

Board of County Commissioners of Lincoln County
September 18, 2019

The Board will begin conducting reviews regarding preliminary 2020 budget requests. The following departments are scheduled to discuss their requests as follows:

- 9:00 Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance
- 9:00 Tom Nestor – Sheriff’s Operations, Jail and Victim Assistance Budgets
- 9:30 Fred Lundy – Land Use Budget
- 10:00 Robin Halley – Extension Office Budget
- 10:30 Ken Stroud – Office of Emergency Management and E911 Fund Budget
- 11:00 Jobeth Mills – Public Health Budget
- 1:00 Rick Ashcraft, Chris Monks and Bruce Walters – Road and Bridge Budgets
- 1:45 Pat Phillips – Department of Human Services Budget
- 2:30 Andy Lorensen – County Coroner’s Budget

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

- Commissioners
- Administrator
- County Clerk and Recorder and Elections
- Weed Control
- Administrative
- Maintenance of Buildings/Plant
- Land Surveyor
- Health Inspector
- Fairgrounds
- Veterans Office
- Library Fund
- Contingent Fund
- Conservation Trust Fund
- Capital Projects
- Landfill Fund
- Lodging Tax/Tourism Fund
- East Central Council of Local Governments
- Fire Control
- District Attorney
- Ambulance Service
- Emergency Medical Service
- E.M.S. Subsidy
- Developmentally Disabled
- Community Development Block Grant
- Transportation Enhancement Grant
- Hospital

The Board of Lincoln County Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. on September 18, 2019, for the preliminary 2020 budget requests. Those attending were: Chairman Ed E. Schifferns, Commissioners Steve Burgess and Doug Stone, County Administrator Jacob Piper, and Clerk to the Board Corinne M. Lengel.

Chairman Schifferns called the meeting to order and asked Undersheriff Gordon Nall to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Sheriff Tom Nestor and Jail Captain Michael Yowell also attended the first appointment to go over the Sheriff's Operations, Jail, and Victim Assistance budgets. The group discussed the best options for the department's vehicles in the future. Mr. Burgess felt that keeping them until they had over 100,000 miles on them wasn't the answer, because they were not getting much out of them when they sold them by sealed bid. Vince's Chevrolet will buy them back, but the undersheriff said they would only take Chevy's. They all agreed that if they could sell the vehicles fully equipped, rather than pay to have them de-commissioned, would also be more economical. Sheriff Nestor would like to trade-in or sell two pickups and a car next year; they are the vehicles with the highest mileage. Replacement cost for the three would be around \$142,000. He prefers SUVs or pickups to cars.

As for the rest of the sheriff's budget, he wants to split overtime into OT and Holiday Pay to better track each separately. Currently, the Jail budget holds all money for uniforms, so Sheriff Nestor would like to divide that as well. He also added a line item for Equipment that would cover Tasers and body cameras.

Mr. Schifferns asked how Lincoln County compares with others as far as salaries, and the sheriff said they are reasonably competitive for this area.

Sheriff Nestor asked if there would be a way to show grant or insurance reimbursements in his budget to keep it from looking like they'd overspent. When a department receives revenue, the money goes back into the County General Fund, making it appear that the department overspent its overall budget. Mr. Piper said the county auditor told him to add contra-expense accounts, which don't affect the budget figures but do illustrate a clearer picture for the public.

Captain Yowell presented the Jail budget, stating that the main increase was in the salary line item. Sheriff Nestor put in that they have a great working relationship with Southern Health Partners for the Medical Supplies. However, they increased that line item because the hospital charges \$2,000 every time they walk in the ER. There were no other extreme adjustments to the budget. The sheriff said he planned to move one of his jail deputies to the road in October since they are still covering the town of Hugo. He talked to the town clerk, who told him that if they didn't have someone hired soon, she'd speak with the board about compensation to the county. Mr. Burgess said they should discuss it by the first part of December to have something in place for January.

Sheriff Nestor went over the Victim Assistance budget, stating that it went up approximately \$4,000; mostly because of the increase in salary, which is covered by the grant.

At 9:50 a.m., Fred Lundy presented the budget request for the Land Use department. The only changes were slight increases to the salary and advertising line items.

Robin Halley met with the Board at 10:00 a.m. to present the Extension office budget. Overall, the increase was about \$4,000.

In reviewing the commissioners' budget, Mr. Burgess said he'd like for them to consider passing the van that the commissioners and other departments drive to Public Health/Extension. If the sheriff could get a better deal on SUVs by adding one, he suggested replacing the van with a Tahoe. Mr. Piper called Sheriff Nestor and asked him to check with Vince's Chevrolet when they got there. The Board also agreed to buy new chairs for the commissioner meeting room and to decrease the Ports-to-Plains, Pro 15, FTZ line item by \$4,000. Mr. Burgess said the savings should cover the cost of the chairs. The Economic Development budget also showed a slight increase.

Mr. Piper presented the Administrator's budget, stating that he'd reduced the office supplies line item by \$100. He would also like to purchase a new office chair.

Since there was a little time left before the next appointment, the Board asked Mrs. Lengel to present her Elections and Clerk and Recorder budget requests. There will be three elections in 2020, which was the reason for the significant increases in the Elections budget. However, the Secretary of State's office promised to fully reimburse counties for the Presidential Primary in March, including any staff overtime. Still, Mrs. Lengel said they would have to pay those bills before getting that money back. Since her Chief Election Deputy took the Finance Director position, Mrs. Lengel moved her from the Elections budget to the Clerk's budget. She wasn't sure if she would designate a Chief Election Deputy again since her remaining employees held other primary job duties. Mrs. Lengel reduced the Education and Training line item significantly since there wouldn't be as much time for training opportunities in 2020 as there was this year.

Emergency Manager Ken Stroud arrived for his appointment at 10:30 a.m. to discuss the Office of Emergency Management and E911 Fund budgets. Mr. Stroud proposed making the Emergency Manager a full-time position beginning January 1, 2020; therefore, his budget showed the salary increase. The grant reimburses \$15,000, which is primarily salary and office supplies. Mr. Stroud said it wouldn't change the EPR funding in any way, and Public Health Director Jobeth Mills would probably discuss that with the Board later.

As for the E911 Fund budget, Mr. Stroud said that CenturyLink will start a line conversion in June of 2020 to all fiber optics, which will cause a substantial price increase. They currently pay \$3,500 annually, but it would go up to approximately \$3,700 per month. Mr. Stroud would like the E911 Board and commissioners to meet with the PUC concerning the surcharge application. Consumers pay \$.70 per line per month now, but Mr. Stroud felt the Board might need to raise that to as much as \$2.00. They are trying to find ways to reduce the cost, such as decreasing

the number of phone lines, but they're not sure yet if that's an option. The E911 Board would complete the application and meet with the commissioners, and then they would submit it to the PUC for approval. If approved, they would need to begin public hearings regarding the price increase. Mr. Stroud said they'd applied for a FEMA grant to fund the answering points for six months, so it possibly wouldn't be an issue for 2020. He added that DOLA indicated they would be more favorable toward funding projects if the county raised the fee.

At 11:00 a.m., Public Health Director Jobeth Mills met with the Board to present her 2020 budget. She briefly discussed the EPR Coordinator position and what it would look like if the commissioners agreed to make Mr. Stroud a full-time Emergency Manager. Darcy Janssen indicated she could handle it, but Mrs. Mills felt it would spread her too thin. They've discussed sharing the position with Cheyenne County. Mrs. Mills said Mrs. Janssen could continue to help them, but she'd like the option to hire a part-time person. There were no other significant changes to the budget, other than the reinstatement of the STEPP grant. The Board discussed cutting another quarter mill from the budget but decided against it.

Mrs. Lengel then presented the Clerk and Recorder budget, explaining that the increases were due to salaries, education and training, and indexing. She plans to have an employee train in driver's license to keep the office open during the driver examiner's absence. He will need to attend training for a week in Denver, which will cost about \$1,200. Mrs. Lengel raised the record digitization line item because her office received a grant to index the remainder of the recorded documents. Since she didn't know when the grant funds would come in, or when US Imaging would complete the project, she felt it would be better to put the money in the budget instead of spending down the grant.

The Weed Control budget decreased by approximately \$64,000 because Wayne Shade felt he didn't need as much in his chemicals line item.

The Board reviewed the Administration and Maintenance budgets, and Mr. Piper said that health insurance increased by six percent. The line item for accounting and payroll went down since the system will be paid for, leaving only annual maintenance and support fees. Possible legislation requiring that the courts open on the weekends would create a substantial cost to the county regarding utilities, personnel, and janitorial services. Mr. Piper didn't know when or if the law would go into effect, but if it happened next year, they would have to increase the Maintenance budget.

While reviewing the Surveyor's budget, Mr. Burgess asked how it was going since they'd given Mr. Westfall the job description. Mrs. Lengel said he still wasn't coming to sign off on plats within forty-eight hours like he agreed to do; sometimes it's more than a week. The Board decided to leave the budget as is but to ask Mr. Kimble about it at the next meeting he attended.

The commissioners then reviewed the Health Inspector and Fairgrounds budgets. John Palmer hadn't accepted a raise in the past two years, so Mr. Piper said he'd included a \$200 per month

increase for him if the Board wanted to approve it. In keeping with the possible two-step cost-of-living increases for other employees, the commissioners agreed to a raise of \$150 per month.

Mr. Piper said the Veterans Office budget looked much higher than past years because of another new bill that may be in legislation next year. The \$14,700 reimbursement that the VA officer receives typically goes into the General Fund; however, the new law would have stricter guidelines. If the bill doesn't pass, Mr. Piper said that Mr. Newbanks would spend what he usually did.

The Board reviewed the Library, Contingent Fund, and Conservation Trust Fund, and Capital Projects budgets. Mr. Piper said he'd added a new courthouse phone system to the latter budget and asked Pat White with Eastern Slope to provide a quote. Also reviewed were the Landfill, Lodging/Tourism, ECCOG, Fire Control, District Attorney, Ambulance Service, EMS, EMS Subsidy, Developmentally Disabled, CDBG, and Transportation Enhancement Grant budgets.

In other business, Mr. Piper asked the Board to change the first December meeting where they would adopt the budget. The commissioners agreed to approve bills on December 5, adopt the budget and conduct other business on December 12, and cancel the December 18 meeting and have the annual Christmas party instead.

At 1:00 p.m., Road & Bridge foremen Chris Monks, Bruce Walters, and Rick Ashcraft met with the Board to discuss the Road & Bridge budget. The only significant change was to add \$300,000 to the Special Oil Projects line item; split equally among each district.

At 1:45 p.m., Human Services Director Pat Phillips and department bookkeeper Sherri Hansen met with the commissioners to present the DHS budget. All agreed that Mrs. Hansen's new format was much easier to follow. Mrs. Phillips said the only change she had to personnel was a promotion of one of her caseworkers to lead caseworker.

Coroner Andy Lorensen met with the Board at 2:15 p.m. to present the Coroner's budget. After he left, Mr. Piper said that the commissioners would need to look at the property tax credit more closely due to the changes in the overall county valuation.

With no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Schiffers adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m. The next meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. on September 20, 2019.

Corinne M. Lengel, Clerk to the Board

Ed E. Schiffers, Chairman