

Board of County Commissioners of Lincoln County
September 23, 2014

The Board will conduct the 2015 preliminary budget hearings. The departments are scheduled as follows to discuss their requests:

9:00 Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance

9:15 Colette Barksdale – Human Services budget

10:00 Jim Covington – County Treasurer budget

10:15 Jeremiah Higgins – County Assessor budget

10:30 Tom Nestor – Sheriff, Jail and Victims Assistance budgets

11:30 John DeWitt - Land Use & Emergency Management budgets

1:15 Sue Kelly – Public Health budget

2:00 Travis Taylor – Extension Office budget and sections of the Fair budget

2:45 Andy Lorensen – Coroner budget

Other budgets that will be reviewed during the day as time allows include the following:

Commissioners
Administrator
Administrative
Clerk & Recorder
Elections
Centennial Mental Health
Health Inspector
Fairgrounds
Veterans Office
Weed Control
Transportation Enhancement Grant
Road & Bridge
Library Fund
Contingent Fund
Conservation Trust Fund
E911 Fund
Capital Projects Fund
Landfill Fund
Lodging Tax/Tourism Fund

Old Business
New Business

The Board of Lincoln County Commissioners met at 9:00 a. m. on September 23, 2014, for the annual budget hearings. The following attended: Chairman Ted Lyons, Commissioners Greg King and Doug Stone, County Administrator Roxie Devers, Clerk to the Board Corinne M. Lengel, and commissioner-elect Ed Schiffers.

Chairman Lyons called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Devers said she had gone back after the last meeting and plugged in the numbers the commissioners had come up with for the Road & Bridge budget, and wanted them to know that their current requests would require 18.6 mills. She had not yet figured in the payments to the towns, so that would bring it close to 20 mills. The Road & Bridge mill levy for 2014 is 14.9 mills.

A brief discussion was held regarding moving the annex building, as Land Use Administrator John DeWitt had forwarded an email to the commissioners from Gerald Hostetler, who moves buildings, and they learned he would charge \$45,000, give or take \$5,000, to move the annex to the fairgrounds. Mr. Lyons said if that were the case they may have to take another look at repairing the current foundation instead of moving the building.

Mr. King made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held on September 18, 2014, as submitted. Mr. Stone seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

At 9:15 a.m., Human Services Director Colette Barksdale met with the Board to present the Human Services budget request. Robert Kraxberger and Sherri Hansen accompanied her. DHS will receive an additional \$5,000 for the extra duties that on-call staff will be required to perform, and since the rates have not been raised since 2002, the Board agreed to increase them to \$30, \$60 and \$90.

At 10:00 a.m., County Treasurer Jim Covington and County Assessor Jeremiah Higgins met with the Board to present their budget requests. The commissioners agreed to add \$2,000 to the Treasurer's budget in order for the department to work on digitizing some of their records.

At 10:30 a.m., Sheriff Tom Nestor met with the Board to present the budget requests for the Sheriff, Jail, and Victim's Assistance departments. Other than salary increases, the sheriff said most of his budget will remain the same as 2014, although he did include his annual request to replace two vehicles.

At 11:00 a.m., Land Use Administrator John DeWitt asked the commissioners if he could refund Cody Weber's \$250 development permit fee, as he had intended to build a crematorium but then took it out of county instead. Mr. DeWitt said the purpose of charging the fee is to review and complete the application process, but since it was never done, Mr. Weber asked if he could have his money back. Mr. King made a motion to refund the \$250 development permit application fee to Cody Weber. Mr. Stone seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. DeWitt submitted Gerald Hostetler's emailed estimate to move the annex building, as well as the building permit cost of \$2,387.25 for Kerry Halde to place a building at 43304 State Hwy 40/287, prior to presenting the budget requests for the Land Use and Emergency Management departments. He would like to add a part time employee to help him with duties from both departments, as he simply cannot get everything done. There are various meetings and training he needs to attend and his goal is to map the county gravel pits, but so far he hasn't had the time to start the project.

Once Mr. DeWitt had gone, the Board reviewed budgets for the Commissioners, Administrator, Administrative, County Clerk and Elections. Ms. Lengel said her budgets had actually both decreased, mainly due to the fact that she will no longer have a Chief Deputy, based on longevity and experience of her current employees. Since her main election employee resigned, Mindy Schiffers will now be responsible for handling the election equipment, and knowing and abiding by election rule and law, so Ms. Lengel did add a Level promotion for her in the Elections budget. She also decreased the amount of record digitization in the Clerk's budget, as U.S. Imaging is coming close to completing the portion of the project that is on microfiche cards. There is still a long way to go if the commissioners choose to digitize old commissioner records, but for now Ms. Lengel felt that a decrease of \$20,000 was in order. The Board also reviewed the Centennial Mental Health and the Health Inspector budget requests, and then broke for lunch.

When the meeting reconvened, the commissioners began discussing the Fairgrounds budget, but Public Health Director Sue Kelly arrived to present her budget request before they had finished.

After Ms. Kelly left, the Board went back to the Fairgrounds budget, agreeing to increase the Fairgrounds manager's salary by \$100 per month, to increase Royalty Expense to \$2,250 based on a request from Joy Noakes and the fair board, to remove \$2,500 from the Fair book and posters line item, and to decrease Dues and Meetings from \$700 to \$500. Ms. Devers said the Rodeo line item should probably be increased since the 2014 rodeo came in over budget. Fair Board President LaRay Patton was asked to come over and discuss whether or not there were any additional requests to the Fairgrounds budget, other than to increase the Royalty Expenses. The only thing she could think of was that there had been a request to add a clown show to the rodeo, which she thought may cost around \$800.

At that time, Extension Director Travis Taylor arrived to meet with the Board to present the budget for the Extension office and to discuss sections of the Fairgrounds budget, but he could think of no other requests for the Fairgrounds budget either. Ms. Patton left and Mr. Taylor said he'd submitted three different requests for the Extension budget based on the following options: leave staff as-is with cost of living raises; move him to the CSU-funded position and hire a 4-H Assistant; or hire a CSU-funded person with him continuing his position as the county 4-H Assistant. After determining that Mr. Taylor would like to see if he can transfer to the CSU-funded position and the commissioners stating that they would also prefer that option, Mr. Taylor said he would proceed with the regional transfer.

At 2:45 p.m., County Coroner Jennifer Nestor and coroner-elect Andrew Lorensen met with the Board to present the 2015 budget request for the department. Included in the request were the following: \$600 for uniforms for the coroner and five deputies, as well as on-call compensation; a new laptop computer; a camera; a filing cabinet; and a mobile office.

First, Mr. Lorensen stated he would like to increase the pay for the deputies from \$50 per call to \$75 per call, unless two deputies were to attend the same call, in which case they would receive \$50 each. He increased the Office Supplies line item by \$200 to cover possible expenses related to an office, stating that he does not want to meet with families in his home, nor does he have adequate room there to store files or other evidence that is not required to be locked in the sheriff's office. Discussion turned to what he proposed to use as an office, and Ms. Nestor said that her father, Doug Ratzlaff, has a building that he would be willing to sell to the county for \$15,000. Mr. Lyons asked if they had decided on a location for the building if that was their intent, but they had not. Mr. Lorensen said he didn't really care where it was located, as long as he can have some office space somewhere. Determining that there really is no available space in the courthouse, Mr. Stone suggested renting a small building, which he would prefer over purchasing something that would then need a foundation, electricity, heat, and water and sewer. Mr. Lorensen said they would check into some places to rent and Mr. Lyons suggested he contact MayeGene Lee.

Although the budget request from Mr. Lorensen and Ms. Nestor for Professional Services showed an increase from \$15,000 to \$20,000, after discussing the annual average number of autopsies generally performed, the Board decreased the line item from \$20,000 to \$17,500.

Since the laptop computer that Ms. Nestor currently uses is only three years old, Ms. Devers suggested they look into purchasing an external hard drive, which they could probably buy for less than \$100, if memory storage is becoming a problem. Mr. Lorensen said he would check into it, as well as find out how much a fire-proof filing cabinet would cost, and whether or not they can find office space to rent. As for the on-call pay for deputies, the commissioners said they would discuss it further and let him know.

The Board reviewed the budget requests for the remaining departments; Veterans Office, Weed Control, the Transportation Enhancement Grant, and the Library, Contingent, Conservation Trust, E911, Capital Projects, Landfill, and Lodging Tax/Tourism funds.

Ms. Devers asked what the Board would like to propose for a property tax credit, and it was agreed to start calculations using the current 12 mills again.

Ms. Lengel asked the commissioners to reconsider raising the mileage rate, as it hasn't been done for quite some time. Mr. Stone said the federal rate is \$.52 per mile and Mr. King said he would prefer to leave it at the current \$.40 per mile. Mr. Stone made a motion to raise the mileage rate to \$.45 per mile, effective January 1, 2015. Mr. King seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned until 9:00 a.m. on September 29, 2014.

Corinne M. Lengel, Clerk to the Board

Ted Lyons, Chairman