

STOREY COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING

MONDAY, APRIL 2ND, 2007 9:00 A.M.

STOREY COUNTY DISTRICT COURTROOM
26 SOUTH B STREET, VIRGINIA CITY, NEVADA

BUDGET HEARING

MINUTES

JOHN FLANAGAN
CHAIRMAN

HAROLD SWAFFORD
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

GREG "BUM" HESS
VICE-CHAIRMAN

JAMES G. MILLER
SHERIFF

BOB KERSHAW
COMMISSIONER

LORRAINE DuFRESNE
CLERK-TREASURER

SARAH S. JENSEN
RECORDER-AUDITOR

PRESENT: Chairman Flanagan, Vice-Chairman Hess, Commissioner Kershaw, Storey County Manager Pat Whitten, and Administrative Officer Marilou Walling

CALL TO ORDER AT 9:00 A.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

(All matters listed under the consent agenda are considered routine, and may be acted upon by the Board of County Commissioners with one action, and without an extensive hearing. Any member of the Board or any citizen may request that in item be taken from the consent agenda, discussed, and acted upon separately during this meeting.)

Approval of Agenda for April 2, 2007

-Correspondence

None

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda was approved upon a motion by Commissioner Kershaw and seconded by Vice-Chairman Hess.

DISCUSSION/ACTION: Tentative Budget Hearings

Revenue

Storey County Manager Pat Whitten explained that while preparing the budget the goal is to take a conservative and cautious approach. Revenues are a blend of the Assessor projections and the Department of Taxations estimates, not included is the Centrally Assessed. The business licenses and building permits are also targeted for less than what has already been collected through January 2007. The SCCRT and the BCCRT taxes are already down this year and we have taken Taxation's estimates as indicated.

Vice-Chairman Hess stated that the dollar amount for building permits seems low. Mr. Whitten said yes and that the numbers are low on purpose.

Chairman Flanagan added that net proceeds for mines are not worth mentioning. Mr. Whitten explained that one is currently in bankruptcy, and that we should be happy that we don't have to rely on the income from the mines as other counties do.

Library

Library Director, Lucy Bouldin, was present. Mr. Whitten explained that the budget includes standard projections on salary and benefits.

Commissioner Kershaw added, "Keep up the good work!"

Justice of the Peace

Justice of the Peace Annette Daniels, was present. Mr. Whitten explained that the majority of the increase in this budget is in salary and benefits. This is the result of what happens when you bring in an employee mid-year. Mr. Whitten added that it is a very modest increase and a very modest budget.

Justice Court

Justice of the Peace Annette Daniels, was present. Mr. Whitten explained that this is the budget for administrative fees assessed. The fund has a very strong balance. The Judge is currently looking at software that would make court and records an easier process.

Community Support

Mr. Whitten explained that there is one key applicant in this budget. This applicant is Sean Griffin from Community Chest. Mr. Griffin was present for the hearing. Overall the budget is used for a number of things including the salary for the two people in the River District, and the Jeep Posse lease on the cell tower.

Vice-Chairman Hess stated that the Nevada Department of Wildlife is on us to attend meetings in Elko and Las Vegas, an increase in the travel portion maybe necessary in order to do so. Administrative Officer, Marilou Walling stated that is covered in a different budget.

Mr. Whitten said that this is the third year that the VCCTA donation remains in this account. He stated that we continue to have concerns regarding the funding formula when collections trigger funding in excess of \$135,000.00. He is going to look at some type of agreement with the VCCTA on expense recovery. RSVP received what they asked for and Youth Activities received all but \$15,000.00 of what was recovered. Lockwood Community Senior Center will have \$40,000.00 budgeted for the operation of the new center. The Fourth Ward School requested a small increase to provide for energy costs.

Fire District

Mike Klug from NDF (Nevada Division of Forestry) was present. Mr. Whitten said that the hope is that this budget will change between now and the final budget. Storey County will continue to receive seasonal coverage from NDF in Lockwood and the VC Highlands. In the past a Captain from NDF was shared with Storey County. This year Storey County will have a Captain from NDF 100% of the time.

Treasurer

Clerk-Treasurer Lorraine Du Fresne was present. Mr. Whitten explained that this is a very easy budget. There will be no increase in staffing; the office will continue to operate with 4 fulltime employees. Election expenses have increased, the budget provides for a peak election year and the possible replacement to, or addition of a couple machines. Overall there is a 3% increase in the budget.

District Court

Clerk-Treasurer Lorraine Du Fresne was present. Mr. Whitten stated that there maybe a new person helping out with court Maxine Cortez, is the Court Administrator from Carson City, might be able to assist in this area. She might be coming down to help with the new court program when it is installed.

Ms. Du Fresne explained that because Sheriff Miller is doing such a good job she has requested an increase in conflict attorneys. Mr. Whitten stated that the budget is presented as submitted.

Recorder

Recorder-Auditor Sarah Jensen was present. Mr. Whitten stated that the Recorder-Auditor's office has had an increase in staffing and they are operating with just under four and a half employees. During the last hiring the office received an incredible number of applicants. Mr. Whitten explained that the budget is almost flat except for the increase in staffing, which is primarily for use on the redaction program.

Technology

Mr. Whitten stated that this is a shared fund. The Recorder and Assessor's Office are both participants in the fund. The fund is primarily used for new software, computers, scanners, ect.

Assessor

Assessor Kathy Weeks was present. Mr. Whitten stated that the budget for salaries has been increased to allow for a new hire to start in January of 2008. This new position would be parttime and would learn basic office business and DMV registrations. The new position would allow for existing staff to concentrate more time on personal and real property appraisals. A salary adjustment has also been allowed for enhanced appraiser certification levels.

District Attorney

District Attorney Harold Swafford was present. Mr. Whitten stated that at Mr. Swafford's direction the two current employees in the office will increase their hours from 35 per week to 40 per week. The employees have also increased their certifications. Mr. Swafford has requested an increase in professional services. He would like to bring in a Deputy District Attorney on a contract basis. The Board has previously approved the concept of a Deputy District Attorney. The individual to be used will come before the Board at a latter date.

Communications

Communications Director Dave Ballard was present. Mr. Whitten explained that the biggest change in the budget is the addition of Communications Specialist positions. The Communication Specialists were originally in the Sheriff's budget. The Communications Specialist staff has been increased from 4 to 6 full-time employees. This increase in staffing will allow for dual coverage during peak operation periods. The ultimate goal is to have 8 people fulltime, this would allow for 2 people to be on duty at all times. For the 2007/2008 budget James Deane will remain under Communications. At a later date an IT Department will be given its own budget.

In addition the budget allows for a GIS (Global Information System) specialist to be hired. This individual would be of benefit to many departments and help to James Deane.

Mr. Whitten added that there are several other line items that should be noted. The Communications Department will now be responsible for their own office supplies, annual service agreements, training for the new GIS Technician, equipment for the GIS, and antivirus software upgrades for all County computers. A small replacement inventory for immediate computer repairs in all County departments will be kept on hand. The cost associated with AT&T and the 911 systems will be removed from the Sheriff and Administrative budgets.

Due to unanticipated cost associated with Communications the following departments have agreed to set aside funds to cover the cost: Sheriff, Fire, Emergency Management, and Forestry (NDF).

Building Department

Building and Planning Director Dean Haymore was present. Mr. Whitten informed the Board that the salary and fringe benefits have increased consistent with the appointed employee salary model established. One employee will be moved out of the Building Department budget and will be paid from the Planning Commission budget. Office supplies have increased to keep up with the rapid growth of the department. The Fire Marshall will no longer be paid from this budget. He will be paid 100% from the Fire budget.

Mr. Whitten added that anticipated major purchases include \$15,000.00 for tenant improvements at the new TRI Center office, \$20,000.00 for a 4WD pickup and laptop for the new building inspector, and \$4,000.00 for technology needs.

Chairman Flanagan asked which position is being moved to the Planning budget. Mr. Haymore stated that it would be Kate Dotson's old position.

Planning

Building and Planning Director Dean Haymore was present. Mr. Whitten stated that the increase in salaries is due to the moving of an employee from Building to Planning. An increase in the per diem rate for the Planning Commissioners will be raised from \$60.00 per a meeting to \$80.00.

Mr. Haymore stated that in 2003 he started to revisit the ten year plan with the Planning Commission. The 25 year plan has been completed in less than 5 years. Mr. Haymore would like the Board to see what the Planning Commission truly costs. At some point he would like to hire a sub-manager to re-work the Master Plan. Currently he is 37 sets of plans behind and they are not just industrial. It would be best to look at a sub-manager with a planning background. Mr. Haymore continued to discuss the possible position and the role it would play.

Vice-Chairman Hess stated that it takes a lot of time to go to TRI for meetings and inspections. TRI would like to see a liaison put in place.

-A break was called by the Chair at 1000 a.m.

-The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 10:20 a.m.

Buildings and Grounds

Public Works Director Mike Nevin was present. Mr. Whitten explained that Mr. Nevin has received quotes for the roof and solar system for the swimming pool and should begin the project shortly. The budget reflects the annualized impact of additional maintenance staff from one to two. Mr. Whitten states that originally it was a little bit iffy that it was best to bring on an additional person. However, it turns out it was the best thing they have ever done. The team of

Tom and Jerry has saved the County countless money. The budget also accounts for a temporary employee that is used for construction projects. He has been working under the direction of Mr. Haymore and does a phenomenal job. Expenses and rents associated with the modular units have been added to reflect the County's annual cost. Line items associated with the Virginia Gty Senior Center and Justice Complex have been increased to allow for continued renovation. Twenty thousand dollars has been set aside for the completion of the Lockwood Community Senior Center and \$5,000.00 was provided to assist with the County owned St. Mary's Art Center building if necessary.

Commissioner Kershaw asked Mr. Nevin if the newsolar system for the pool would make the County eligible for any rebates. Mr. Nevin explained that it is possible to track the BTU credits and sell them back to the power company. The equipment required to track the BTU's would be an additional \$3,500.00.

Commissioner Kershaw said that he is talking about the initial capital investment. Mr. Nevin said that he was not aware of any rebates for the installation of a solar panel system.

Commissioner Kershaw stated that he will talk to Serra Pacific about the possibility of some kind of rebate.

Pools and Parks

Public Works Director Mike Nevin was present. Mr. Whitten stated that for a brief period of time two salaries were coming out of this budget. This was during the transition time of Richard Bacus and Mike Nevin. The Capital Outlay and VC Park have increased to provide for long deferred maintenance and repairs to the pool and playground equipment.

Mr. Nevin stated that he is suspecting that we are going to have a leakage issue with the swimming pool.

Chairman Flanagan asked if there was a plan to do some work to the VC Highlands Park. Mr. Whitten said that he not received a current plan for improvements to the park.

Commissioner Kershaw asked if this budget can be used to replace equipment. Mr. Whitten said it can, but not to do maintenance.

Roads

Public Works Director Mike Nevin was present. Mr. Whitten stated that this is one of the big funds. The County will continue to do everything it can to help with roads. A large injection from the general fund has been placed in the budget. The Department of Taxation has forecasted a slight increase in gas and SCCRT revenues, however we are skeptical of this. Salaries and benefits have been increased to allow for one additional new crew person at entry level. The County has a critical responsibility out at TRI. An additional crew person will help fulfill that responsibility. Mr. Whitten explained that when he sat down with Mr. Nevin and Ms. Walling they prioritized what is needed. High on that list is a street sweeper. We are going to try to put 50% down out of the current

budget, and pay the remaining 50% out of the next budget. Street signs have been increased to replace the missing signs Countywide.

Mr. Nevin added that the price of asphalt continues to rise. It is very expensive to do any road repairs.

Commissioner Kershaw suggested looking at slurry seal. He said it holds up well and may be cheaper.

Mr. Whitten said that interest and principal have been established to provide for estimated financing payments to purchase necessary equipment for the County. It may be a five- or seven-year loan. The equipment needs include a 10 wheel cab/chassis that would be used in TRI as plow/sander in the winter and as a dump bed in the summer, a 4WD truck with 10 foot reversible plow and chassis sander, and a loader. The current loader has two payments left. Mr. Nevin would like to keep the older loader in TRI and keep the new loader in Virginia City.

Vice-Chairman Hess asked if the current loader is still in pretty good shape. Mr. Nevin said that it is in great condition. He has looked at past Nevada State purchasing bids from NDOT and feels that we can get about the same rate as NDOT paid in the past.

Mr. Whitten stated that we will continue to work with Mr. Nevin and do what we can to help with funding.

Water

Public Works Director Mike Nevin was present. Mr. Whitten explained that this is an enterprise fund and that General Fund money cannot be used in this area. Last year it looked better due to the grant that was awarded for the water tanks. Another employee recently received his certifications for the water system. Every time an alarm at the plant goes off someone who is certified has to respond.

Vice-Chairman Hess stated that the County needs to give incentives to the guys who get their certifications.

Mr. Whitten stated that Capital Outlay and Equipment Acquisition have been increased to provide for a purchase of a 4WD pickup, installation of a chlorine facility at the Silver City control station, and security fencing around all tank sights. Mr. Nevin has also requested that a survey be done in the inside of the water tanks for any maintenance that may be necessary. The purchase of a 4WD truck will be split with the Sewer Department.

Mr. Whitten explained that there is a mismatch between the expenditures and the revenues in this fund, so it may be necessary to look at raising rates.

Mr. Nevin informed the Board that the improvements on the Marlette water system will begin in May. This will primarily benefit Carson City, but we will certainly have positive benefits in Storey County.

Chairman Flanagan asked if it is still coming from the tunnel. Mr. Nevin said yes it is and do to that we have not had to use as much chemicals.

Sewer

Public Works Director Mike Nevin was present. Mr. Whitten stated that this fund has a discrepancy between revenues and expenditures. The salaries and benefits have been increased due to new certifications received by the staff. His budget will be paying for 50% of the 4WD truck purchased for water and sewer. A grant was received to do a video inspection of the sewer system, we may want to look at buying our own equipment in the future. Gold Hill may eventually need its own sewer plant and the Ramada has agreed to purchase an auger.

Mr. Nevin said that he would like George Jorgensen look at the system in Gold Hill and see if he has any ideas.

Mr. Whitten said that for Mr. Nevin coming on in the middle of January he has done a great job.

Emergency Management

Emergency Management Director Joe Curtis was present. Mr. Whitten explained that we do have sufficient money to handle the increase in the budget. We are fortunate to have Mr. Curtis. As a retired person, we can not pay him anymore that he currently receives. He is a real bargain. As the County's Emergency Management Director he deals with issues that are global throughout the county.

Mr. Whitten said that operating supplies have increased. A portion of it is paid back with a grant. There are several things that the department would like to purchase for training and operations.

For the first time Emergency Mitigation will provide funding for emergencies and disasters that may not meet State or Federal reimbursement levels. Controls are being established on the utilization of this portion of the budget.

Fire

Fire Chief Gary Hames was present. Mr. Whitten said that he is very optimistic that the County will have a firehouse in the TRI area before the end of the year. Salaries and fringe benefits have increased consistent with the appointed employee's salary model established during the prior year. Salaries also provide for the addition of two new Fire Fighter/EMTs and a new Fire Fighter/Paramedic. The Fire Marshall's salary will fully come out of the Fire Budget. Chief Hames also included the addition of a part time assistance fire chief, maybe someone that is retired. Issues remain regarding who will fund the maintenance on the Fire Buildings.

Vice-Chairman Hess stated that he would like the approval of who is hired as assistant chief to come before the Board.

Chief Hames explained that the firemen in Lockwood do not get the attention that they need. It takes so much time to get down there that it ruins the day. The part-time chief will help with the management.

Mr. Whitten stated that it is important to look at these departments and realize that they are full time, 24 hours a day, service.

Equipment Acquisition

The funding includes the principal and interest payments on four brush trucks. Also included in Vehicle Acquisition are one patrol vehicle and two replacement utility vehicles. Two of the primary engines need major overhaul.

Chairman Flanagan asked if this includes the equipment that we are going to need in TRI. Chief Hames said it does, and through pre-planning it will be opened with ALS service.

Vice-Chairman Hess asked if the exact sight has been determined. Mr. Whitten said the intersection of Denmark and Peru

Fire Emergency

Mr. Whitten explained that Chief Hames has submitted a proposal outlining the details for this long overdue fund.

Sheriff

Sheriff Miller James G. was present. Mr. Whitten explained that business is up. As of this morning there are 13 people in jail. This boost in business is reflective in both the Sheriff and Jail budgets. There are no increases proposed to staffing. Positions that were previously committed to Dispatch have been moved to the field. Sheriff Miller set money aside for Communications. One message that Mr. Whitten received from Sheriff Miller is that he is unwavering in his commitment that our District Attorney may not be busy right now, but he will be.

Vice-Chairman Hess asked if the VCCTA will be helping to reimburse costs that the Sheriff's Office incurs while helping with major events. Mr. Whitten stated that they have been working with the VCCTA.

Commissioner Kershaw asked if Sheriff Miller keeps track of warnings. Sheriff Miller said yes, they are equal to the number of citations if not more.

Jail

Sheriff James G. Miller was present. Mr. Whitten explained that the majority of the increases in the Jail budget request are driven by the high number of inmates. Capital Outlay has been raised to allow for the purchase of Jail Management software. Feeding the inmates continues to be a difficult item to budget. The budget will provide to feed the maximum number of inmates at any time, as it is best to provide for the worst case scenario.

Commissioner

Mr. Whitten informed the Board that salaries and operational expenses have been slightly bumped up. For the final budget there will be an increase in travel. It may be necessary to send someone to Washington D.C. during the next fiscal year.

Administrative

Mr. Whitten explained that this is a "catch all" account. It serves to cover expenses that are not "department specific". The Retiree Insurance Subsidy is state mandated. As more of our longtime workforce retires, this will continue to be a significantly growing impact. Professional services have been upped. This will cover outside council, web design, and programming for and acceptance credit card processing services. NACO and WNDD dues have increased. We are funding WNDD this year and Mr. Whitten would recommend that we continue this next year.

Mr. Whitten stated that someone has to be responsible for this account. "Just because something is in the budget doesn't mean that it can just be used."

Regional Transportation

Mr. Whitten stated that this department was eliminated in the 2007 budget and should remain that way. He would however, like to see it reinstated at some time to address transportation issues.

Commissioner Kershaw asked if the Commission can do the work. Mr. Whitten said that it can.

General Health

Mr. Whitten explained that this is an annual billing that works well for the County.

Service

Mr. Whitten stated that the County is in need of a service mechanic. The Service Department has been reactivated. Mr. Nevin is in the best position to supervise this position. They have provided for the hiring of a master mechanic. The new mechanic will have mobile equipment, in order to go where needed. By the first of January the County will pick up a junior assistant. Each department would not receive a bill. It will be different from last time.

Indigent Medical

Mr. Whitten said that this is a State mandated. That is used for long-term care and also to absorb significant medical cost of inmates in our jail.

Capital Projects

Mr. Whitten explained that anticipated projects include tenant improvements at the new TRI County Complex and the completion of the Communications Department relocation. This budget will also serve to begin the planning for the new Justice Complex.

Infrastructure

Mr. Whitten stated that we continue to analyze future uses as part of our ongoing assessment of needs and address them thru the Resolution process. Storey County is still waiting on the Senate’s decision on this matter.

Stabilization

Mr. Whitten said that this is the County’s savings account, and he is looking at adding an additional \$100,000.00 to this fund.

Gold Hill

Mr. Whitten stated that this is a minimal budget that is not used for much

Virginia

Mr. Whitten explained that this budget is used to pay for Virginia City’s street lights. As of February 28, 2007 the fund balance is \$27,28.00.

Indigent Accident

Mr. Whitten stated that this is a state mandated fund and that the County doesn’t pay for any more than necessary.

Commissioner Kershaw complimented Ms. Walling, Mr. Whitten, and Cindy Wiley on the budget presentation.

Commissioner Kershaw moved to approve the tentative budget. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Hess and carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

BOARD COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at the call of the Chair at 12:10 p.m.

By _____
Deputy Clerk/Treasurer