

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING, ROOM 113
THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2010
8:15 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Bernie Heier, Chair
Larry Hudkins
Deb Schorr

Commissioners Absent: Ray Stevens, Vice Chair
Bob Workman

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer
Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Dennis Meyer, Budget & Fiscal Officer
Dan Nolte, County Clerk
Cori Beattie, Deputy County Clerk
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

The Chair opened the meeting at 8:16 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM

1 APPROVAL OF THE STAFF MEETING MINUTES, THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2010; MINUTES OF DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET HEARINGS ON TUESDAY, MAY 11, 2010 AND WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 2010

It was noted the minutes of the Departmental Budget Hearings on May 11, 2010 and May 12, 2010 are not ready for approval.

MOTION: Hudkins moved and Schorr seconded approval of the May 13, 2010 Staff Meeting minutes. Hudkins, Schorr and Heier voted aye. Motion carried 3-0.

2 ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None were stated.

3 MENTAL HEALTH BOARD MEMBER COMPENSATION - Honorable Paul D. Merritt Jr., Presiding District Court Judge; Troy Hawk, Court Administrator, Lancaster County District Court

Heier said the Board has reviewed the Mental Health Board budget and questioned whether members of the Mental Health Board should be compensated for cancelled hearings.

The Honorable Paul D. Merritt Jr., Presiding District Court Judge, said the District Court Judges have reviewed the State Statutes that govern the Mental Health Board and a letter from Doug Cyr, Chief Administrative Deputy County Attorney. In addition, Judge Merritt spoke to three members of the Mental Health Board regarding this issue. He said it appears that members of the Mental Health Board started charging for continuances, counting them as hearings. The District Court Judges were advised that the Legislature planned to look at what constitutes a hearing this year, but that did not occur, so the District Court Judges plan to issue an order within the next four to six weeks to deal with the issue of compensation.

Troy Hawk, Court Administrator, Lancaster County District Court, estimated that hearing costs will be in the \$70,000 to \$75,000 range, based on historical data, compared to the proposed budget of \$100,000.

Schorr asked that the Clerk of the District Court's Office monitor the budget.

Judge Merritt said he was told the Board had also questioned compensation of outside experts (psychiatrists or psychologists). He noted \$16,000 is budgeted for the expense and said costs have been less than that amount the last few years. Judge Merritt also stated the expense is controlled by the Public Defender's Office.

NOTE: Also present for the discussion were Sue Kirkland, Clerk of the District Court; Simon Rezac, Deputy; and Monica Ross-Williams, Office Administrator, Public Defender's Office.

4 SALE OF REAL PROPERTY (EXECUTIVE SESSION) - Abbie Widger, Johnson, Flodman, Guenzel & Widger Law Firm; Mike Thew, Chief Deputy County Attorney

MOTION: Schorr moved and Hudkins seconded to enter Executive Session at 8:33 a.m. for the purpose of protecting the public interest with regards to the sale of real property. Hudkins, Schorr and Heier voted aye. Motion carried 3-0.

MOTION: Schorr moved and Hudkins seconded to exit Executive Session at 8:46 a.m. Schorr, Hudkins and Heier voted aye. Motion carried 3-0.

**5 DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET HEARINGS: A) JUVENILE PROBATION;
B) ADULT PROBATION; & C) ELECTION COMMISSIONER/JURY
COMMISSIONER - Dennis Meyer, Budget & Fiscal Officer**

A) Juvenile Probation (Fund 673)

Appearing were Lori Griggs, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, and Wendy Barrera-Andazola, Juvenile Drug Court Coordinator.

Griggs said her budget is essentially the same as last year. She said she has to incorporate a 10% salary increase for a senior probation officer so she cut back on the contract with Cedars Youth Services for the Drug Court Tracker to offset that cost.

Schorr noted that Juvenile Probation is moving and asked how that will impact their rent costs.

Griggs said she isn't sure.

Hudkins said they will be gaining additional space but said the rent will be less per square foot.

Heier asked Griggs whether Juvenile Probation could utilize the services of Community Corrections.

Griggs said she has discussed that possibility with Kim Etherton, Community Corrections Director, and said State Probation is assessing the electronic monitoring situation in terms of technology and costs.

In response to a question from Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer, Griggs said she did not submit a microcomputer request but said she would like to purchase three Netbook computers for the intensive probation officers and said she will try to fund the expense out of this year's budget.

B) Adult Probation (Fund 674)

Appearing was Gene Cotter, Chief Probation Officer, Adult Probation.

Cotter said the rent increased \$14,500 over last year's budgeted figure so he made reductions to operating costs to keep the budget flat.

Hudkins questioned the increase in local telephone costs.

Cotter said they have more phone lines due to expanded office space and additional programming at the Adult Reporting Center.

Heier noted the request to purchase six Netbook computers and asked if Adult Probation has sufficient funds in this year's budget to fund the expense.

Dennis Meyer, Budget & Fiscal Officer, said Adult Probation was overcharged for rent, which is being resolved, and said the amount budgeted for their rent was below what it should have been. He said they are working to "squeeze" it out of this year's budget without an additional appropriation.

Heier asked if they need all six Netbooks.

Cotter said he is trying to equip his probation officers so they can do more work in the field and said State Probation has agreed to provide the wireless modems, which helped to reduce the cost.

C) Election Commissioner/Jury Commissioner (Funds 607 & 627)

Appearing were Dave Shively, Election Commissioner, and Becky Hight-Moravec, Administrative Services Officer.

Shively presented additional information regarding the budget request for the Election Commissioner (Fund 607) and Jury Commissioner (Fund 627) (Exhibit A). He said the increase in the Fund 607 budget is due to: 1) The election cycle (there will be three major elections in the coming fiscal year compared to one in the prior fiscal year); 2) An increase in poll worker wages (the wages are based on minimum wage which has increased); and 3) Increases in early and absentee voting requests; and 4) An increase in postage rates. Shively also indicated that redistricting is coming up and said they may need to look at software changes.

Meyer asked whether early voting offsets other expenditures.

Shively said only if they are able to merge precincts. He said they worked with a mail sorting company during the last election and said that helped them get a reduction in postage rates. Shively added they are not able to fully recover election costs (see election billing breakdown in Exhibit A), which would require legislative change.

Schorr asked that it be added to the list of County legislative priorities.

Meyer asked Shively about his microcomputer request.

Shively said he asked Information Services (IS) to assess their computers and said they indicated five computers should be replaced, with memory upgrades for two other computers. He said he would be willing to cut the request back to two or three computers and the memory upgrades.

Meyer inquired about out-of-county travel.

Shively agreed to look at whether the travel is necessary for continuing education or could be cut from the budget.

- 6 A) VISITORS PROMOTION COMMITTEE (VPC) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT OF NEW MEMBER (RON SNOVER) AND REAPPOINTMENTS (JULIE LATTIMER & LISA TUPPER); B) REQUEST FOR USE OF COUNTY IMPROVEMENT FUND PROCEEDS FOR VISITOR PROMOTION; & C) COUNTY IMPROVEMENT FUND GRANT RECOMMENDATIONS (LANCASTER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY, STAR CITY BMX, FROELICH FOUNDATION FOR GRAND MANSE, INTERNATIONAL QUILT STUDY CENTER & MUSEUM, AND LIED CENTER) - Jeff Maul, Lincoln Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) Executive Director; Steve Hilton, VPC Chair**

A) Visitors Promotion Committee (VPC) Recommendations for Appointment of New Member (Ron Snover) and Reappointments (Julie Lattimer & Lisa Tupper)

Steve Hilton, VPC Chair, said the VPC has recommended appointment of Ron Snover (new member) and reappointment of Julie Lattimer and Lisa Tupper.

The Board scheduled the appointments on the May 25, 2010 County Board of Commissioners Meeting agenda.

B) Request for Use of County Improvement Fund Proceeds for Visitors Promotion

Hilton said the VPC has recommended that an additional 0.5% of the lodging tax proceeds (\$127,094.08) be transferred to the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) for promotion support, having found that tourism facilities in the County are adequate.

Hudkins questioned the accuracy of that finding, noting the condition of Pershing Auditorium.

Hilton said the lodging tax proceeds are not sufficient to renovate the facility and said the VPC supports using the funds to bring groups in that will utilize the Haymarket Arena and Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Jeff Maul, CVB Executive Director, said Pershing Auditorium still serves a function, noting its future has not been determined.

Hudkins suggested it would be appropriate for the VPC look at that issue.

C) County Improvement Fund Grant Recommendations (Lancaster County Agricultural Society, Star City BMX, Froelich Foundation for Grand Manse, International Quilt Study Center & Museum, and Lied Center)

Hilton gave an overview of the grant requests (Exhibit B). He said the VPC has recommended approval of all of them, with the exception of the request from the Froelich Foundation for funds to install a virtual history kiosk in the Grand Manse. He said their request was disqualified because the owner is not a 501c(3) (non-profit) organization.

Schorr exited the meeting at 9:45 a.m. to attend the Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) County Government in 2020 Committee Meeting.

7 ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

8 CONSENT ITEMS

There were no consent items.

DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS

A. Public Building Commission (PBC) - Hudkins, Schorr

Hudkins said they discussed a proposal to convert three offices currently used by the County Clerk into office space for the County Assessor, convert office/storage space that was previously used by the Personnel Department into offices for the County Clerk (Phase 2 of the County Clerk's remodel project) and convert the remaining space that was used by the Personnel Department into offices for City Finance and Human Services. He said the PBC agreed to fund conversion of space into offices for City Finance and Human Services but said conversion of space into offices for the County Assessor and County Clerk would need to be financed internally.

B. Lancaster County Correctional Facility Joint Public Agency (JPA) - Heier, Stevens

Heier said claims totaling \$534,574.77 were approved. The claims reflect payments to Wells Fargo for bank fees; Sampson Construction Company, the contractor; and The Clark Enersen Partners, the architect. A semi-annual interest payment on the bond in the amount of \$1,257,340.00 was also approved.

9 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT

A. Correspondence from Village of Bennet Regarding Road Maintenance

NOTE: The Village of Bennet is seeking an interlocal agreement with the County to provide for the continued maintenance of portions of 162nd Street and Bennet Road.

Eagan said the County Engineer has suggested the County Attorney draft an agreement for the Board's consideration.

B. Letter from Chad and Meredith Fickes (Sale of County Parcel)

Eagan said the Fickes own a home at 2333 South 47th Street in Lincoln and would like to purchase the small triangular lot at the back of their property that is owned by the County. He said the Board will need to follow established procedures to declare the property surplus, which include holding a public hearing on the matter.

C. County Change of Zone No. 147 (134th & A Street)

Mike DeKalb, Planner, appeared and requested disposition of County Change of Zone No. 147, noting applicant was asked to withdraw the application in July, 2002 but failed to do so (Exhibit C). He said the item was removed from the County Board's pending list in October, 2002 and no further action was taken. It was noted the property in question is no longer in the County's jurisdiction.

There was consensus to seek advise from the County Attorney's Office on how to best dispose of the item.

D. Overload Permits for County Roads

Consensus was to schedule discussion of this matter with the County Engineer.

10 PENDING

There were no pending items.

11 DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS

- A. Public Building Commission (PBC) - Hudkins, Schorr
- B. Lancaster County Correctional Facility Joint Public Agency (JPA) - Heier, Stevens

Items A and B were moved forward on the agenda.

12 EMERGENCY ITEMS AND OTHER BUSINESS

There were no emergency items or other business.

13 ADJOURNMENT

By direction of the Chair, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Dan Nolte
Lancaster County Clerk