

Proposed 2001 Budget

TERM OF COMMISSION: November Session of the November Adjourned Term

PLACE OF MEETING: Boone County Government Center Commission Chambers

PRESENT WERE: Presiding Commissioner Don Stamper
District I Commissioner Karen M. Miller
District II Commissioner Linda Vogt
County Auditor June Pitchford
Deputy County Clerk Melanie Stapleton

The Presiding Commissioner called the Budget Hearing to order at 10:00am.

Columbia Special Business District

Introductory Comments by the Auditor

June Pitchford noted that the proposed 2001 Budget included the entire amount requested by the Columbia Special Business District.

Group Presentation

Cari Gartner, Executive Director was present on behalf of the Columbia Special Business District.

Cari Gartner stated that the Columbia Special Business District handles many things that people are not aware of such as cleaning sidewalks and alleys and putting up the downtown holiday lights. She stated that that the group would begin its masterplanning process next year with a focus on beautification of the downtown area.

Cari Gartner stated that the \$7500 offered by the County in lieu of taxes would be a tremendous help.

Commissioner Miller noted that it is critical to Boone County that the downtown area remain strong. She stated that they hoped to continue their support of the Columbia Special Business District.

Commissioner Stamper thanked Cari Gartner for coming.

There was no one present to inquire of this portion of the budget hearing.

Human Resources

Introductory Comments by the Auditor

June Pitchford stated that the Human Resources Department's does a consistently good job of identifying its progress. She stated that an additional full-time, professional position was requested this year, however it was not included in the proposed 2001 Budget. She stated that this did not reflect a lack of support for the need for the position, but rather a lack of funding.

Department Presentation

Betty Dickneite, Director was present on behalf of the Human Resources Department.

Betty Dickneite stated that the supplemental request outlined the need for the additional full-time personnel. She stated that it is very difficult to provide coverage for the office when applicants arrive. She noted that the Human Resources Department has processed approximately 1,000 applicants since January 1, 2000.

Betty Dickneite stated that it is important that excellent service be provided to applicants, since for many it is their first real interaction with County government. She noted that it is necessary to

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interact with the applicants when they arrive as part of the initial screening process. She stated that the County has lost potential candidates and received complaints from County officials due to the current length of time taken to process applicants.

Betty Dickneite also noted that frequent interruptions inhibit the office's ability to provide adequate secretarial coverage. She stated that her supplemental request proposes an entry level Human Resources person who possesses an understanding of Personnel policy and law to aide the applicants as they come in, in order to free up the other full-time staff to focus solely on secretarial functions. She noted that she proposed the position at a range 20.

Betty Dickneite stated that in addition to processing applicants, the Human Resources Department's responsibilities include: filling critical positions, recruiting and advertising for Countywide positions, the classification questionnaire, the exit questionnaire and checklist, the salary survey, memo of understanding, new employee orientations, staff trainings, and dealing with employee issues.

Betty Dickneite noted that a major portion of 2001 would be devoted to the following: employee retention issues, reduction of turnover rates, address of workloads, parking assignment (possibly), non-professional duties, Affirmative Action Plan, and other scattered responsibilities. She noted, in reference to the scattered responsibilities that the County may want to consider some consolidation of the Human Resources duties and the County Clerk's duties in relation to employee benefits.

Betty Dickneite stated that consideration is also being given to the development of a procedures manual to serve as a reference for employees who fill vacancies.

Betty Dickneite stated that the Human Resources Department should be able to spend more time with the departments in order to better address liability issues. She stated that it would be helpful if the Human Resources Department was included more in the interview process in order ensure that the County is not in risk of future lawsuits.

Commissioner Vogt stated that the idea of a pool of employees was suggested some time ago, which could offer general support to departments when needed.

Commissioner Stamper stated that the consolidation of functions of the County Clerk's Office and Human Resources would be something that could be discussed with the County Clerk in the future.

Commissioner Stamper opened a discussion of vacant positions in the County. He stated that he wanted to make those present and the public aware of the County's concern about lengthy position vacancies. He stated that the question of whether there is truly a need for a certain position arises after a position has remained vacant for an extended period of time. He noted that funding is provided for vacant positions out of the General Fund.

Betty Dickneite noted that, at times, there are salary and recruitment issues that affect the length of a vacancy.

Commissioner Stamper stated that it would be helpful to review these kinds of issues in a report and make some decisions regarding the positions.

June Pitchford stated that it would also be helpful to have information that indicated the level of effort in recruitment and the amount of money spent on advertising for these positions.

Commissioner Miller also noted the difficulties in retaining employees in the Information Technology due to the salaries offered in the private sector.

A brief discussion ensued on various County departments that have had lengthy vacancies.

The County Commission tentatively agreed to invite County officials and department heads to a discussion concerning position vacancies at the end of the Budget Hearings.

Commissioner Stamper thanked Betty Dickneite for coming. There was no public present to comment on this portion of the hearing.

Central MO Humane Society

Introductory Comments by the Auditor's Office

June Pitchford did not offer introductory comments on this budget.

Group Presentation

Steven Finch, Executive Director and Jo Thomas, Shelter Manager were present on behalf of the Central MO Humane Society.

Steven Finch stated that the agency serves over 20 counties. He noted that over 70% of the animals taken in originate in Boone County. He stated that this results in the Central MO Humane Society serving between 125,000-150,000 people and approximately 5,000 animals in Boone County.

Steven Finch stated that the overall budget is a little over \$350,000 per year, with the Boone County portion for 2001 being around \$9,300. He stated that the services provided only to Boone County residents include: investigation of animal care, neglect or abuse and pickup service for injured, distressed, or dead animals. He stated that outside of Boone County, these cases are referred to the local law enforcement authorities and/or other organizations similar to the Humane Society. He noted however that local, law enforcement agencies are not always equipped by training or statutes to handle these kinds of cases alone. He stated that the Humane Society investigators are able to offer knowledge and input.

Steven Finch stated the Humane Society investigates all complaints and covers a wide territory. He stated that the agency works to ascertain first if the complaint is valid, then gathers information, and attempts to remedy the situation in the animal's favor. He stated that if the cases are valid, then the owner is made aware of the problem and educated on proper care. He stated that if the owner is resistant or the situation is severe, then the owner is turned over to the Animal Control or a similar agency. He stated that Humane Society provides testimony during the trials. He noted that the Humane Society has no legal authority, but works with the other agencies to bring resolution

Steven Finch stated that there is confusion on the part of the public about the duties of the Humane Society vs Animal Control. He stated that the Humane Society will handle complaint calls unless the Animal Control has been called into the situation. He stated that the Humane Society has a staff member that performs the pickup service. He gave the example of Cookie (dog). He noted that when a dog is picked up (that belongs to someone) and it is held for five days at a nominal fee to the owner.

Steven Finch stated that some of the other services provides by the Humane Society included: working with other small cities on their animal services, visiting schools to educate on animal care, and spading/neutering services. He stated that a great deal of time and money was spent on spading services this past year, (300 performed) for people who normally would not go to a veterinarian for these services because of costs. He noted that the adoption rate rose to 2050 this year, however the effort was very time consuming

Steven Finch stated that the funds given to the agency by Boone County are very important to its success.

Commissioner Vogt asked if the fact that not all of the cities are covered under the Animal Control Ordinance causes problems for the Humane Society.

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Steven Finch stated that this does not normally affect the agency to a great degree. He stated that the agency could use the City or County regulations. He stated that often times a situation is investigated on the basis of good animal care.

Commissioner Stamper thanked the representatives of the Central MO Humane Society for coming.

There was no public present to comment.

The Budget Hearing was in recess from 11:25am until 1:30pm.

Sheriff's Department

Introductory Comments by the Auditor

June Pitchford did not give introductory comments.

Group Presentation

Enforcement and Operations

Sheriff Boehm stated that the 11% increase in the Class 1 budget was related to the shift differential, merit & COLA adjustments, and increased overtime.

Captain Braun noted that the decrease in microfilm reflected a smaller amount of microfilm to be purchased in 2001. She also noted that this budget mainly consisted of the purchase and processing of camera film.

Sheriff Boehm noted that the department has taken money from several line items to fund the staffing study.

Sheriff Boehm stated that Small town payments in Account 71100 has been in place since before he began his tenure as Sheriff. He stated that it began as a payment to each small municipality (\$1800 a year) for law enforcement assistance.

Commissioner Stamper stated that this budget is proposed at \$3, 050,122 reflecting a 22% increase overall.

June Pitchford noted that this budget includes funding for one additional officer, however Sheriff Boehm requested three, additional officers.

Sheriff Boehm stated that this is the second year that he requested three, additional deputies. He stated that a detailed justification has always been included in that request. He stated that this is a very conservative request considering what is actually needed. He stated that without the additional deputies, the Sheriff's Department will continue to shortchange the people in the unincorporated areas of Boone County by not providing good law enforcement. He stated that the Sheriff's Department is not able to provide an adequate amount of time on each call.

Commissioner Stamper stated that the Sheriff's Department budget, over the last 7-8 years, has risen in expenditures from 1.7 million to over 3 million, while revenue has (flatline) decreased. He stated that the Sheriff's Department spends about every dollar that it receives.

Commissioner Stamper noted that if the County would grant the request for additional officers, then another area would have to be cut. He stated that the County would have to find additional (monetary) support for law enforcement.

There was a brief review of the increase in the number of FTEs in the Sheriff's Department. Sheriff Boehm noted that the majority of the FTEs began their employment under a federal grant. He noted that the status of the federal grants for 2001 would remain in limbo until the new administration is in place.

Commissioner Stamper stated that he is proud of the accomplishments that the County has made in this 8-10 year period. He stated that the County would have to find other funding mechanisms to fund additional law enforcement.

Sheriff Boehm noted that he would have to take a hard look at downsizing and shifting of priorities within the department.

Corrections

Major Brewer stated that the Courts are pleased with the progress of the Reality House program.

Commissioner Stamper stated that 1255 budget increased from \$1.5 million to \$4 million over an 8-year period. He stated that this budget is beginning to heavily impact the General Revenue Fund and the County's disposable income.

Commissioner Stamper noted the 61% increase in Workers Compensation.

June Pitchford stated that Law Enforcement and Corrections pay significantly higher premiums for workers compensation.

Major Brewer noted that prescription drug costs continue to increase. He noted that a greater portion of the jail population is in need of medication.

Commissioner Stamper noted that healthcare is a great portion of costs. He stated that this includes the address of mental healthcare needs.

Major Brewer stated in response to a question by Commissioner Miller that at present the historical data shows that the average number of prisoners housed out of County next year could be approximately 35. He stated that he has no real way of knowing what the average will be. He stated that the only way to attempt to project is through the current trends and historical data.

Class 9

Sheriff Boehm stated that he accepted the recommendation of the Auditor in this area.

Commissioner Stamper stated that the Corrections Budget reflected a total budget of \$3,981,157 and two new FTEs.

There were no comments on the Sheriff's Forfeiture Fund or the Sheriff's Training Fund.

Commissioner Stamper noted that there are no revenue sources for DARE or Neighborhood Watch.

Captain Braun stated that the Sheriff's Department is given money by the Optimist Club and other organizations for the Neighborhood Watch and DARE, which is then used to purchase program graduations gifts, etc.

Commissioner Stamper noted that there has been tremendous overall growth in the Sheriff's Department in the last ten years. He stated that the County anticipates having a ballot issue early in the year 2001, which would propose additional support in the area of Law Enforcement. He stated that the decision would belong to the people of Boone County.

Commissioner Stamper thanked the Sheriff's Department for their presentation.

Commissioner Vogt stated that if the County Commission had to ask for support for its Law Enforcement issues in the form of a tax, this could not be viewed as the first course of action taken by the County Commission in an attempt to address those needs. She noted that the County Commission created a Task Force and followed the recommendations received from the group. She also stated that the County created additional space for its inmate population and used General Revenue Fund money toward Law Enforcement issues such as out of County

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housing. She stated that the County has managed quite well for a long time in its effort to meet the Law Enforcement needs of Boone County, however the growth of the County has extended beyond the funds that are available.

No one requested recognition for comment on this portion of the budget hearing.

Public Works

Introductory Comments by the Auditor

June Pitchford did not give introductory comments on this budget.

Department Presentation

David Mink, Public Works Director, Greg Edington, Maintenance Operations, John Watkins, Project Development Manager, David Nichols, Project Engineer were present on behalf of the Public Works Department.

The Public Works Department presented a packet of information entitled Boone County Public Works 2001 Budget as part of their presentation.

NID

John Watkins stated that the department wanted to continue the NID budget as it had in the past. He stated that the NID Coordinator position was included in the budget.

David Mink stated that there are three, vacant FTEs in the budget, one of which was taken over by the Planning and Building Inspection Department. He stated that David Mink would bring forward a proposal for staff reorganization.

Maintenance Operations

June Pitchford stated that the revenues in this budget are derived from Sales Tax,.

Commissioner Stamper noted that the revenue is shown at \$11.7 million and expenditures at \$12.7 million.

June Pitchford stated that money was accumulated in previous years and spent at a later date.

Commissioner Stamper noted that Class 1 is at 2.1 million, which reflects a 5% increase. He noted that there were no new FTEs projected.

Commissioner Stamper noted that the Auditor took this budget through a process to accommodate a flat growth year in order to build the Fund balance and have an adequate Emergency Fund.

Greg Edington stated that the pavement repairs would be highly dependent upon next year's weather conditions. He stated that they anticipated that the rock budget would not be as heavily used as last year.

Commissioner Vogt stated that it looked as though the department preferred to use vendor-hauled rock. She asked if there was any benefit in the County owning its own equipment.

Greg Edington stated that it would not be of benefit to the County to have to own the equipment or pay the employees that perform this work on a year-round basis.

Commissioner Miller expressed concern about the budget for asphalt overlay.

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Greg Edington stated that there were only two roads slated for overlay, one of which was removed during the budget preparation stage.

David Mink stated that there are alternative methods of resurfacing that could be more affordable. He gave the example of microsurfacing, a technique which involves using a liquid seal to coat a road. He stated that this technique could not be applied to roads that have deep potholes and structural damage.

There was brief discussion regarding which entity (State or County) was to pay for the repaving of Old Hwy 63 N. The County Commission agreed to contact a past Public Works Director in order to obtain more information regarding the matter.

Commissioner Stamper noted that there is \$100,000 in the Emergency Fund.

Commissioner Stamper noted that the Class 9 has a gross budget of \$1.25 million.

Design & Construction

David Mink drew the County Commission's attention to a packet of information composed by David Nichols in the Design & Construction Budget.

Commissioner Stamper noted that there is \$2.4 million projected in 2001. He noted that the bottom line on the budget is \$3,634,543 which is down 26% from the previous year's budget. He noted that the Zumwalt Bridge project was carried over from the past couple of budgets.

Commissioner Stamper noted that the Administration budget reflected revenue sharing and rebates to the special revenue districts. He noted that the Revenue Sharing is being held to the formula and that Grants to Cities is down somewhat from last year.

Commissioner Stamper stated that Revenue Sharing to cities should be addressed from a policy standpoint. He noted that June Pitchford brought it to his attention that the revenue sharing is currently based upon growth and assessed valuation and does not track with the growth of Sales Tax. He stated that some revision should be made in this area in order to revise the format to be more consistent. He noted that it would behoove the County to include potential County projects in the Grants to Cities. He listed examples such as Sanderson Lane, Heller Rd, etc.

June Pitchford stated that she put together a schedule of existing sales tax rates in the unincorporated areas. She noted that three cities have permanent transportation sales taxes in place.

Commissioner Stamper stated that the revenue sharing was originally based on the amount given to cities when they belonged to special benefit (road) districts. He stated that the cities received a portion of the property tax that was equal to their assessed valuation. He noted that this formula was abandoned after the road districts, were eliminated (with the exception of Centralia). He noted that the cities now receive a certain percentage of their assessed value, which was designed to grow with their assessed value. He noted that a bulk of the funds now go to the city of Columbia. He noted that this entire process should be examined.

David Mink presented a proposal to restructure the setup of the Public Works Administration area in lieu of the replacement of two pickups in the amount of \$40,000. He stated that the purpose of the new setup would be to enhance the image of the office to the entering public, improve the coordination between the two divisions, and to more efficiently use the limited space available. He stated that he wanted to try to initiate the restructuring plan utilizing the existing FTEs. A proposed layout is included in the packet.

David Mink noted that the new arrangement could establish a position, Supervisory Management Analyst, that could track costs, write reports and aid in tracking costs of projects. He stated that this arrangement could free up the Maintenance Operations Manager to spend more time with the supervisors in the field and on controlling costs.

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David Mink stated that he would also like to have some thought given to the creation of a Design and Construction Manager position.

Commissioner Miller stated that the restructuring plan looked like a good idea.

Commissioner Vogt stated that she did not have any opposition to the restructuring.

June Pitchford stated that the concept is very viable. She noted that the NID Coordinator position is paid for out of the General Fund. She stated that it might be necessary to note whether there would be some shared funding in the restructuring plan.

David Mink stated that he had encountered what seemed to be a very difficult process with what seemed to be a very simple purchase. He stated that this process led him to the idea of establishing a miscellaneous capital purchase line item, which could be done by creating a line item with a zero balance. He stated that it is very difficult to anticipate every item that the department would need to replace in the upcoming year.

Commissioner Miller stated that the County Commission would have to consider the way this would be perceived across County government. She stated that if the line item was give to one department for its dedicated funding, then it would have to be given to every department.

Commissioner Vogt stated that these funds are dedicated specifically for Public Works projects.

June Pitchford stated that establishment of an emergency appropriation would aid responsiveness.

Commissioner Stamper stated that the County Commission would take this idea under advisement.

David Mink stated that he believed that the Stormwater Acts passed by Congress could make streetsweeping mandatory in the future. He stated that he would ask the Public Works staff first to review the curbed streets in their areas and possibly place those streets under a sweeping contract in 2002. He noted that contracting for these services would probably be the best option since the streetsweeper itself is a very cumbersome piece of equipment that requires a high degree of maintenance.

The County Commission thanked the Public Works Department representatives for their presentation.

There was no one present that wished to comment on this portion of the Budget Hearing.

The Budget Hearing adjourned at 3:25pm.

Attest:

Don Stamper
Presiding Commissioner

Wendy S. Noren
Clerk of the County Commission

Karen M. Miller
District I Commissioner

Linda Vogt
District II Commissioner