller projects will be completed if funding is available once the roof project has been completed.

The roof expenditure is listed under the Facilities General Fund at \$200,000.

Computer Services

Jason Fouts, Information Services Manager, provided the proposed budget for the Computer Services department to the budget committee.

Mr. Fouts reported that there was an increase in \$1,500 since cyber-security software doubled in price, with a decrease in AS400 software maintenance cost.

Alex McHaddad asked which virus software the County uses. Mr. Fouts relayed that it is Viper Antivirus that is a packaged deal with multi software built into it.

District Attorney/Legal Services

Kelsie McDaniel, Union County District Attorney, presented the DA budget to the budget committee.

Mrs. McDaniel reported that the Oregon District Attorneys Association (ODAA) would like to continue to engage in a constructive manner to be a voice to ensure public safety and protection for our communities. As a result, the organization requires additional funding for sustainability on an ongoing basis. Dues for the office as well as individual members are expected to increase this fiscal year and continue to do so over the next several years.

There will also be an increase in Juvenile Evaluation Expenses for juvenile evaluation costs. So far in 2020, the process has only been completed once and as the case is still pending, it is unclear what the final cost will be. At this time, best estimates range from \$5-8,000 for evaluation costs per case. Mrs. McDaniel relayed that there is a \$15,000-line item included for Juvenile Evaluations specifically.

Additionally, there is a new revenue line item. Grand Jury Recordation was implemented in July 2019. Some shuffling of employees was done to allow one of the assistants to work as a part time Restitution Clerk with the hope that the state would backfill some of the cost for personnel. Unfortunately, the Oregon Judicial Department and the Oregon District Attorneys Association were in the process of negotiating with Ways & Means when the walk out occurred, however a vote never took place. The DA's office was told there would be funding, however the amount is unknown and we shouldn't expect it unless there is a special session and this is put on the agenda.

Chair Candlish asked Mrs. McDaniel if the Medical Examiner was ever brought in that was discussed last fiscal year. She relayed that she prioritized money for the medical examiner program last year. The doctor from Grande Ronde Hospital that was performing those duties, took a position outside of the area, but has agreed to stay on board until a new person is hired.

Kelsie reported on the Child Support Enforcement Department; which included no new changes. There are some modifications in terms of moving personnel services because employees were moved in different portions of the office, which operates under the umbrella of the DA's office.

Victims Services is also status quo, no changes in terms of funding or revenue. Victim Impact Panel is also budgeted the same as last year. The last panel was cancelled due to the pandemic restrictions. The funds that we typically receive from that went to Lane County.

Committee member McHaddad, asked how typical it is for these programs to be nested under the DA's program in other counties in Oregon or in the region. Kelsie relayed that Victims Assistance is constitutionally and statutorily required by Oregon law, the Victim Impact Panel varies from county to county, which is also required in the jurisdiction of law to be ordered.

Juvenile Department

On behalf of Ben Morgan, Juvenile Department Director, Shelley Burgess provided the proposed budget to the budget committee.

There has not been a significant change to the budget, aside from a proposed personnel increase. The increase request of \$5,000 is for a Lead Counselor position, which is an in-house promotion. The position will assume a limited set of tasks from the Director, which will increase the departments connection to statewide organizations.

Shelley reported that the Juvenile Department shifted \$1,000 to their office supplies line item to accommodate increasing Microsoft fees.

Planning Department

Scott Hartell, Planning Department, provided the proposed budget for the Planning Department to the budget committee.

Mr. Hartell reported that there will be an increase in revenue in the amount of \$75,000 from the Oregon Water Resources Department and \$100,000 from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board for the Place Based Integrated Water Resources Planning Grants.

Two-line items will need to be continued for FY 2020-21. Place Based Integrated Water Resources Planning Grant and Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Grant. Planning effort to evaluate all demands on water resources within the watershed compared to available water resources for the Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed and potential water project feasibility studies.

Emergency Services

JB Brock, Emergency Manager, provided the proposed Emergency Services budget message to the budget committee.

Mr. Brock reported that FY 2019-20 was an extremely active year for emergency services. Emergency Services worked toward completion of many long-term projects, responded to fires, floods and snow events. One significant event is the COVID-19 response. Union County also organized a Joint Information Center (JIC) on March 17 and in-briefed a local multi-agency Incident Management Team on March 20.

Expenditures including staff time and materials associated with the COVID-19 pandemic will be reimbursable at a 75% federal and 25% local cost share.

Emergency Services has no new capital requests.

Communications

JB Brock, Emergency Manager, provided a summary of the proposed budget to the committee on the Communication System fund (CSF).

The purpose of the CSF is to support maintenance and upkeep of the county wide communication system. Emergency Services constructed the system through federal grants.

The communications system billings will increase by 3% in the next year.

The only significant change to the budget is an increase in Equipment Purchases of \$20,000 due to aging equipment.

Special Accounts

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, provided a summary to the budget committee on the Special Accounts fund.

This fund is used to provide payment of costs which apply to each general fund department such as property and liability insurance, legal services, auditing, postage machines, AOC and NACO dues, and participation costs. It also includes the other programs that are not operated directly by the county, such as libraries, senior programs, Veterans Services, Public Health, Alcohol and Drug Treatment, Rural Health Nurse, Predator Control, Eastern Oregon University GED program, and Cherry Fruit Fly program.

There are some personnel costs in this budget, which is for the Vector Control Program. The Vector Control District reimburses these costs.

Mrs. Burgess relayed that she did increase liability insurance premiums and high-risk premiums associated with jail operations.

Stacey Candlish asked Shelley if she had the option to shop insurance for the county. Mrs. Burgess relayed that it is an option. However, the county insures through CIS (City-County Insurance Services) because they are specifically organized to meet the needs of cities and counties.

Transfers

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, provided a summary to the budget committee on the Transfers budget.

The Transfers department includes allocations of general fund dollars into special funds for specific purposes.

Transfers included in FY 2020-21 budget provide funds for Animal Control, County Surveyor, Vehicle Reserve, and the Agri Services Fund for the Water master program.

Stacey Candlish inquired about the Vehicle Reserve Program and how that program works. Mrs. Burgess relayed the Vehicle Reserve Fund is utilized to buy vehicles for departments outright when the needs are identified.

Sheriff

Boyd Rasmussen, Sheriff, provided a summary to the budget committee on the Sheriff's budget.

Mr. Rasmussen reported that there was a new line item added in revenue for the K-9 Program, which will cover the cost of dog food and medical costs if any.

He also reported that they had applied for a COPS UHP grant to fund a patrol deputy for the city of Union and South County. There was removal of Patrol Captain, and addition of a Patrol Lieutenant and Patrol Corporal position.

Alex McHaddad inquired about the reasoning for replacing the Captain position with a Lieutenant position. Mr. Rasmussen relayed that the discussion was made to align the management structure with that of the jail which has a jail Lieutenant.

Stacey Candlish asked why there was an increase in Vehicle Impound Fees by \$3,000. Boyd will follow up with Cathie Falk and report back to Shelley.

Corrections

Sheriff Boyd Rasmussen, provided a brief summary to the budget committee.

There were two major funding changes, one in Personnel was to reestablish a part time Food Services Coordinator position at Range 11. The second is an increase in Travel/Training by \$5,000 to cover increased training costs of new staff. Increase in Jail Supplies by \$5,000 to purchase 40 new mattresses for the jail. Current mattresses are 7-8 years old and the outer coverings have begun to crack and split.

Public Comment

An opportunity was given for public comment from those participating via teleconference. None was given.

The chair asked if it would be appropriate to keep moving forward or on to the next agenda item. Shelley Burgess relayed that she would be happy to report on the Solid Waste District that is on the agenda for tomorrow. There was no need for a motion. If there are any questions tomorrow, she will answer those questions.

Union County Solid Waste District

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, provided a brief summary to the budget committee.

The Union County Solid Waste District proposed budget is presented in three funds, Enterprise Fund, Capital Reserve Fund, and Household Hazardous Waste Fund. The total proposed budget is \$848,510.

The Enterprise Fund budget for 2020-21 is proposed at \$151,410. The Capital reserve fund is proposed at \$52,000. The purpose of the Capital Reserve fund is to ensure that funds are available to complete the required monitoring of the landfill. A transfer of \$20,000 to the Enterprise Fund for monitoring and reporting expenses is budgeted in the event funds are needed.

The largest of the three funds for the Solid Waste District is the Household Hazardous Waste Fund. This fund covers the operation of the Union Baker Wallowa County Household Hazardous Waste program. Revenues come from a \$3.17 per ton assessment on garbage.

The Solid Waste District is in sound financial condition and continues to operate well within the revenues generated.

The chair called a break at 6 pm. The meeting was called back to order at 6:30 pm.

USDA Predator Control Program

David Williams, USDA Fish & Wildlife State Director, addressed the budget committee. Commissioner Beverage asked Mr. Williams what the predator control numbers were for the last year. He did not have the numbers requested by Commissioner Beverage and asked if it would be appropriate to create a report and provide it at a later time.

The budget request presents a draft budget that outlines the funding required to maintain approximately the same level of service that the County is currently being provided by Wildlife Services.

EOU-GED Program

Tressa Seydel and Cathy Trochell, introduced themselves to the budget committee and provided a statement from EOU wishing to extend the GED program.

Ms. Trochell reported that it is a standard recap that Cathy has achieved in the program over the last year. There is a critical need for General Education Development (GED) support services and an on-site testing location in Union County.

The request is \$25,000 for the cost of the Continuing Education Program Coordinator to continue to provide services, at .35 FTE for a period of 12 months.

Center for Human Development – Public Health, Mental Health, Veterans Services

Carrie Brogoitti, Public Health Administrator, addressed the budget committee with a brief update regarding the emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mrs. Brogoitti previously requested an infrastructure budget line item in past years. With the recent pandemic, it has grown to prove that the line item is necessary. The line item would provide sources to CHD staff should it be needed.

Rico Weber, Financial Coordinator, addressed the budget committee with a summary of the proposed budget for FY 2020-21.

The Center for Human Development requests funding from Union County in the amount of \$271,013 for the fiscal year ending 6/30/21. This is a 1.02% increase from FY 2020.

Brian Blais, Veteran Services Coordinator, addressed the budget committee with brief summary regarding Veteran Services in Union County. The funding request for Veteran Services is not increased as additional state funding is being provided to support the program.

The chair called a recess until 4 pm, Tuesday, May 19, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Moore
Senior Department Specialist