

Board of County Commissioners of Lincoln County
September 22, 2015

The Board will conduct the 2016 preliminary budget hearings. The departments are scheduled as follows to discuss their requests:

9:00 Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance

9:00 Jim Covington – County Treasurer’s budget

9:30 Jeremiah Higgins – County Assessor’s budget

10:00 Andy Lorensen – County Coroner’s budget

10:30 John DeWitt – County Land Use & Emergency Management budgets

11:00 Wayne Shade – County Weed Control budget

11:30 Corinne Lengel – County Clerk and Recorder and Elections budget

1:00 Colette Barksdale – County Human Services’ budget

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

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

Commissioners
Administrator
Administrative
Centennial Mental Health
Health Inspector
Fairgrounds
Veterans Office
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 22, 2015, for the 2016 preliminary budget hearings. Those attending were Chairman Greg King, Commissioners Doug Stone and Ed Schiffers, County Administrator Gary Ensign, and Clerk to the Board Corinne M. Lengel.

Chairman King called the meeting to order and asked County Assessor Jeremiah Higgins to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. County Treasurer Jim Covington was also in attendance.

After the Treasurer and Assessor presented their respective budgets, Mr. Higgins informed the Board that the Assessor's office will need to replace their vehicle but will plan on doing it in 2017. It is a 2001 with 86,000 miles on it. Mr. Higgins would like something with higher clearance. Mr. King reminded him that the county is heavily dependent on the energy industry for tax revenue, and Mr. Higgins responded that he would prefer that his employees continue to receive cost of living raises, which is why he will not put in for the vehicle in 2016. He added that the tires are very expensive but it still runs okay.

The Board reviewed the Office of the Board budget request, reducing the Travel & Transportation line item from \$9,000 to \$6,000. When reviewing the County Administrator's budget request, Mr. Ensign commented that the Affordable Care Act requires a tax form for each individual employee, in addition to their W-2. The forms will have to be hand-typed and will be very time-consuming; therefore, Mr. Ensign added \$5,000 into his budget for part time labor. The amount will also be used to pay Roxie Devers for her continued work on the roundhouse. Mr. Ensign added funds for a new computer for his office, which prompted a discussion regarding data back-up. Ms. Lengel stated she has always been concerned that there is no way to back up her email folders, and Mr. Ensign said that James Martin suggested storing county data on the cloud for a monthly fee.

As for the Administrative budget request, Mr. Ensign reported that there will be a five percent increase in the health insurance, and the large increase in the Amend #1 – hospital tax increase line item is due to the fact that the county's assessed valuation is \$44 million. The line item was voter approved and the hospital will always get four mills, no matter what the county valuation is. The hospital will also get 2.5 mills from the county general fund.

Mr. Ensign said that John Mohan will need a new mower in 2016 and he had priced them at roughly \$14,000. That purchase will likely come from the Grounds & Buildings or Capital Projects budget. Ms. Lengel asked if the Board had considered replacing the carpet and repainting the office they have given to the county coroner before he moves in, as it may be a good time to do so. She added that the hallways and commissioner meeting room were the last on the list to be repainted and re-carpeted and asked that they consider those as well. Mr. Ensign also reminded them of the request to remodel the combined courts side of the building.

The contribution had been removed from the Centennial Mental Health budget based on Mr. King's report that the board had voted against contributing to the organization in 2016, and the Health Inspector budget was increased to \$10,000.

The Board began reviewing the 2016 Fairgrounds budget since the commissioners set those amounts but before they could make much progress, County Coroner Andy Lorensen arrived for his 10:00 a.m. appointment. Mr. Lorensen stated he had increased his Professional Services line item to \$25,000, simply because he does not like being over budget and would like to give money back to the county at the end of the year, rather than being over. The amount would pay for seventeen autopsies which the county is required to pay for. He stated he is already overspent in that line item for 2015 and still has three and a half months left in the year. He would also like to increase the deputy coroner pay to \$100 per call, justifying it by the fact that some neighboring counties pay either \$125 or \$150. The second deputy would be paid \$50 per call. The group discussed moving the deputies to the new Support Staff line item in order to comply with the county auditor's request that staff not subject to withholdings be assigned account numbers not associated with payroll. Ms. Lengel said that if the commissioners choose to increase the pay, it is more likely that the deputies will make over the minimum amount required by law for withholdings. Mr. Lorensen said that if they will have to go through payroll, he would suggest increasing the pay to \$125 and \$75 in order to provide better compensation after taxes. Mr. Ensign asked what would be easier for the payroll department and Ms. Lengel responded that calling the deputies support staff and not running them through payroll would be better. The Board agreed to increase the deputy coroner line item to \$2,350 and to continue paying them as non-payroll staff. Mr. Lorensen also requested \$1,100 for office furniture since he will need a desk and chair, bookcase, and a couple of visitor chairs. He stated that he is not opposed to secondhand furniture if some other office would have something usable, and Mr. King suggested he contact the FSA/ASCS office.

At 10:30 a.m., Land Use Administrator John DeWitt met with the Board to present the 2016 budget requests for the Land Use and Emergency Management departments. There were no changes to the Land Use budget other than the salary and social security increases, and also no changes to the Emergency Management budget. Mr. DeWitt informed the commissioners that Larry Meier was selling manure/compost to the oil and gas companies but has offered it to the county free of charge for reclamation on gravel pits, if the county will pick it up. Mr. King was concerned with weeds and was told that Mr. Meier has a very high success rate for reclamation on the oil fields. Mr. King said he is not averse to using it but they would need to monitor it for weeds.

Weed Control Coordinator Wayne Shade met with the Board at 11:00 a.m. to go over his budget request. He explained he had added ten percent to several line items, especially since he has no idea how much chemical will go up. No changes were made at the time, and Mr. Shade said he had an issue with another one of the turbos on the weed truck and would be taking it to Colorado Springs for repairs. Mr. Schiffers asked if the truck is still under warranty, which it is for another 30,000 miles.

Once Mr. Shade had gone, discussion returned to the Fairgrounds budget and a raise for the grounds manager, especially since the group agreed that scheduling of the facilities should be the fairgrounds manager's responsibility, not the administrator's. Mr. King said he would like to pursue the idea of bringing a carnival back in an attempt to increase attendance, and the Board

considered adding an Entertainment line item to the budget for items such as the bounce house, obstacle course, and carnival. The fair manager's salary was increased to \$19,200, the Ads and Notices line item was increased to \$1,500, and an Entertainment line item was added in the amount of \$17,000. Mr. Stone said that Travis Taylor felt the Judges line item should be increased as he was over budget in that area this year. They agreed to speak with Mr. Taylor about it at 2:00 p.m.

County Clerk Corinne Lengel then presented her Clerk and Election budget requests. Mr. King noted that the Clerk budget was actually less than 2015, even with the addition of a chief deputy. Ms. Lengel stated she had reduced her Office Supplies, Postage, Capital Outlay, and Record Digitization line items. The last phase of the record digitization project will begin in 2016 and Ms. Lengel said they should consider digitizing the commissioner records. As for the portion of the project that the clerk's office would be paying for, it will not cost nearly what was budgeted for in 2015; hence the decrease. The Election budget request was higher, due to the fact that there are always two elections in even numbered years. Ms. Lengel also explained that there may be new law and rule requiring a 24-hour drop box for ballots, to include security, but the Secretary of State has said the state may pay for one box per county. Ms. Lengel said she had added funds into the Operating Supplies line item for the drop box in the event the state cannot provide the funding. A Support Staff line item was created in the Election budget for temporary election help, and \$70,000 was added to the Capital Projects line item for new voting equipment, since it will not be purchased this year.

The Board broke for lunch and when the meeting re-convened at 1:00 p.m., Human Services Director Colette Barksdale and Sherri Hanson met with the Board to present the budget request for Human Services. Ms. Barksdale had created several different job titles on the pay schedule and had added another level, stating that Robert Kraxberger's duties had changed and he should actually be considered an Operations Director. She had moved him from Level 5 Step 10 to Level 6 Step 6 and stated it would only amount to around a \$34 increase. She had also included numerous employee promotion justification sheets.

Ms. Barksdale then explained that since all of their programs are mandatory, it is state law that the county can be held accountable for twenty percent of the department's budget. However, the current county share is 13.15% for 2016. The request also showed a fund balance of \$272,273.33, which is where the state would like it to be. The mill levy request is 2.5 mills for 2016; .5 mills less than 2015.

Undersheriff Gordon Nall stopped in with information on a replacement vehicle for Jail Captain Michael Yowell, stating that he could not find a 2015 Charger in Colorado, but Colorado Springs Dodge located one in New Mexico and will go pick it up if the county wants to buy it. It is a 2015 rear-wheel drive Dodge Charger for \$24,200. It is a police package car and will take another \$3,000 to retro-fit it to Lincoln County. The undersheriff commented that the need is there for the vehicle, but they do not want to jeopardize their chances of replacing two vehicles in 2016 by purchasing a new one now. Mr. Ensign said there is ample money in the 2015 Capital Projects line item for the car to be purchased this year, and Mr. Stone made a motion to

allow the sheriff's department to purchase a 2015 Dodge Charger from Colorado Springs Dodge in the amount of \$24,200, and to add \$3,000 to retro-fit it for operation. Mr. Schifferns seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Extension Director Travis Taylor arrived at 2:00 p.m. for his appointment with the Board, stating there were no major changes to his budget other than salaries, which will include the amount the county will be required to reimburse CSU for his partially funded position. When asked about increasing the Judges line item in the Fairgrounds budget, Mr. Taylor said he had gone over the \$3,500 this year and felt it should be raised in 2016. Mr. Ensign told him the 2015 amount was actually \$4,000 so he would not have gone over as he thought. Mr. Taylor felt \$4,000 would be adequate for 2016 so no changes were made.

Mr. Taylor left and Chris Monks stopped in with several quotes on packers. They can get a 2012 CAT for around \$35,000. He suggested they keep looking and maybe a rental will show up somewhere this fall or winter that they can purchase. He spoke with Chester Ewing about fuel prices for 2016 and asked the commissioners if they would like for him to order six loads if the price is between \$2.00 and \$2.25 per gallon. Mr. Stone said to go ahead and order if the price drops below \$2.00 per gallon.

Macdonald Equipment sells salt/sand spreaders that are placed in the back of a dump truck and District One is looking at purchasing a stainless steel Hiway V-Box deicing spreader for \$15,500. The money is in the 2015 budget. Mr. Schifferns made a motion to allow the purchase, Mr. Stone seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Chris said the Peterbilt salesman was out and they can buy a 2011 or 2012 Kenworth truck for \$65,000 but they have around 200,000 miles on them. The group decided they would keep looking.

Once Chris had gone, the Board reviewed the 2016 budget requests for the Veteran's Service Officer and the Transportation Enhancement Grant. Mr. Ensign had made the requested changes to the Road & Bridge budget and had increased the Signs line item to \$5,340. After reviewing the Library budget, Mr. King said he would like to increase the Books line item by \$2,038. The Contingent fund budget is based on TABOR; three percent of the overall county budget, and Mr. Ensign said he could not predict the Conservation Trust budget at this time since they had not heard back on whether or not the county had received grant funds for the lift station project at the fairgrounds. The E911 and Capital Projects budgets were also reviewed. Mr. Ensign asked the Board to consider what other large projects may need to be completed in 2016 in addition to the new election equipment and two vehicles for the sheriff's department. They would need to add money for moving the annex to the fairgrounds and the lift station if the grant is not approved. Mr. King said he would like to move forward with replacing the courthouse parking lot, and Ms. Lengel asked if the commissioners were considering Public Health Director Sue Kelly's request to buy a house for the public health office. They stated they were not interested in such a purchase and Mr. Ensign said he'd been thinking about the situation and felt there was another option. He suggested finding out the

cost of building a new building for the extension office at the fairgrounds and leaving the public health office in the annex building where it currently is. They could then use the vacant extension office portion of the building for county storage, since there never seems to be enough. He added that John Mohan has been checking beneath the annex and it has remained dry since the sump pump was fixed. Mr. Ensign was concerned with the damage that may be caused to the building if they try to move it, and Ms. Lengel put in that she was worried about vital records being out at the fairgrounds since the state requires they be kept in a secure location. The Board agreed that Mr. Ensign's idea would be worth looking into.

The Veterans Office, Landfill, and Lodging/Tourism Fund budgets were reviewed, and then Mr. King called for old business. Hearing none, he moved on to new business, stating that he would like to sell a portion of the property north of the Genoa shop, as it belongs to the county and they do not use it for anything.

With no other business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned until 9:00 a.m. on September 29, 2015.

Corinne M. Lengel, Clerk to the Board

Greg King, Chairman