

MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 2023
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
COUNTY CITY BUILDING, ROOM 112

Advanced public notice of the meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board, the Lancaster County, Nebraska, website and emailed to the media and published in the Lincoln Journal Star print and digital editions on June 9, 2023.

Commissioners present: Christa Yoakum, Chair; Roma Amundson, Matt Schulte, and Rick Vest

Commissioners absent: Sean Flowerday, Vice Chair

Others Present: David Derbin, Chief Administrative Officer; Kristy Bauer, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer; Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer; and Courtney Lyons, Deputy County Clerk

Yoakum called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m. and announced the location of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

AGENDA ITEM

1) APPROVAL OF BUDGET MEETING MINUTES FOR MAY 23, 2023

MOTION: Amundson moved and Vest seconded approval of the minutes. Vest, Amundson, Schulte, and Yoakum voted yes. Flowerday was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

2) PROPERTY MANAGEMENT – Kerin Peterson, Director, Property Management

Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer, led the discussion for all following items.

Meyer displayed the online Transparency Portal (Portal) and a Fund 66 budget document (see agenda packet).

Meyer and Peterson discussed Fund 66, the source of funding for buildings owned by the County. Peterson stated she is on budget for this fiscal year. For the next budget year, revenues are remaining the same and expenses are decreasing slightly. The four buildings under Fund 66 are staffed by five full-time equivalent (FTE) employees. There are currently no vacancies. Increased expenses include Information Services (IS) and Human Resources (HR) billed services. Utility expenses will be lower. Peterson discussed options for the County building currently housing the DMV on West O Street.

Schulte asked if there are other County buildings not in Fund 66. Meyer answered the buildings under this fund are properties managed by Property Management. Schulte suggested moving all County buildings under the care of Property Management. Peterson stated she has six fewer staff than when she started and will need more FTE's. Schulte suggested adding a building maintenance discussion to a future Board Staff Meeting.

Meyer displayed a document showing the budget for Building Fund 51 (see agenda packet). Peterson discussed fund expenses planned for next year, including building improvements to the Youth Services Center, Motor Vehicles building, and the Election Commissioner's building.

Meyer discussed requests to the fund for the next budget year and stated the Board will need to make decisions in July. \$1,300,000 is currently unobligated.

3) PUBLIC DEFENDER – Kristi Egger, Public Defender

Meyer displayed the Portal and a budget document for the Department (see agenda packet). Angela Franssen, Administrative Services Officer, was also available for the discussion.

Meyer and Egger discussed this year's budget. Egger said the Department was over the budgeted amount of Post Employment Health Plan (PEHP) payouts due to three unplanned retirements, but she is saving money on other expenses. Meyer stated he will bring needed budget resolutions to the Board in two weeks, but he did not believe the Public Defender's Office will need a budget adjustment.

Meyer and Egger discussed Department revenues and projections for next year, including revenue from City misdemeanor cases.

Meyer and Egger summarized Department expenses, including salaries and benefits planned for the next budget year. Egger noted she has had difficulty filling open positions. Other increased expenses will be expert witness fees, interpreter fees and IS services for case management. Egger stated she wants to add two attorneys to the Department to address high caseloads.

Meyer asked Egger if there is a way to show cost savings. Egger answered it is difficult due to the variance in billing amounts and when cases are billed. Schulte asked Egger to calculate what the salaried employees make hourly.

Franssen stated the request from the Technology Fund will include replacing a portion of computers based on a yearly rotation. Egger noted the need for a projector to show Continuing Legal Education (CLE) trainings.

4) CORRECTIONS – Brad Johnson, Director, Corrections

Meyer displayed the Portal and a budget document for the Department (see agenda packet). Johnson reported the Department will be under budget for the current year.

Meyer and Johnson discussed changes in revenues and expenses for the next budget year. There will be increased revenue due to billing for beds at the Lincoln Regional Center (LRC). For staffing expenses, Johnson stated the Department is down 12 officer positions and has a building cleaner position open. There are no planned retirements to budget.

Johnson said due to record high population numbers, he has budgeted for housing inmates at other facilities. Yoakum noted other counties are struggling to hire staff, making housing additional inmates difficult.

Johnson reported on planned expenses that will increase, including the need to replace a van, hospital services and building maintenance.

Johnson explained the reasons for the need for 13 new corrections officers and that most of the request is due to currently being understaffed. The Department may also need more staff to cover the implementation of paid parental leave.

Future expenses should include: a needs assessment, body cameras, additional transition services, a therapy dog and mental health beds and services. Johnson explained the process for a needs assessment.

Vest asked if more staff decreases overtime and on call time. Johnson said yes, but it depends if he can hire positions. Vest expressed concern that staffing issues would increase if the County implements paid parental leave. Johnson added implementing paid parental leave would cause an increase in overtime, exacerbating staffing issues. He stated it is difficult to recruit staff because of the shift work.

Schulte left the meeting at 11:18 a.m.

Meyer reviewed the schedule for the remaining budget hearings.

5) ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Vest moved and Amundson seconded to adjourn at 11:21 a.m. Vest, Amundson and Yoakum voted yes. Flowerday and Schulte were absent. Motion carried 3-0.



Matt Hansen
Lancaster County Clerk

