

Union County Budget Meeting  
May 27, 2009

Present: Steve McClure, Commissioner  
R. Nellie Hibbert, Commissioner  
Mark Davidson, Commissioner  
Mary Jane Johnson, Budget Committee Member  
Don Waldrop, Budget Committee Member  
Dale Case, Budget Committee Member

Call to Order

Commissioner Hibbert called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. with all budget committee members and commissioners present.

Election of Chair

**Mary Jane Johnson was elected Budget Committee Chair by a motion made by Don Waldrop. The vote was unanimous.**

Budget Message

Budget Officer Shelley Burgess reviewed the written budget message included in the budget packet materials. Shelley explained that all funds are balanced with the exception of the general fund.

Community Corrections

Jane DeClue, Director of Community Corrections, explained that her budget was prepared according to the numbers that the State has given. The State did say that the numbers given will change but for now it is the budget that is being proposed. The largest line item is for contractual services, which is used for sex offender and alcohol/drug treatment as well as housing for the offenders. She explained offenders need housing, treatment and employment to stay compliant. The budget is not a lot different than last year and at this point it is not known if these numbers will be the final numbers. Community Corrections is funding the work crew position in the Sheriff's budget with the contractual funds as well. The entire cost for that position is not being covered by Community Corrections but they were able to keep the revenue for the staff that is the work crew coordinator. The work crew is very important and much less costly than a jail bed to sanction some of their offenders. Jane asked the Commissioners to increase their fees for the offenders. Each offender currently pays a fee of \$25 a month for supervision. It was approved to increase that fee to \$35 a month beginning with offenders that were placed on supervision after the date the Court Order was signed. It will increase their revenues over time. Jane explained that if the State budget is not finalized by July 1<sup>st</sup> they will still receive their allocation, but they will receive it after July 1<sup>st</sup> so they can keep operating.

Dale Case asked what the anticipated change will be to the budget from the State. Jane stated that the anticipation at this point is 8% which is not as much as what it was first thought to be and she believes she can work with that by cutting some of the client services.

#### Facilities

Bill Rosholt, Director of Golf Promotions & Economic Development, explained that his department oversees the maintenance on the county buildings. His responsibilities as far as facilities are concerned is to keep things running and at the same time try to make improvements as money is available for them. He has tried to budget minimally as far as income is concerned and tries to expect the worst for expenses. He has looked at the history of the past years so there are some differences in the expenses. He explained that he is short staffed so there is some difficulty with getting the janitorial work complete. His goal is to see that everything is clean and neat not only for the public but also for the employees. Bill stated that one thing he believes is important is the upgrade of the elevators. Every time Schindler is brought over from Walla Walla, WA and it is not a part of the maintenance agreement it costs \$1300. One of the things that is of concern is that if someone got stuck in one of the elevators and started to panic the only way to get them out right away is to use the jaws of life and then the elevators would not be useful in the future.

Bill has identified the Jail building alarm system as something that needs to be replaced. The alarm system in the Jail building goes off many times without reason which requires maintenance to come in and take care of it. At certain times of the day there are only the 911 operators in the building and they cannot be responsible for going and taking care of the alarm. Also, the refueling station for the back up generator at the police building is not efficient. If the right person is not doing the fueling there is a possibility that there could be a leak and the building would have to be evacuated.

#### Buffalo Peak Golf Course

Shelley Burgess, Budget Officer, explained that due to factors that have come up she is requesting that the miscellaneous revenue line item be increased from \$1,000 to \$6,000. She stated that the miscellaneous expense line item would also need to be increased to \$5000. There are miscellaneous things that are not able to be identified but there needs to be the ability to address the expenses as they come up.

Bill explained that there will be a few new events that will generate some more fees this year. It is more realistic to budget lower than expected. A line item that has been increased is the cost of the top dressing sand. There is a dry spot problem on the greens so there is a need to do more aerating and thatching. There is a better quality of sand that should be better for the process. It will be

more beneficial for the greens and a better solution than to try and build in a few years if the localized dry spot problem continues. Bill explained that he budgeted \$10,000 for a piece of equipment to use for the dry spot problem if the top dressing does not work. The problem is being monitored very closely.

Commissioner Davidson asked for an estimate of cost to replace the greens. Bill estimated it would be \$50,000 to \$75,000 a green.

Commissioner Hibbert asked if this would be the last year for the cart leases. Bill explained that there are 20 cart leases that will be up this year but there are still 30 carts that have a year or two left on their leases.

Bill stated that he has identified some cost of goods items that he predicted to increase due to a new golf tournament that will be coming to Buffalo Peak Golf Course that has not been there in previous years.

Shelley explained that what they are trying to do is to get the revenues covering the expenditures. She stated that Bill has made a real effort this year to reduce the expenditures. He believes that he can cut the expenses but still operate a quality golf course.

#### Economic Development

Shelley Burgess, Budget Officer, explained that the economic development budget has two sections. The Industrial Park section is going away so there are no funds in that budget. The next portion is the Transient Room Tax portion of the budget. It is the area where the 3% hotel/motel transient room tax is received and spent. It is budgeted to collect \$140,000 for the next year. Previously there has been more money collected but it looks like this year it will be lower so she budgeted low expecting that the economy will still not allow for a high collection rate next year. The Commissioners allocate those funds based on a Resolution that allocates up to a certain percentage. The Commissioners will hear from those agencies typically in July so the levels that were approved for this current budget year were used for this year's budget as well. There is flexibility for those to change. The second section of the Economic Development budget is the lottery money. It is Union County's portion of the video lottery that comes back to the county. She budgeted \$140,000 and there is \$50,000 of carry over money that was not spent. There was a partnership grant with hot lake springs. There is some match money that is still due back to the County for that project. Shelley has put them in the contractual services line item which is basically what is done until projects are identified that the Commissioners wish to spend the money on or it will be left there to carry forward.

There is a transfer of \$75,000 to Buffalo Peak Golf Course to help fund the golf course. It is still not to the point where it is fully funding itself, but in the past it has

been supported as an effort to promote more economy. Last year there was \$170,000 transferred to the golf course to make up the funding so this year it is down significantly. There is a loan payable which is a loan payment to the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department for money that was borrowed to pay for infrastructure construction.

#### District Attorney

Shelley explained that one of the District Attorney's requested items was removed from the proposed budget.

Tim Thompson, District Attorney, stated that there are three programs under the District Attorney's office that are put through the budgetary cycle. The first is the Legal Services Program which is the prosecution program. The Legal Services Program is where the primary activities are through. There are some items that they get reimbursed through the State for revenues in this department. The primary reimbursements that are received regularly are \$2500 for Deputy D.A. reimbursements which is based on the number of Deputy D.A.s on staff, \$2000 for autopsy reimbursements, and a grant.

Tim explained that the Medical Examiner line items have been removed from their budget request on the proposed budget. The medical examiner program was not funded last year because the budget committee thought it was less of a priority than a third Deputy D.A. It is still a request he would like the budget committee to review. It would help them to be able to train and retain the volunteers that are currently doing the medical examiner duties. Tim explained that a volunteer medical doctor is recruited and it seems to rotate. The D.A.s office cannot compensate the doctors on any regular basis but they do pay \$75 per death investigation to a few people in town that help on the investigations. Tim stated that he would like to compensate the volunteers more than the \$75 that they are currently compensated. It usually takes 4-6 hours to do the on scene investigation and prepare the paperwork. There are about 25 death investigations done a year. The State recommends that 30% of the deaths in the county are sent to autopsy. Tim stated that Union County is only doing one-third of the deaths that the State is recommending be done. The total budget that Tim is asking for is \$8400. The medical examiner reports on the 25 deaths per year would be \$4000 which is about double what is currently being paid to the volunteers. He is proposing a \$200 a month stipend to the volunteer physician.

Tim explained that the District Attorney's office has a Support Enforcement Program. All of the expenses in this program are reimbursable by the Federal government based on the performance. It is usually about 67% maximum.

The Victim Impact Panel is a self supporting program and is for any person that is convicted of an alcohol or drug related charge.

Commissioner Hibbert asked about the medical examiner district that was formed in Southern Oregon that helps with the costs for the program. Tim explained that it took years in Southern Oregon to form the district. He does not feel it will happen in this region for awhile.

Don Waldrop asked where the District Attorney's office is with the backlog of cases compared to last year. Tim stated that they are down in terms of cases and are currently within 120 days in case processing. There are a few cases that go beyond that but the majority of the cases are within the 120 day time line. Tim stated that the State suggests that a case is completed within 120 days and he believes that as a whole they are current on that suggestion other than an occasional case.

#### USDA – Predator Control

Mike Slater, explained that the USDA is a Federal program that is to resolve wildlife conflicts. They are set up to be a cooperative program. Congress does not want the program to be fully Federally funded. Typically in Oregon it is done as a Federal, State and County cooperative program. The Federal money covers the administration and supervision. The district office is located in Union County and since it has been located here they have had quite a few calls to handle predators in the area.

Dale Case asked how many phone calls he usually gets in a year. Mike stated that he easily gets a couple dozen phone calls a year. He said that it doesn't seem like many but that is only word of mouth because there is no program in Union County. Most of the phone calls he receives in Union County are predator problems with livestock. The call volume in an average county with a program is about one hundred a year.

Mike explained that the way the complaint is handled depends on the type of wildlife involved in the complaint. They do a lot of predator control but they also deal with skunks and gophers.

Mike stated that he would like to be in this community and have offered their plane and pilot to the Sheriff. They employ trapping methods and utilize the aircraft. They also do disease samplings from the wildlife that is trapped. Typically there has been matching funds that have paid for positions to be in the area. There is no more matching money that is coming from the State. He is able to do a partial program because their district office is located in Union County. If the County could come up with half the funds they could have a half time employee. He believed that if he had at least half of the funds they could respond to the problems that are occurring. Mike explained that their program does both corrective control and preventive control.

Commissioner Davidson asked about the cooperative effort with Baker and Grant Counties that was mentioned in the letter Mike gave to the budget committee. Mike explained that Baker and Grant counties are the only surrounding counties that do not have a USDA program. Umatilla and Wallowa Counties both have programs the counties support. Those counties have been with the program for a long time so they are in the cost share program.

Dale Case asked if Union County supported a half time or quarter time program that would be enough to get some assistance in the future. Mike stated that it will definitely get the County in line to receive some funding in the future when additional funds are available.

Mike stated that Union County can have a cooperative program with Baker or Grant Counties so the full program doesn't have to be funded by one county.

Ron Dake raises sheep and cattle in Summerville, Oregon. Ron stated that he has had a number of lambs killed this year by coyotes which would be a loss of \$2,000 this year alone. Mike helped him catch the coyotes that were killing his sheep. A few years ago there was a cougar that got his lambs and it was a larger amount of lambs that were lost that year. Ron stated that there are a lot of sheep producers that have gone out of the business because of predation.

Mike explained that the ranchers are paying for the aerial program. When the airplane is out the rancher is paying the hourly charge for it.

Commissioner Davidson asked what he meant by ranchers. Mike explained that it is individuals that pay for the hourly rate.

Dale Case asked how the ranchers are funding the amount. Mike stated that they bill the ranchers individually and the ranchers cut them a check. Dale asked how many ranchers are involved in that program. Mike stated that he has about ten within Union County.

Jennifer Easley is a neighbor of Ron Dake. Jennifer explained that she raises sheep and that predators are a large problem for them. She said that she does have a guard llama. Jennifer talks to Ron and they try to coordinate together how to remedy the predator problem since they both live close together. She explained that she has been fortunate this year because the coyotes go to Ron's first so since he trapped the coyotes they did not travel down to her sheep. Jennifer stated that she believed it would be a big help to producers in the County.

Nancy Dake, wife of Ron Dake, stated that the predator control service is the best answer because they have the expertise on how to handle the wildlife and the best form of control to use on each type of predator.

#### Assessment & Taxation

Linda Hill, Assessor/Tax Collector, explained that she provided a budget narrative to explain most of the increases and decreases in her budget. There is an over all increase of \$20,600 in personnel services due to merit and benefit increases. The materials and services has decreased \$21,881. There was a request for compensation for the Tax Collector position. It was eliminated in the proposed budget. Linda gave a history to the budget committee of why the request was made. She asked the budget members to read the narrative and consider putting compensation for tax collection back into the budget.

Commissioner Hibbert asked if the Tax Collector stipend did not come through what her intention would be. Linda explained that the Assessor has been the Tax Collector for eleven years. During that time there has never been any compensation for doing the tax collection. The county was facing some drastic budget cuts during the time so as a way of cutting the budget without losing people the Assessor and Tax Collector's offices were combined. The Assessor did not get any compensation for doing the additional duties because the Treasurer was still paid full time. Linda stated that it is an additional duty and is not part of the elected position at all. Linda explained that the savings this past year by having the two offices combined is \$96,000. Her feeling is that if she is going to continue to be the Tax Collector the County needs to come up to their obligation and pay something for tax collection. Her stipend represents 15% of her salary. It is a little over \$8600. Out of 36 counties there are 15 counties where the Assessor is also the Tax Collector. Many of them are the large metro counties. There are some counties that are similar in size and can be compared to Union County. Comparing the similar counties to Union County all of the positions of Assessor/Tax Collector make anywhere from 9 to 45% more then the same position in Union County. An average of those would come out to 24.4% and she is asking for 15%. She stated that this should have been done before but it wasn't so it needs to be corrected.

Commissioner Hibbert asked what her intent would be if the budget committee and the salary committee decide not to fund the stipend. Linda stated that she would no longer be the Tax Collector. She feels that there is no one else in the county that works for free. She thinks that asking for something for tax collection is not asking too much. Linda explained that every one of her staff has to be cross trained to be able to have enough people to cover the tax collection. At the same time they still have to do Assessment duties during tax time. She stated that she has spent four years getting things to a point where it runs smooth. Linda tried to provide all the history so that everyone understands where this is

coming from. She explained that it is awfully hard when something has gone on for a period of time and everyone is comfortable with where that level of pay is and not understanding what has occurred in the past.

#### Public Works

Rich Comstock, Public Works Director, explained that the public works budget is balanced but that does not mean that there is enough money. He removed any increase in personnel and removed any new heavy equipment or shop equipment. They did not decrease their building maintenance request because DEQ has informed them that there needs to be an oil separator in their shop which will be a large expense.

Commissioner Davidson asked how many of the crew is a full crew out plowing the roads in the Winter. Richard said that fourteen is a full crew in the Winter months. There are eighteen employees total that work for the Public Works department. Richard stated that services will have to decrease if they lose any more employees.

Nellie asked if they are in negotiations this year with the employee union. Richard explained that they are not in negotiations with the union this year so the cola is 3% this year.

#### Parks

Richard Comstock, Parks Director, explained that there is a need to change the way the funds are broken out. Richard explained that the expenses will be consolidated and not separated out by each individual park. He explained that it gives him the flexibility to spend the money differently instead of the same dollar amount for each park. So, if there is a big project in one park the money can be used towards it. Shelley Burgess, Budget Officer, explained that this is a good year to make the change in the budget line items.

Commissioner Hibbert asked what the transfer to the public works is out of the parks budget. Richard explained that is for the work that public works does on the parks. The transfer is also for the administration of the parks.

#### Airport

Richard Comstock, Airport Director, explained that they have left the airport budget the same. The revenue was increased a little due to the past fuel sales. If there is a big fire season there needs to be enough money in the line item to purchase the fuel. There are seven part time employees at the airport.

Dale Case stated that it looks like there is a shortage of \$100,000 in the capital improvement line item. Shelley Burgess explained that the fund that Richard was going over was the Airport Operations budget. There is also an Airport Capital



Improvement Fund where the projects are funded. She explained the budget shows a \$2,500,000 FAA grant. That project is the runway safety improvement project. It is done in stages so it is an estimate what will be spent in each funding year. When the budget was put together it did not include a stimulus project that is the Taxiway Rehabilitation because it was anticipated to be done in the current budget year. The construction probably won't happen until the end of June and carry on into the next fiscal year. Shelley stated that she needs to request the committee to add an additional \$1,100,000 in this budget under FAA Grant and contractual services for that project. Shelley stated that there is a 5% match on the Safety Improvement project but some of the expenditures required for that project had to be made up front. There will not be an actual cash outlay as the match. They will be given credit for those items that have already been paid. Typically there would be a cash match but this project is different. Shelley explained that there is another adjustment she would like the committee to make on the Airport Capital budget. The forest service building is under construction and it is in the current budget. The project will not be complete until August so she needs the line item increased to \$500,000 to finish the project.

#### Computer Services

Kathie Powell, Computer Services Manager, explained that there is a change in the equipment line item to \$14,000 to replace the two old AS400 machines. She is going to replace two of the machines with one machine. It will not be a new machine but a recertified one. IBM will take maintenance over on the recertified machine. This will provide more storage space on the machine as well as hold the server for the email and internet system. The memory will be better on the new machine and it will have room for growth. Kathie stated that the last machine that was purchased was \$35,500 in 2005 and she chose to go to a recertified machine this time which would be \$14,000.

#### GIS

Kathie Powell, Computer Services Manager, explained that this year they have almost made their revenues which is good. It has covered almost all of the expenditures for GIS. Overall there is a decrease in the budget of \$5,000. They are trying to be realistic in what kind of revenues that can be pulled in from cooperatives that are made with utility companies and other places when they request maps or the database. That revenue is reported in the GIS fund. It is a separate fund which will cover the expenses for the GIS training that is needed. The budget was reduced because a server is not needed. Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, explained that the transfer to the general fund that is in the budget is for the Planning Department to offset some of the expense for a staff person that works in GIS. Kathie stated that they will continue to grow and serve more people. The Public Works, Assessor, and Planning Department are all currently using GIS. Eventually the Clerks office will be using the system as well.

Commissioner Hibbert asked if there is still an opportunity to bring in other agencies to use the GIS program. Kathie stated that the utilities have paid in to use the program and she hopes more agencies will use the program in the future.

Center for Human Development, CHD

Ricco Weber, CHD Fiscal manager, stated that the demand for their services has increased. He stated that they recently received the contract from the State for the Public Health Department and it was reduced from last year by 20%. The youth suicide prevention program was cut from the program. The other areas within the State contract were reduced about 5%. They have identified a need in the community for family planning especially among the young people in the community and also for immunization education. They are finding a need for some outreach so people know what services are offered. They have engaged with Vista which is a domestic Peace Corp. but there is a matching component involved in that program.

Ricco explained that the La Grande School District has decreased their funds for the school based health center by \$10,000 this year. They have offered the program at 30 hours per week during the school year but they will not be able to continue to operate at that level with the loss of revenue. The State minimum is 15 hours per week so it will be reduced to that level without further support. In the past years the County has kept their contribution at \$20,000. Ricco explained that CHD is asking the County to contribute \$30,000 to make up for the loss in revenue.

The Veteran Services Program has seen a 30% increase in case load. CHD chose to operate the Veterans Services at a loss for the increased demand. They are asking the County to increase their contribution. The State is predicting a 5.8% decrease in funds from the State.

Dale Case asked Ricco what the percentage of increase CHD is asking the County to contribute. Ricco stated that it is roughly a 31-32% increase.

Shelley Burgess stated that the levels of funding for CHD are at the current levels of funding in the budget. She explained to the budget committee that if they want to grant the budget requests for CHD it would be additional to the proposed budget.

Don Waldrop asked if CHD gets any federal money. Ricco stated that they do get some money through the federal government. A lot of the programs are a mix of State and Federal money. Don asked if the Veterans Services Program was paid with Federal money. Ricco stated that the money for that program is received from the State.

Don Waldrop asked if CHD will be moving locations.

Ricco stated that they received approval from the board to move forward with the progress. Meyer Memorial Trust has given \$200,000 and they are waiting to hear from the bank about the rest of the funds.

Don asked if it will save CHD money. Ricco stated that it will not save costs in the short term and it is more secure as far as debt. They will save some money for front office costs. It will make the services easier to access.

#### Sheriff

Boyd Rasmussen, Sheriff, explained that the gun permit revenue will be up by \$500. The ATV contract will give some money to the Sheriff's office on the revenue side which was an increase of \$16,000 and there was not a new deputy added for that program. The expenditures have increased for the yearly merit for the personnel. The Federal grant went down from \$39,000 to \$24,000 which is a significant loss. The City of Union materials is less because the funds were in the wrong place last year. The vehicle fuel went up slightly. There was a new patrol vehicle added to the fleet. Boyd stated that he would like to add another new vehicle to his fleet. Shelley Burgess explained that there would be money from the general fund to compensate for the extra vehicle. The transfer from the wind money could be used but it is proposed to come out of the general fund at this point for the new vehicle.

#### Corrections

Boyd Rasmussen, Sheriff, explained that they are now adding two isolation cells to give them more rooms to use for isolation of inmates. Boyd also stated that they have purchased a new video system that would be a continuous stream. He explained some of the problems with the Wallowa County contract. They added \$11,000 to the Wallowa County contract. Those funds are for the instances when the jail is full so inmates have to be taken to another facility. The work crew reimbursement went down because the State is not paying as much for that position. Boyd stated that he wants the work crew program to be maintained because it works very well in the community. The personnel was increased due to step increases and it does not include a cost of living raise. CHD was going to increase the rate for the CHD nurse so the jail has contracted with the providers for a nurse to be on call. It was a savings of over \$10,000.

#### Animal Control

There are two part time employees. The line items are the same as last year. They are adding a vehicle in the animal control budget. Boyd went over the costs that have been paid for the animal control vehicle for repairs. Boyd stated that there is \$6900 budgeted for the Animal Control vehicle in the budget.

Commissioner Davidson asked how many years the vehicle lease would be. Boyd stated that they would lease the vehicle for three years. Shelley Burgess explained that the Animal Control fund is a separate fund and general fund revenues are transferred into the fund. There is a contribution received from the City of La Grande for \$25,000. In order to fund the vehicle there needs to be another revenue source so her proposal is to transfer the \$6900 out of the wind energy revenue to make the purchase.

Commissioner Davidson asked if any of the other cities provide funding for the animal control services. Shelley explained that the animal control services are not provided within any of the other cities within the County.

#### General Fund

Shelley stated that this is the general budget for the general fund. It includes the taxes and the various revenues. The liquor and cigarette revenues are down this year so they were budgeted lower. There is a significant PILT amount budgeted within this fund. It is helping make up for many of the revenues that were lost. Many of the revenues that were reduced show up in the individual budgets.

Commissioner Hibbert stated that it has increased significantly from the 2008-09 budget. Shelley stated that it is up from what was budgeted but not from what was received.

Don Waldrop asked what the \$700,000 budgeted for payment in lieu of taxes was for. Shelley stated that is the money received from the Federal government in lieu of property taxes.

#### Accounting

Shelley explained that it is similar to last years budget with a notable change of \$10,000 for contractual services which would be used to contract with a CPA to assist with preparation of financial documents. There is not enough staff to prepare all the documents that are needed to be audited. A contract service would be a more cost effective way to have the financial documents done. Everything else in the accounting budget is the same.

#### Clerk

Shelley stated that this budget is a status quo budget. There is a decrease in the amount of Clerk's fees budgeted based on the history. The expenditures are budgeted about the same.

#### BOPTA

Shelley explained that this is a small budget that handles the property tax appeals. It has one revenue source from the House Bill 2338. It covers the expenses for tax appeals.

#### Elections

Shelley explained that there is a reduction in the revenue. The State no longer reimburses the County for the elections and that is the reason why there will not be as much revenue generated.

#### Commissioners

Shelley stated that there are a few revenue sources in this fund. There is an administrative fee charged for work that is done on the Solid Waste District and a few grants that are administered for the Grande Ronde Model Watershed and the Criminal Justice Commission. The personnel has gone down because a person in the Commissioners office will be a full time presence in the office but will share the expense of the personnel with the Emergency Services Department. The reason that is being done is because there are federal funds available to reimburse the salary. By sharing the individual the Commissioners budget will be reimbursed for half of the salary. The person will remain in the Commissioners office as the receptionist and will do some planning and clerical work for Emergency Services from that location. It is a way to get some additional revenue to fund a position that is needed in the Commissioners office. There is an increase in the materials and services line item for a computer replacement.

#### Juvenile

Shelley explained that there are no new expenses within this budget. There will be a reduction in the detention revenues but there is a budgeted reduction in the expenditure as well.

#### Planning

Shelley stated that this budget is similar to the last year's budget. There are a few revenue sources. The Planning Director does most of the administrative work for the Solid Waste District. He does the permit renewals so there is a revenue to reimburse the department for those services. They do charge fees so there is collection of Planning Commission fees within the budget. There is also the GIS transfer that was mentioned earlier towards personnel.

#### Emergency Services

Shelley stated that she mentioned the funding for the Department Specialist that shows up as a new line item within this budget. There is a revenue that offsets the cost. There is a Department of Justice grant and a Public Safety Interoperable Communication grant to fund Phase II and Phase III of the communications plan. Phase II includes some radios and antennas on Howard Butte, Worth Hill and Johnson Rock. Phase III is actual communication radio purchases that will go out to the emergency responding agencies. Those are both Federal grants. The other expenditures are those necessary to maintain the program most of which are covered by the Emergency Services grant with a

small general fund amount that is necessary as a match to make the County eligible for the grant.

#### Special Accounts

Shelley explained that this fund is the area for services that are provided for all of the departments. There is also a collection of revenues in this fund. The GAP bond revenue is received for the certificates of participation that were used to build the Chaplin building. There is a Title III transfer in which the money is to offset some of the work the Emergency Services Officer does for Search and Rescue and Emergency Services. The HUD grant is a WURA grant that Union County sponsored. Last year it was \$100,000 and most of it was used. There is an expenditure that matches that revenue. There is a field burning reimbursement line item. There is reimbursement that is received from the grass seed growers for the program. The Vector Control reimbursement is fairly significant. It is for the personnel within the Vector Control Department. The Jail assessment fee line item is State funds which were cut this year. The liability insurance and property insurance is paid out of this fund. The phone system is also paid for out of this fund. The membership to the Association of Oregon Counties and the National Association of Counties is paid from this fund. There is a contractual services line item to pay for outside legal counsel. This is also where the CHD contribution is budgeted.

Commissioner Davidson asked how many libraries are being supported with the money that is going to the circulating libraries line item. Shelley stated that it is \$20,000 to the City of La Grande library and contributions also go to the City of Elgin, the Cove Community Foundation, North Powder and Union. She does not know the percentages but it is based on the contributions from other sources.

The senior program is the contribution towards the senior transportation and the senior center.

Commissioner Davidson asked what the resource development line item was used for. Shelley explained that it is the miscellaneous line item for things that don't fit in another line item.

Shelley stated that she requested that the contingency be increase from \$200,000 to \$300,000 this year. It is probably still not enough but it would be much better than the \$200,000.

#### District Court

Shelley explained that this is where the facilities department is paid for the rent for the District Court. It is important that the contribution is shown for the courts.

#### Transfers

Shelley stated that this is where she has budgeted the general fund money that would go out of the general fund to other funds. The Animal Control fund was at \$45,000 but looking at the way the budget was proposed with the City of La Grande was giving \$28,000 but they only contributed \$25,000 so the general fund contribution needs to be \$48,000. The thing that Boyd did not mention when he went over that budget is that under the contractual services in the Animal Control fund is \$10,000 that is given to the Blue Mountain Humane Association.

The next transfer is to the Surveyor Fund and the proposed transfer is at the level that it has been for a number of years. She has also proposed to transfer \$5,000 to the Vehicle Reserve Fund.

The general fund budget was balanced as Shelley proposed it.

#### Bicycle Fund/OTIA

This is the project fund. It has a beginning fund balance of money that has been generated from taxes for the bicycle fund projects. There is a small amount of State highway funds received each year for that purpose. There is a Federal stimulus project that is still in the works. It is proposed to be a \$3,000,000 project.

#### County School

This is the fund where the County receives the revenue on behalf of the school districts and then it is dispersed amongst the school districts.

#### Commission on Children and Families

This is a fund that is self balanced. This is one that took some hits with State funding. The director has proposed the budget based on the best information she has on the State cuts. Most of the expenditures are in the contractual services line item. What she will do to keep the fund balanced is as the numbers become clearer if there are reductions then that item will be reduced. That amount is what they will have to give out to their programs. This budget will only spend what they receive.

#### Court Security

This is another self balanced fund. Money comes in from fees and fines on court proceedings. It is under recommendation of the Circuit Court for the expenditure of those funds. They pay for a court security officer who is contracted with the Sheriff's department. The revenue shows up in the Corrections budget because they use a correction's officer to provide the service. They sometimes will do improvements to the facility to increase safety for the court staff. The only thing budgeted this year is to cover the cost of the officer.

#### Wind Project Fund

Shelley explained that this fund is where the community services fees are received for the wind energy project. There is a beginning fund balance because there was more community service fees received than originally anticipated. She is anticipating the community service fees to be at \$255,000 for this years budget. It is 8-10% less. It is on a sliding scale. The community services fees for the other districts are also collected in this fund. The wind energy company wanted to be billed all in one bill so they only had to write one check. So the County receives it and distributes it to the districts. The proposed expenditures are some transfers out to support some programs. There is a transfer to the Sheriff's department for \$35,000, the D.A.'s office, Animal Control and she is proposing a transfer to the building reserve. Shelley explained that the County committed to transfer some of the funds into a renewable energy grant program.

This funding is discretionary so there is no obligation to spend it on anything specific.

Commissioner Davidson asked if the renewable energy grant is the money that the renewable energy committee is looking for projects to sponsor. Shelley stated that it is. None of the funds have been expended this year. She stated that the Commissioners signed a Resolution that dedicated 25% of the community service fees to the renewable energy fund for projects. There is a committee that is appointed that has developed guidelines to develop some projects. The funding is waiting for approved projects.

#### STF Fund

Shelley explained that the STF fund is money that the County receives for cigarette tax revenue dedicated to transportation for elderly and people with disabilities. There is an advisory committee that reviews the proposals annually and designates how those funds will be utilized. The STG funds are a similar program through the public transit division competitive grant process where the County receives the grant funds and then those are provided to the contract providers which is usually Community Connections, Center for Human Development, or New Day Enterprises.

#### Crime Victim Program

This program is done out of the District Attorney's office and it is a self balancing fund with grant funds. There were some Justice Court fees transferred in last year to offset a grant shortage. This year they are balanced based on their own sources.

#### MERA

This is a new fund this year. It is for the Mt. Emily Recreation Area. There are grants that the Planning Department staff has worked to secure so there will be



some grants for trail maintenance and development. There was some funding to purchase ATV's to allow them to construct and maintain the area.

Dale Case asked who was going to be responsible of the maintenance of the property. Shelley stated that Cody Vavra from the Planning Department is currently the staff person assigned to the project.

Commissioner Hibbert stated that there are a number of volunteers that have already given of their time to help improve the area. She believes they are planning on doing the maintenance with volunteers. Also, through the Oregon Consortium they will be getting some youth crew workers.

Shelley stated that this budget does not show any personnel costs. The County has not increased staffing to maintain the area at this point.

#### CAMI Fund

This is a fund that operates the Mt. Emily Safe Center. They have grant funding for their program. It shows the staffing and their expenses.

Commissioner McClure asked what CAMI stands for. Shelley stated that it stands for Child Abuse Mitigation and Intervention.

#### Title III SR2008

This is the new allocation that has just become available in the current year. It is a six year authorization in that the funds have to be utilized within the six year time frame or the funds have to be returned to the Federal Government. The National Forest Service Title III money is one that there was no sunset so the funds could be accumulated and used at any time. The funds could only be used for specific purposes. It was recommended to keep the money separate so all the money would not have to be used or it would have to be returned. This fund was able to be used for some projects for Search and Rescue, Emergency Services, fire safety planning, and youth crews. It has to be projects on or adjacent to forest lands. There are a lot of requirements in using the funding. The County will accept proposals under the new funding for projects that qualify.

Commissioner Hibbert asked if there was a penalty if it accumulates and is spent all on one big project. Shelley stated that it is fine as long as it is spent by the sixth year. If there aren't any good projects the money does not have to be spent until the end of the sixth year.

Dale Case asked what type of projects qualify for the funds. Commissioner McClure stated that the new grant requires the projects to be fire mitigation projects. Search and Rescue can also be allowed in the new grant. The old grant had educational categories and was a more broad scope of projects.

#### Community Development Loan Fund

This is a Community Development Block Grant that Union County received. The administrator of the grant is Community Connections. It is a program for housing rehabilitation for low income families. It is a loan program where they can do improvements to their home at no interest.

Commissioner Hibbert asked if the loans were tied into energy conservation. Shelley explained the loans are usually upgrades that are needed due to safety or health concerns.

#### Watershed

This fund is the staff for the Grande Ronde Model Watershed program. It is funded through a BPA grant. The BPA provides the money to Union County. The employees are County employees and the County is reimbursed for their salary by the BPA grant.

#### Agricultural Services

This is where the assistant Watermaster is funded through. The Watermaster is a State employee. It is funded completely through grants. They are reimbursed based on maintenance and monitoring of water gauging stations. Some of the entities pay a certain amount for that service so there is some money generated to keep the program going.

#### Non-Med. Transportation Program

Shelley explained this fund is another program that Union County is the grant recipient and the funds are provided to a subcontractor. This is transportation for Medicaid transportation fees but they are non medical. The provider is Community Connections.

#### Human Services

This fund is where some public health money is received and also there are two employees that are contracted to CHD. There is a Public Health Department Specialist and the Veterans Service Officer. The employees are paid by Union County and CHD reimburses the County for the costs. There are a few of the funding sources for those programs come to the County and the funds are then turned over to CHD.

#### Mediation Assessment

The revenues come from fees from court filings and this is administered by an individual from the courts. Any time there is a divorce that involves children they are required to do mediation and there is assistance available for those costs through this program.

#### Ambulance

There used to be an ambulance levy and delinquent taxes still come in now and then. This fund is down to \$42.

#### Library Project

There was an activity a few years ago to pursue a library district in Union County. There were several grants available for some demonstration projects and for a staff person to do some feasibility study work. The grants have all expired but there is still a little bit of money in the fund. It is interest that has been generated. It is available for the library project so at some point it can be made available to the libraries. The money is dedicated to library services because that is the reason the County received it.

#### 911 Communication

The revenue for the 911 service is in this fund. It is contracted with the City of La Grande for the dispatch services. There is a break down on the contractual services budget. There is a user board that reviews the budget proposal and recommends it for payment each year. The County is the fiscal agent for that funding. Revenues are received from the State and from other jurisdictions and pay the bill once a year for contract services.

#### RAC Maintenance

This is for the Riveria Activity Center. The County receives rent in the amount of \$300 a month for maintenance fees for the building. The County holds the title to that facility.

#### Law Library

This fund receives revenues from the Clerks fees and those are dedicated for law library purposes. The Eastern Oregon University librarian administers this for the County. The law library is located at Eastern Oregon University so they budget for materials and a small fee for operations.

#### Drug Court

This fund receives a Criminal Justice Commission grant and a Department of Justice grant for this program. The staff is provided by a Circuit Court employee. The County reimburses the State for her salary out of the grants. There is monitoring of individuals assigned to drug court. They are dedicated funds received to use only for drug court.

#### Building and Property Reserve

The next budget year the final participation payment will be paid for the Chaplin building. It was budgeted to have a transfer in from the wind fund of \$100,000. The financial institution that the certificate of participation was done through

holds the reserve funding that will be returned and the final payment will be made with those funds.

#### Senior Maintenance

This is similar to the RAC Fund. There is a monthly rent received for the use of the Senior Center that goes into this fund for repairs and maintenance.

#### County Fair

The County Fair board prepares the budget but because of the Statutes it is necessary that this budget be adopted by the County. It is balanced based on the revenues.

#### Justice Court

The fines and fees in this fund were budgeted at \$190,000 and they are at \$140,000 so that is where they are budgeted this year. It covers the judge and the department specialist that manages that program. The materials and services are very lean. If the projections are right there will be a \$20,000 contingency. There were a lot of transfers out of this fund last year but there is not enough in the reserve of this fund to schedule any transfers this next fiscal year.

#### Clerk – Equipment Reserve

This is a reserve fund where a certain portion of the fees collected by the Clerks office go into this fund for capital purchases. There is \$6,000 budgeted for equipment and computer hardware.

#### A&T User

This fund is for Assessment and Taxation for capital purchases. There is a request for office equipment in this fund.

#### Vehicle Reserve

This is a fund that was established to accumulate money for vehicle purchases. This year there is a proposed transfer in from the Assessment and Taxation budget and one in the general transfers. The reason the money is being transferred from the Assessment & Taxation budget is because it is partially grant reimbursed. The other transfer allows for money to be moved into this fund so that if a vehicle needs to be purchased it can be done.

Commissioner Davidson asked if she is proposing any vehicle purchases. Shelley stated that she has budgeted it so that the money could be spent but she does not have any requests for vehicles.

#### Transit Hub Maintenance

This is a new fund that was created. It is similar to the RAC and Senior Center Maintenance fund. This is the new building that is near the senior center. It was

built with grant funds received by the County so the County owns the building. It is leased to Community Connections for a monthly fee that will go into the fund to build up for maintenance needs.

#### Communication System

This is a new fund. A new tower was constructed on Mt. Emily that services emergency responders and they will pay a fee for the use of that tower. Those fees go into this fund and generate revenue to maintain that system. It is a very costly system. There are some expenditures because there will be some contract maintenance for the tower but there will also be a reserve that will need to be built up as well.

#### Surveyor

The budget is put together by the Surveyor, Greg Blackman. There are revenues that are generated and there is a beginning fund balance that is carried forward from public land preservation fees. He receives certain fees for plan review that are collected by the Clerk. There is a request for a general fund transfer of \$19,200 that was discussed earlier. The expenditures are all contract services. The surveyor does not receive a salary but he is reimbursed for the services that are provided on a contract basis. There is also a request for a new file cabinet under office/operating supplies.

#### MAP

In the past there were funds set aside for mapping needs in this fund. It was used to do the upgrades. There was a balance left in the fund so it is transferred in small increments into the Assessors budget to honor the contract.

#### Discussion

Shelley stated that she did a couple of summaries. The first one was to point out some of the revenue reductions. It was mostly informational for the budget committee. She did a summary of capital and equipment requests that were included in the budget. She identified the requests by the fund and the department.

Commissioner Davidson asked what the card printer was for the Sheriff's office. Shelley explained that it has to do with the fingerprint cards. There is a request for a new printer. It has to be a heavy duty one because of the type of material they are printing on.

Shelley stated that the capital and equipment requests are all in the budget. She was able to balance with them all in the budget. If there is any of the items on the list that the budget committee does not wish to fund they can be pulled from the budget and it will leave more funds available.

Shelley made a list of items that are new requests that are not part of the proposed budget. Shelley stated that Boyd reduced a revenue that she wasn't aware of so she will have to do some adjustments to make up for the reduction.

Commissioner Davidson asked about the revenue reduction in the Sheriff's budget. Shelley stated that in the corrections budget that Boyd Rasmussen, Sheriff, gave to the budget committee there was a revenue reduction. Boyd reduced two revenues from his original proposal. He reduced the Senate Bill 1145 revenue which Shelley was aware that revenue would be decreased. He also decreased the work crew reimbursement. He had originally proposed \$65,773 revenue and the new budget shows the revenue being \$46,289 so it is \$19,484 that she will have to find out of the budget. Boyd stated that he got the information of the decrease in the work crew revenue from Jane DeClue, Director of Union/Wallowa County Community Corrections. The information has come after the budget was put together.

Don Waldrop stated that he would like to see the \$8700 for the medical examiner included in the budget. Dale Case stated that he believes it is asking a lot of someone to pay for their own training. Shelley explained that the amount to pay the medical examiner was a separate line item. In the District Attorney's budget there is a \$6000 medical investigation. That money is not for the medical examiner. That money is used if an investigator needs to be hired for anything. Shelley explained that there are no current line items for the medical examiner. It is a request that was brought forward last year. He was also requesting an additional Deputy District Attorney which was added last year because it was of higher priority.

Don Waldrop asked Shelley if there was any money that could be moved to support the medical examiner position.

Mary Jane Johnson asked how the Tax Collector function is in addition to the job function of the Assessor. Commissioner Hibbert stated that the history shows that in 1998 the Tax Collector was combined with the Assessment and Taxation. Linda has given a good narrative, but at that time the Assessor was put on as a full time employee instead of a part time employee. It represented a 5% increase.

Commissioner McClure explained that prior to 1996 the Treasurer did Tax collection. In 1996 the Tax collection was transferred to the Assessor. The Assessor was then put on as a full time employee. The Assessor at that time worked in that position for six years after the change was made. Commissioner McClure stated that he could not remember a request for an increased salary until now.

Mary Jane stated that the compensation for the time was already in place when Linda Hill took the job. Commissioner Hibbert stated that the two departments had already been combined when Linda ran for office. It has not changed since she was first elected.

Shelley Burgess stated that the salary compensation committee would usually have to review the wages for the elected officials. That is the role of the lay members of the budget committee. This year Linda Hill decided that the tax collection duties are not required to be an elected position so that is the reason why it came before the full budget committee. The Assessor position is the elected part of the position. The way it is proposed in the budget would not effect the Assessor's salary. Linda is asking for a stipend for the Tax Collector position.

Dale Case asked if she has extra personnel that she supervises because of the addition of tax collection. Shelley explained that at the time the County did the change from the Treasurer/Tax Collector to the Assessor/Tax Collector the whole system was combined. The Assessor/Tax Collector has staff that does both duties. Each of the individuals within the department except for the Appraisers provide a dual function. Commissioner Hibbert stated that some of the duties that the Tax Collector had been doing before have now gone to the part time elected Treasurer. Some of the duties left the department.

Mary Jane Johnson explained that Linda told the budget committee she will no longer do the Tax Collector function if she does not receive the stipend. Mary Jane asked how that would affect the County. Commissioner McClure stated that the County would have to find someone else to do the function. Mary Jane asked if the budget committee does not accept the request would they then have to figure out who would do the functions. Commissioner McClure stated that it would then be the Commissioners job to find a person to do the functions.

Shelley asked the budget committee if there are any items on the capital or equipment requests that they would like removed from the budget. Shelley stated that these would all be one time expenditures that would not be reoccurring in the budget next year with the exception of two vehicle leases.

Commissioner Hibbert asked why the District Attorney is requesting a microfiche system rather than digitizing. Shelley explained that they are trying to go to paperless court proceedings so she believes that it is digitizing.

The budget committee agreed that the capital and equipment requests should all remain in the budget.

Shelley asked what the budget committee would like to do with the new requests.

Mary Jane stated that she feels the Assessor/Tax Collector stipend should not be given. The rest of the board agreed to not fund the stipend request from the Assessor/Tax Collector.

Shelley stated that there is still the \$19,484 that has to be made up in the Corrections budget. Don Waldrop asked how much money is left in the wind energy budget that could maybe be transferred to make up the difference. Shelley stated that there is \$29,300 budgeted as the contingency for the wind energy budget.

Dale Case stated that he doesn't believe Union County can afford a full time predator control person. He could not justify paying for a full time person but might be willing to fund a half time person. He thinks Union County should definitely fund a quarter time person.

Commissioner McClure stated that he would agree with that. He feels that another county could partner with Union County to see if a program can be put together between the two counties. He thinks that it should be put in the budget which would give them leverage to find another county such as Baker County to partner in the program.

Commissioner Hibbert explained that if Union County shows a good faith effort showing the program being funded then she thinks that the cattleman's association might participate in the program as well.

Dale stated that he believes Union County should fund at least a quarter or one-third of the program.

Commissioner Davidson asked if the budget committee would like to fund the CHD request. Commissioner McClure stated that he would like to take a better review of the veterans program. CHD is asking for a 30% increase in the veterans program. Commissioner Hibbert agrees with Commissioner McClure to review the program.

Shelley stated that CHD's request included \$10,000 for the school based nurse for the La Grande school district. Shelley stated that the contribution towards the school nurse program is at \$20,000 now and they are asking for an additional \$10,000.

Mary Jane asked if they are asking for a \$10,000 increase for the School Nurse program and \$10,000 increase for the Veteran services program. Shelley explained that is what they are requesting.



Commissioner Hibbert stated that this is a good opportunity to review the veterans service program since CHD will be moving and maybe the program will no longer be under CHD.

Commissioner Hibbert stated that she thinks the school health nurse needs to be where it was last year.

Commissioner Davidson stated that he would like to go down the list and discuss the items in order. He stated that the accounting request is in and staying in. The Assessor/Tax Collector stipend is out and is staying out. The Corrections request is in and will be staying in. He stated that the Medical Examiner request could be left out. He explained that the Facilities request for a janitor is in the budget and there has been no discussion of taking it out of the budget.

Mary Jane Johnson asked if there has been a change in the appearance since the janitor was brought in. Commissioner Davidson stated that there is a large improvement. Mary Jane thinks that it is very important to have the public buildings looking nice.

Commissioner Hibbert wanted to revisit the Corrections budget. She stated that the new item is the on call nurse and overtime and another item for work crew of \$19,484. It is additional new request. Commissioner Hibbert stated that there is \$52,000 budgeted for extra help and she is wondering if since there has never been an overtime line item before if it can be under the extra help. Shelley stated that the extra help line item is for the reserve officers.

Commissioner Davidson stated that Commissioner Hibbert has a better understanding of the Corrections department since she is the liaison. Shelley explained that when she went through the Corrections budget she didn't see where any money could be used for other line items.

Mary Jane Johnson explained that the budget committee would like to leave the Corrections requests in the budget. She asked about the District Attorney Medical Examiner program.

Don Waldrop stated that he thinks it should be put into the budget. Commissioner Davidson said that he thinks the committee should weigh it against the other items that the committee would like in the budget.

The budget committee has decided not to fund the additional request for the La Grande school nurse. They also decided not to fund the additional request for the Veterans Service officer at this time.

Commissioner Davidson asked if they were asking for a 4% cost of living raise for the public health and alcohol and drug departments. He stated that Union County has asked all of their employees to not take a cost of living raise. He thinks the County owes it to the departments to be consistent.

Commissioner Davidson stated that he could fully support doing something for the Veterans office because there is a growing population of veterans with the Iraq war. He thinks the program could be looked at more closely to see if it should stay a County function or be moved to CHD.

Shelley Burgess summed up the requests for CHD by stating that the CHD funds will be left as it is in the budget and if the Commissioners feel it is appropriate to give the Veterans program more funds after an extended view of the program. They will do so at the budget hearing.

Dale Case stated that he would support quarter time funding for the Predator Control program. The committee agreed to support the Predator Control program at a quarter time level.

Commissioner Hibbert stated that there is also a request from the Ambulance Advisory Committee. Shelley explained that there is some left over money from a levy that Union County had. There is an Ambulance Advisory Committee that serves the entire County and they had utilized the revenue that was left for some educational purposes for the volunteer individuals. The funding source only has \$42 left in the fund. The budget request from the Ambulance Committee is to give some funding for that function. Commissioner Davidson asked if this funding would give them enough for training for one year. Shelley stated that it would be for one year.

Mary Jane Johnson asked what the training was for. Shelley stated that there were some training videos purchased so the outlying areas can continue to train. The Committee would like to subscribe to the training system so that the Ambulance districts can stay up to date on their training. The request is for \$2,000. Commissioner Davidson asked Shelley if she thought that request would come back every year. Shelley stated that she did think it would be a continued request. She explained that there was no funding for that program last year and there is nothing that would prevent the budget committee from not funding it in next year's budget.

Shelley asked the budget committee if they had come to a decision on the Medical Examiner request on whether to fund it or not. Commissioner Davidson asked what the amount to find out of the budget would be without the Medical Examiner request. Shelley stated that it would be \$40,562 that would need to be

found to balance the budget. If the Medical Examiner request was added she would need \$49,000.

Shelley explained that she would be able to balance the budget with money that is used from the Wind Energy Fund.

Commissioner McClure stated that he would like to see the Predator Control program in the budget but to use it as leverage to receive match funding from another agency. She could reduce the transfer into the Building Reserve fund from the Wind Energy Fund to \$80,000 and use the contingency in the Wind Energy Fund.

Shelley stated that with the budget committee's direction she will make the corrections to the budget of the items that were identified to add to the budget which would be the Ambulance request and the Predator Control program request at quarter time.

**Commissioner McClure moved approval of the budget as changed for publication. Dale Case seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned to a Solid Waste District budget meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley Wilhelm  
Department Specialist