

**MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2011
COMMISSIONERS HEARING ROOM, ROOM 112
FIRST FLOOR, COUNTY-CITY BUILDING
7:00 P.M.**

Commissioners Present: Deb Schorr, Vice Chair
Bernie Heier, Chair
Larry Hudkins
Jane Raybould
Brent Smoyer

Others Present: Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer
Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer
Brittany Behrens, Deputy County Attorney
Dan Nolte, County Clerk
Cori Beattie, Deputy County Clerk

The location announcement of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was given and the meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

1) **PUBLIC HEARING:**

A. Keno Fund Projects

The Chair opened the public hearing.

Dennis Meyer, County Budget & Fiscal Officer, was administered the oath.

Raybould arrived at 7:02 p.m.

Meyer said there was a slight change this year in how keno funds were used. In the past, these funds were primarily reserved for County road projects. This year, the majority, or \$1,575,000, was transferred to the General Fund for property tax relief. He added the remainder of the keno funds for this year has been budgeted for the motocross project, a new bookmobile, a consultant for the Community Health Endowment study and prevention grants.

There being no other comments, the Chair closed the public hearing.

B. Lancaster County's Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012

Schorr provided a brief overview of this year's budget process, emphasizing that the County was able to maintain the same levy (26.83 cents) as last year by making significant cuts across

departments. She said the County budget for fiscal year 2011-12 is \$154,299,846 which reflects a 7.52% decrease. Schorr also noted that property valuations increased 1.21% which will allow the County to place \$103,300 in reserve.

The Chair opened the public hearing.

Coby Mach and Mike Koberlein, Lincoln Independent Business Association (LIBA), were administered the oath.

Koberlein thanked the County Board and Dennis Meyer for their efforts in preparing the budget which reflected no tax increase. He urged the Board to be cautious with the use of one-time funding, such as keno funds, to balance future budgets.

Mach, on behalf of the LIBA Board of Directors, also thanked the County Board for not raising the tax levy. He offered some suggestions for future savings such as privatization, 100% retirement match, increasing hours to qualify for benefits, interlocal agreements, General Assistance and debt service (see Exhibit A).

Schorr clarified that while the County did transfer a large portion of the Keno Fund to the General Fund this year for tax relief, the Keno Fund replenishes itself on a monthly basis. Meyer confirmed that the County only budgets what is received which is currently about \$700,000 per year.

Heier noted the Board has been working on the retirement match for some time but this requires legislative change. They have also been discussing options for information services.

Raybould added she has proposed looking at privatizing the County Engineer's maintenance shop. She mentioned a State study is also underway regarding the retirement match. The Board continues to look at information services and other areas where interlocal agreements can be utilized.

Greg Osborn was administered the oath. He expressed his appreciation to the County Board for their overall budget efforts and for not raising taxes.

There being no other comments, the Chair closed the public hearing.

Heier thanked department heads, elected officials and employees for their efforts and sacrifices in planning this year's budget.

Hudkins noted this was one of the toughest budget years the County has faced and he was happy the Board was able to work through the issues and maintain the levy. He added the Board understands LIBA's concern about using one-time funding to balance the budget.

Smoyer said he also appreciated everyone's efforts and sacrifices throughout the budget process. He said the County is already working on next year's budget hoping to prevent another fiscal crunch.

2) **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Heier moved and Hudkins seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m. Raybould, Heier, Smoyer, Hudkins and Schorr voted aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Dan Nolte
Lancaster County Clerk