

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES  
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING  
BILL LUXFORD STUDIO (ROOM 113)  
TUESDAY, JULY 15, 2014  
9:30 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Larry Hudkins, Chair  
Brent Smoyer, Vice Chair  
Deb Schorr  
Roma Amundson

Commissioners Absent: Jane Raybould

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

*Advance public notice of the Board of Commissioners Staff Meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board and the Lancaster County, Nebraska, web site and provided to the media on July 14, 2014.*

The Vice Chair noted the location of the Open Meetings Act and opened the meeting at 9:34 a.m.

**AGENDA ITEM**

**1 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 10, 2014 STAFF MEETING**

**MOTION:** Amundson moved and Smoyer seconded approval of the minutes of the July 10, 2014 Staff Meeting. Smoyer, Amundson, Schorr and Hudkins voted aye. Raybould was absent from voting. Motion carried 4-0.

**2 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

There were no additions to the agenda.

### **3 BUDGET UPDATE - Dennis Meyer, Budget & Fiscal Officer**

- A. District Court
- B. Information Services

#### **B) Information Services**

Steve Henderson, Chief Information Officer, Information Services, appeared to review the data processing numbers included under the County Commissioners budget. It was noted the total amount increased by \$161,589 for Fiscal Year (FY) 2015. Henderson informed the Board that this figure will be reduced by \$20,000 due to a miscalculation. He said the biggest impact to this year's budget is application development, including an upgrade to the County financial system. He also predicted that the budget for FY16 will be lower following completion of this major project.

With regard to support services, Henderson said rates are based on historical trending and did increase slightly. He noted two other important factors: 1) the disposition of the Windows XP environment; and 2) the transition from Novell to a Microsoft File Management process.

Henderson said there will also be a slight reduction in Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) rates in addition to those changes based on the debt service schedule.

Schorr questioned what projects could be delayed in order to reduce expenditures. Henderson said while the financial system upgrade is needed soon, the start of the project could be postponed in order for the cost to straddle two budget years. He estimated that reduction to be around \$35,000 for FY15. Dennis Meyer, Budget & Fiscal Officer, agreed that implementation of the upgrade could be slightly delayed.

It was the consensus of the Board to delay implementation of the County financial system upgrade so the cost can be divided between FY15 and FY16.

#### **A) District Court**

Meyer noted the Board previously discussed reducing the District Court budget in the areas of video conferencing (\$50,000) and legal services (\$20,000). He said another issue to address is law clerk salaries.

Jennifer Kulwicki, District Court Administrator, noted that the Board did approve a 5.7% salary increase for District Court law clerks at the end of the last calendar year with a commitment to continue reviewing these salaries. Both law clerks are licensed attorneys with over five years of employment. She indicated that while in other

jurisdictions law clerks are only employed for two years, in Lancaster County District Court they have become career positions. Therefore, the judges would like to see their salaries increased an additional 5% based on their qualifications and experience. (The current salary is approximately \$42,000.)

Schorr said while she cannot support a 5% increase at this time, it may be appropriate to establish a step program for District Court law clerks, similar to what was recently done for Deputy County Attorneys and Public Defenders. Smoyer said law clerks were never meant to be a "career" position, therefore, the Board needs to decide if it wants to fundamentally change the position or continue status quo, knowing that someone in the future may only stay two years. He added, for the record, that District Court is a State function but in Nebraska they run through the counties. He considered this another unfunded mandate.

The Board decided to forego an additional 5% salary increase for the District Court law clerks at this time and to continue discussion at mid-year. Schorr added that if these law clerks are truly career positions, then they should probably be on a step plan like the other professional attorneys. Hudkins said the Board should also take into consideration that these employees receive a full benefit package.

Lastly, Kulwicki said District Court is moving forward with the attorney billing software but is awaiting some adjustments in order for it to better accommodate their needs.

## **Region V Contribution**

Hudkins inquired about the Sexual Trauma/Offense Prevention (STOP) Program. Thorpe said while Region V will likely have a future financial role, following the County's three-month financial commitment funding will come from Health and Human Services (Division of Behavioral Health) through June, 2015.

Amundson felt CJ Johnson, Region V Systems Administrator, gave the County Board a clear ultimatum at the July 10, 2014 Staff Meeting whereby, if the County reduces its contribution to Region V, Region V will reduce its allocation to the County's Crisis Center. She felt this statement was disproportionate, ill conceived and illogical and she would not support allocating additional funds to Region V until a better proposal was submitted. **Note:** Lancaster County has currently budgeted \$400,000 over its per capita share for Region V who has historically allocated these funds to cover administrative costs. (See July 10, 2014 Staff Meeting minutes for additional discussion on this item.)

Hudkins added that Lancaster County has always paid its fair share of the per capita and he has always been concerned about the County's over match (\$400,000). He felt Region V has a fiduciary responsibility to help fund the Crisis Center and, unless Region V is willing to compromise with the County, he would support removal of this additional funding.

Eagan explained that many years ago, the State came up with an additional \$400,000 for the Crisis Center which passed through Region V. This then freed up \$400,000 previously designated and, instead of discussing this issue with the County, the Region reallocated it to cover administrative costs. He said if the money was from the State for the Crisis Center, he didn't know how Region V could just remove it should the County lower its match. Additionally, the per diem for other counties utilizing the Crisis Center would have to be increased to help cover this funding loss. It was also noted that there is no contract between the County and Region V for the additional funding.

Schorr said she understands the County is responsible for a portion of Region V's administrative costs and felt it may be time to reallocate the per capita rate and recalculate the Crisis Center per diem.

**MOTION:** Amundson moved to reduce Region V funding by \$400,000.

**FRIENDLY AMENDMENT:** Schorr offered a friendly amendment to reduce funding by \$300,000.

The maker of the motion did not accept the friendly amendment.

Hudkins seconded the original motion for discussion purposes.

Smoyer said ultimately the Region V Governing Board will be making the final funding determination and he thought it would benefit Lancaster County to look for a compromise. Schorr said retaining an additional \$100,000 in the budget would help Region V cover expenses for the next year until the reallocation can be determined. She added it is also not just a budgetary issue, there is the concern of overpayment by the County.

Meyer noted that Commissioner Raybould's recommendation was to reduce Region V funding by \$300,000.

**ROLL CALL ON ORIGINAL MOTION:** Amundson and Hudkins voted aye. Schorr and Smoyer voted nay. Raybould was absent from voting. Motion failed 2-2.

Meyer said for budgeting purposes, he will work with the \$300,000 figure knowing the issue will continue to be discussed. He added he will not be contacting Region V at this time pending a final budget decision.

Meyer said he will schedule additional discussion with the County Engineer for next week.

#### **4 ACTION ITEMS**

- A. Authorization Form for Payment of Expenses of Attending 2014 Prudential Client Conference (September 17-19, 2014 in Marina del Ray, CA)

**MOTION:** Smoyer moved and Schorr seconded to authorize the Chair to sign the form. Amundson, Schorr, Smoyer and Hudkins voted aye. Raybould was absent from voting. Motion carried 4-0.

Eagan confirmed that he and Doug Cyr, Chief Deputy County Attorney, will be attending the conference with the cost covered by the Employees Expense Account.

## **5 CONSENT ITEMS**

There were no consent items.

## **6 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT**

- A. Emergency Management Director

**MOTION:** Schorr moved and Smoyer seconded to begin negotiations with James Davidsaver for the position of Emergency Management Director and request that he retain Mark Hosking as Deputy.

Schorr also indicated that she would like to see Hosking retain his current salary level (\$55,000).

**ROLL CALL:** Amundson, Smoyer, Schorr and Hudkins voted aye. Raybould was absent from voting. Motion carried 4-0.

## **7 PENDING**

There were no pending items.

## **8 DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS**

- a. Lincoln Chamber of Commerce Coffee

The meeting was cancelled.

- b. Public Building Commission Meeting with the Mayor

There was no report.

**c. Meeting with the Mayor**

Schorr indicated they discussed the following: Emergency Management Director, Human Services position, Emergency Medical Services Oversight Authority (EMSOA), Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD) levy and City sales tax.

**d. Public Building Commission (PBC)**

This report was held.

**e. Board of Health**

The meeting was cancelled.

**f. Regional County Clerk Meeting**

Schorr said she was asked to attend this meeting due to her membership on the Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) Board of Directors. She said the primary focus of the meeting was on fee increases. County Lobbyist Gordon Kissel was also present to discuss the difficulties and strategies associated with getting such legislation passed. Inmate marriages and increasing cases of marriage license fraud were also discussed. She asked that fee increases and locksmith license statutes be scheduled for further discussion at the Tri-County Meeting.

**g. Information Services Policy Committee**

The meeting was cancelled.

**h. Parks and Recreation Advisory Board**

Schorr noted she attended the Jamaica North Trail groundbreaking for the portion of the trail between the City of Lincoln and Jamaica South. She added the County was recognized as owners of Wilderness Park which runs parallel to the trail.

**i. Juvenile Justice Review Committee**

Amundson said a representative from Health and Human Services discussed the juvenile justice system service process and responsibility with regard to various programs. A highlight was learning that 50% of out-of-home placements are now be placed out of state. She felt Lancaster County needs to access community dollars to increase local placement options.

**j. LIBA - Budget Monitoring Committee**

Smoyer said the City of Lincoln budget was discussed.

## 9 EMERGENCY ITEMS AND OTHER BUSINESS

There were no emergency items or other business.

## 10 ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION:** Smoyer moved and Amundson seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:31 a.m. Amundson, Smoyer, Schorr and Hudkins voted aye. Raybould was absent from voting. Motion carried 4-0.



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Dan Nolte  
Lancaster County Clerk

