

TERM OF COMMISSION: December Session of the November Adjourned Term

PLACE OF MEETING: Boone County Government Center Commission Chambers

PRESENT WERE: Presiding Commissioner Don Stamper until 3:50 p.m.
District I Commissioner Karen M. Miller
District II Commissioner Linda Vogt at 1:55 p.m.
Deputy County Clerk Michelle Malaby
Auditor June Pitchford

The budget hearing was called to order at 1:08 p.m.

SUBJECT: County Clerk

Commissioner Stamper stated the commission thought it would be appropriate for Ms. Noren to explain why the elections and voter registration budget request is considerably higher this year.

Ms. Noren replied it is higher because 1996 is a presidential election year; the county is facing growth and there are repercussions from the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) which began this year. There have been about 15,000 registration transactions so far. In a typical off year, there are about 4,000 transactions. She anticipates the number of transactions will increase in 1996 to approximately 28,000 new registrations and 20,000 other changes. To remove people from the books by December, 1998, records must be canvassed by May 1, 1996. Under the NVRA, that process is more expensive. In the past, if any piece of mail was returned as undeliverable, she could remove the individual. The NVRA requires an initial non-forwardable mailing. A second mailing, with a postage paid business reply envelope, must be sent for each item returned as undeliverable. Forwarding addresses provided by the postal service must be entered. Even after all these steps are taken, the voter cannot be removed from the registration rolls until December, 1998 if they do not respond to the second mailing. Ms. Noren stated she can no longer predict how many people are qualified to vote in an election. There is no change of address deadline under the NVRA. There are new deadlines associated with processing changes and registrations.

Ms. Noren stated she understands the commission had questions about the overlay printers she requested as part of her supplemental budget. The printers used currently cannot be used for overlay printing or to print envelopes used for absentee ballots. Therefore, the envelopes have to be completed by hand.

In response to a question from Commissioner Miller, Ms. Noren replied of course she can get by with one or two printers, but she is trying to identify where problems are and find solutions for the problems which increase efficiency and save time, which is crucial during an election.

Commissioner Miller stated she understands such forms are currently printed in Information Services.

Ms. Noren replied daily transactions are batched and printed in the Information Services Department each night. She would prefer to print the forms as each transaction is processed. With the requested printers, voter registration cards could be given directly to voters when they register. The printers currently being used could be relocated to other departments.

The meeting recessed from 1:35 p.m. until 1:40 p.m.

SUBJECT: Public Works Department

Commissioner Miller commented she believes the county only has to pay one membership in the National Institute of Government Purchasing. She would like the funding to come from the Purchasing Department.

In response to a question from Commissioner Stamper, Mr. Abart replied the \$50,000 included in account 71700 is for the rental of equipment which the county does not own or which is being used elsewhere. The purpose is to facilitate acceleration of the road improvement projects.

Commissioner Vogt arrived at the meeting.

Following discussion, the commission agreed \$50,000 should be budgeted in class 7 for environmental cleanup of former motor grader sites.

Mr. Ratermann noted, in light of a recent budget revision, the amount requested for engineering services for the Obermiller/Roemer/Blackfoot Road project can probably be reduced. Mr. Ratermann noted the neighborhood improvement district budget request includes a supplemental request of \$5,445 as the county's share in a neighborhood improvement district to improve Barry Road. Such projects need to be evaluated individually. A strong argument can be made that Barry Road is of a collector nature, rather than of a local nature. If the county decides to participate in neighborhood improvement districts, he would advocate that the nature of the project be one of the criteria used to determine participation.

The commission expressed concern with the precedent set by participating.

Commissioner Stamper commented the volume of similar projects should be assessed.

Ms. Pitchford commented if the commission decides to fund the request, the cost should be accounted for in the Public Works Department budget rather than in the Neighborhood Improvement District Administration budget.

Commissioner Stamper requested Mr. Abart place the item on the agenda for their regular meeting with him.

In response to a question from Commissioner Miller, Mr. Abart replied there is a lack of security in the front office of the southern Public Works facility. There is no way to keep people from walking through the office into interior areas of the building. For example, vendors who bypass the front office can become disruptive. In addition, the front office is open to the public for an hour and a half each day when no one is in the front area. The Maintenance Operations Division closes at 3:30 p.m., but the Design and Construction Division remains open until 5:00 p.m. They would like to remodel the front area to hinder access to interior areas. He hopes to install some type of opening so that Design and Construction can monitor the area between 3:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. He requested recommendations on how to improve security from MARCIT, the insurance trust the county is part of, the Sheriff's Department and a private company. The \$7,000 amount requested is an estimate. The cost could be half that amount. Once he receives the recommendations, he will present a detailed proposal to the commission.

Ms. Pitchford confirmed the following budget changes the commission agreed to make.

- Add \$50,000 to re-budget grounds improvements associated with runoff containment,
- Add \$80,000 for a heating mechanism for the asphalt storage facility.
- Add \$50,000 for environmental cleanup of motor grader sites.
- Reduce the budget by an amount to be identified by Mr. Ratermann for engineering services for the Obermiller/Roemer/Blackfoot project.

SUBJECT: University Extension

University Extension County Program Director Ron Higginbotham, University Extension Council Treasurer Bob McConnell, University Extension Council President Dan Judy, and University Extension Council Secretary Alice Havard were present. Mr. McConnell stated a letter was sent reducing their original supplemental budget request from \$6,450 to \$4,600. The budget is similar to that of previous years. They requested an in-kind contribution to help maintain their driveway and parking lot by grading it and applying gravel.

Commissioner Stamper replied the request presents a dilemma. There is the question of whether road crews should be diverted from other duties to perform such work and the question of whether the county can legally perform the work. What will they do if the county cannot comply with the request?

Mr. McConnell replied they would need funding added to their budget to accomplish the work.

Commissioner Stamper asked is funding provided by the county used for building maintenance?

Mr. McConnell replied a very small portion. The building is relatively new. Major repairs have not been necessary. Most building maintenance is performed by volunteers.

The commission agreed to investigate whether they can grade the driveway and apply gravel.

Ms. Pitchford confirmed she will revise the proposed budget to reflect the change outlined in the letter from Mr. Higginbotham dated December 4, 1995.

Mr. Higginbotham noted the county provides funding for parking lot snow removal.

The meeting recessed from 2:35 p.m. until 3:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Family Health Center

Commissioner Stamper stated \$185,378 is requested for 1996.

Family Health Center Executive Director Gloria Crull, Medical Director Bernard Ewigman, M.D., Jane Kruse and Family Health Center Board President Bob Bailey, J.D. were present.

An extensive budget narrative was provided.

Mr. Bailey stated the county has been involved in health care for over seven decades and continues to be involved by funding the needs assessment, supporting the Health Department and Family Health Center and by considering support of a health clinic at Centralia. It is important to consider whose responsibility health care is and who is responsible for the social well-being of Boone Countians. He believes that has been and continues to be a function of the county. The Family Health Center has also accepted that responsibility. There are almost 4,000 clients.

Ms. Kruse explained how the Family Health Center practice is different from other public or private practices. They provide 24-hour access. They provide access to drugs through the pharmaceutical manufacturer. They deal with all aspects of a patient's health, including their emotional, social, behavioral and environmental needs, all of which impact on their physical health. They provide many additional services, some of which are outlined in the budget narrative.

Dr. Ewigman stated he believes we have a responsibility to provide health care in the local community. The people who need help are not welfare bums who do not work. The people he sees are people who work or who just lost their job or people who are unable to obtain insurance. Access to health care involves not only doctors willing to seeing patients, but also a patient's ability to buy what the doctor prescribes. The survey funded by the commission and the State Department of Health outlines the needs of the community. A group of people in the community will review the survey and make recommendations. A major barrier to access to health care appears to be cost rather than transportation. They have expanded and remodeled space at the Family Health Center to make it more efficient and increase capacity. They hope to provide care for additional uninsured people. The amount requested from the county will provide funding needed to accommodate uninsured patients with their increased capacity. Patients do have some responsibility for their health care. They pay according to their ability to pay, using a sliding scale.

Commissioner Stamper asked what will happen if the county does not provide the requested amount?

Ms. Kruse replied it would not necessarily mean cutbacks during the county's fiscal year. The five year contracts with local hospitals end in December, 1996. They do not know what will happen with Medicaid managed care funding. State funding will end this year. If they cannot replace funding they lose, cutbacks will be required.

Ms. Crull added it is a planning issue.

Mr. Bailey added everything they see on the horizon indicates access to health care will become more of a problem and require more resources.

Commissioner Miller asked what percentage of the patients live out in the county?

Dr. Ewigman replied about ten percent. They tried to reach such patients by advertising in local papers. Their efforts were not very effective. The survey indicated most people use the Columbia Daily Tribune and Channel 8 to receive information. Both media are expensive to advertise in. In terms of people who do not have health care, about 30 percent live outside city limits. Many people are not aware of the Family Health Center. They may need to develop satellite sites.

Mr. Bailey stated another reason they have not done more marketing is because they are providing service at full capacity.

Ms. Pitchford commented their presentation concerning need has been thorough. The challenge for the county is finding funds to provide.

Dr. Ewigman asked what is the intent for the money which comes from the lease of Boone Hospital? It seems appropriate to earmark that money for the benefit of the community with respect to community health issues.

Ms. Pitchford replied the lease of the hospital enabled the county to continue services which would have been discontinued had it not occurred. The money has never been earmarked. In the county budget there is a fair amount of discretionary spending for services and programs which are beneficial, but not obligatory. She has heard people refer to the lease funds as health care dollars. However, that was never the intention. Lease revenue is key to the county general fund.

Commissioner Stamper stated they are divided on this issue. The county is being asked to buy into program with ever expanding costs. They have debated and discussed what should be done with the revenue from the lease of the hospital. About \$750,000 is currently allocated to public health issues. Commissioner Stamper stated he has proposed removing the \$1 million of lease revenue from the general fund and allocating it to public health.

Commissioner Stamper left the meeting.

SUBJECT: Geographic Information System

Assessor Tom Schauwecker, Information Services Department Director Scott Monnig and Bob Alderson of the Boone Electric Cooperative were present. Mr. Schauwecker requested the commission fund the geographic information system (GIS) project. The Technical Committee, composed of representatives from the City of Columbia, County of Boone and Boone Electric Cooperative, formed to review a study obtained from Woolpert Associates on whether assessment maps could be used as a base for GIS. The committee completed their work this month. An executive summary of their report has been provided to the commission. Long term costs are outlined. Mr. Alderson supports the project. The assessment fund can provide \$34,500 of the first year cost. The general fund would need to provide \$11,000.

In response to a question from Commissioner Miller, Mr. Schauwecker replied he cannot say he can come up with \$35,000 a year for the next five years. He believes he can provide the same amount next year. The expense is reimbursable.

In response to a question from Commissioner Miller, Mr. Schauwecker replied the City of Columbia has not committed to proceeding with the project. He is optimistic they will.

Ms. Pitchford stated one of the entities will have to act as the fiscal agent. Someone has to administer the funds for all the entities. Who will do that?

Mr. Schauwecker replied that has not been discussed. The Policy Committee will need to do that.

Mr. Alderson commented the first three years consist of the conversion process. The county will perform that work. He anticipates Boone Electric Cooperative being billed for their cost.

Commissioner Miller questioned whether the project could be placed in the Information Services Department budget?

Ms. Pitchford replied yes or in a separate budget.

Ms. Pitchford asked will the project be administered by the Policy Committee?

Mr. Alderson replied the Policy Committee is responsible for obtaining money from the governing bodies for the project. The Policy Committee will have project oversight.

Mr. Monnig commented the Technical Committee included a project management line item in shared costs. The committee did not consider what form project management would take. Someone will need to work with the Policy Committee to make sure the goals of all three participants are being met.

Following further discussion, Commissioner Vogt stated she believes the project should be funded.

Ms. Pitchford asked if the project is funded, when will contracts be formalized?

Mr. Alderson replied the earliest the City could act on an agreement would be March or April.

The meeting adjourned at 4:24 p.m.

Attest:

Don Stamper
Presiding Commissioner

Wendy S. Noren
Clerk of the County Commission

Karen M. Miller
District I Commissioner

Linda Vogt
District II Commissioner