

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES  
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING  
ROOM 113 - BILL LUXFORD STUDIO  
THURSDAY, JULY 2, 2015  
8:30 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Roma Amundson, Chair  
Larry Hudkins, Vice Chair  
Deb Schorr  
Bill Avery  
Todd Wiltgen

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

*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 1, 2015.*

The Chair noted the location of the Open Meetings Act and opened the meeting at 8:31 a.m.

**AGENDA ITEM**

**1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JUNE 25, 2015 STAFF MEETING**

**MOTION:** Wiltgen moved and Avery seconded approval of the minutes of the June 25, 2015 Staff Meeting. Avery, Schorr, Wiltgen and Amundson voted aye. Hudkins was absent from voting. Motion carried 4-0.

**2 ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None were stated.

**3 LABOR NEGOTIATIONS** - Doug McDaniel, Lincoln-Lancaster County Human Resources Director; Nicole Gross and Amy Sadler, Compensation Technicians; Brittany Behrens, Deputy County Attorney; Pam Dingman, County Engineer; Sheli Schindler, Youth Services Center (YSC) Director

**MOTION:** Schorr moved and Wiltgen seconded to enter Executive Session at 8:32 a.m. for the purpose of protecting the public interest with regards to labor negotiations.

The Chair restated the motion for the record.

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

Hudkins arrived at the meeting. The clerk was not in the room to record the time.

Avery and Hudkins exited the meeting. The clerk was not in the room to record the time.

**MOTION:** Wiltgen moved and Schorr seconded to exit Executive Session at 9:05 a.m. Wiltgen, Schorr and Amundson voted aye. Avery and Hudkins were absent from voting. Motion carried 3-0.

Avery and Hudkins returned to the meeting at 9:06 a.m.

**4 SALARY FOR ELIZABETH CARPENTER, BAILIFF FOR THE HONORABLE SUSAN STRONG** - Jennifer Kulwicki, District Court Administrator

Jennifer Kulwicki, District Court Administrator, said District Court Judge Susan Strong, who was recently appointed to the bench, has named Elizabeth Carpenter her bailiff . She said Carpenter does not have District Court experience but has held a couple of positions in County Court since 2008, including serving as Judge Strong's Judicial Assistant. Kulwicki asked that Carpenter be started at the same salary as the other Bailiff II's.

Joe Kelly, County Attorney, appeared and said he feels paying a new District Court Bailiff that salary (\$59,000) would amount to unfair treatment for paralegals and attorneys in the County Attorney's and Public Defender's Offices. He said the goal of the Board for a period of years has been to elevate the bailiffs, at the request of the District Court Judges, to Paralegal II status. Kelly said Bailiff I and II positions do not have step increases so a new Bailiff II would receive the same salary as the most senior paralegal in the County Attorney's Office who has been there for 18 years.

**NOTE:** Paralegals have 8 steps. He said he also believes a bailiff would receive more vacation time. Kulwicki explained that bailiffs do not accrue vacation time, rather they must take their vacation when the judge they serve takes vacation. Kelly also pointed out that the \$59,000 salary paid to Bailiff II's, which will increase with a cost-of-living

adjustment (COLA), is more than the County pays starting attorneys. He said this becomes a hiring and retention issue for the County Attorney's and Public Defender's Offices.

It was noted there is only one Bailiff I in the District Court. It is a part-time position that has work release duties.

Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer, said bailiffs are in the unclassified service by statute and said he sees no reason a step system could not be developed for them. Nicole Gross, Compensation Technician, Human Resources Department, appeared and said Human Resources' could create a step system that "mirrors" that of the Paralegal I and II's.

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Wiltgen seconded to ask the Human Resources Department to study this position before the County agrees to fund it and provide options for a step system for bailiffs.

Kulwicki said Judge Strong has a jury trial is starting on Monday and that is when the new bailiff is scheduled to start. Hudkins said then the matter should have been brought forward earlier. Avery agreed and asked Kulwicki, "You don't think you owe us the courtesy of giving us more time?" Kulwicki said Judge Strong's bailiff appointment moved quickly and said she sent a letter within a day of when the selection was made.

Schorr suggested that Carpenter start as a Bailiff I and be held at that salary (\$48,023) as the County begins to explore a step process.

Hudkins asked what Carpenter is currently making. Kulwicki said she doesn't have that information.

Doug Cyr, Chief Administrative Deputy County Attorney, appeared and said he believes it is counterintuitive to start a person that has no District Court Bailiff experience at the highest rate paid for that position. He added most positions have probationary periods and said starting a person at the top eliminates any evaluation period.

**ROLL CALL:** Wiltgen, Avery, Hudkins, Schorr and Amundson voted aye. Motion carried 5-0.

**MOTION:** Schorr moved and Hudkins seconded to start Elizabeth Carpenter on July 6, 2015 as a Bailiff I at an annual salary of \$48,023. Avery, Hudkins, Schorr, Wiltgen and Amundson voted aye. Motion carried 5-0.

**NOTE:** See Exhibit A for 2015 salary information for bailiffs.

## 5 BUDGET UPDATE - Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer

Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer, presented updated budget information (Exhibit B). He said the first page addresses Commissioner Avery's suggestion at the June 18<sup>th</sup> County Board Staff Meeting to require a 10% across-the-board reduction to the increases in budget requests. Meyer said it is difficult for smaller departments to make that type of reduction without eliminating staff. Avery said another concept would be zero-based budgeting in which all expenses must be justified for each new period. Wiltgen noted some departments have already made reductions and suggested the 10% reduction be applied after those changes rather than to their original proposed increases.

Meyer also noted there is one bond payment remaining for the Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and said he pays that out of the Debt Service Fund and reduces each department's budget according (see Page 1).

Meyer discussed capital outlay items (see Page 2) noting those items account for less than 1% of the General Fund budget. He noted there is \$16,889,226 in capital outlay items in the budget and said \$13,667,242 of that amount is for roads and bridges. Meyer also explained the Jail Savings Fund is utilized for Corrections' capital outlay items.

In response to a question from Hudkins, Meyer indicated the capital outlay request for the Youth Services Center (YSC) includes a key cabinet but felt Sheli Schindler, YSC Director, would agree to eliminate that expense if asked.

Wiltgen noted an item is scheduled on the July 7<sup>th</sup> County Board of Commissioners Meeting agenda to approve a requisition in the amount of \$22,663.73 from Business Interiors by Staples for conference room chairs and a cart at County Extension and asked where those funds are budgeted. Hudkins said those items will be used in County Extension's meeting rooms which are utilized by a number of departments and groups. He said non-county users pay a small fee to use those room and said those funds were accumulated over several years to help pay the cost. Wiltgen asked whether other departments accumulate funds in this manner. Meyer said the majority do not.

Information was also presented on motor fuel costs (see Page 3). Thorpe questioned the large increase shown in the Highway Fund from actual Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-2015 to budget FY 2015-2016. Meyer said he doesn't have information on that. Hudkins said he believes motor fuel costs could be controlled by contracting for fuel.

At Schorr's request, Meyer discussed how the County budgets for cost-of-living adjustments and health insurance increases (COLA) in the Contingency Fund rather than through the department budgets. Meyer was asked to provide a list of agencies that did not request an additional appropriation at midyear to cover those costs.

Meyer noted Coby Mach, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Lincoln Independent Business Association (LIBA), had suggested several cost-saving measures at the June 30<sup>th</sup> County Board of Commissioners Meeting (see Exhibit C):

- Reduce the Joint Budget Committee's (JBC's) budget by 5%

Meyer said a 5% reduction in the JBC budget would be \$38,500. He noted the Board gave Sara Hoyle, Human Services Director, authority to develop contracts based on the JBC's funding recommendations (see June 25, 2015 Staff Meeting minutes). Hudkins said he believes the City should be asked to increase its contribution. Thorpe noted Human Services will be updating their website, which was another of LIBA's recommendations.

- A 10% across-the-board reduction to the increases in budget requests

This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

- A grant writing program and a year-to-year comparison to see if the County is bringing in more or fewer dollars from grants

Meyer noted the several individuals write grants but the County doesn't have a grant writer position. He said the County has received approximately \$4,000,000 in federal grants the last three years. Schorr suggested that increasing grant funding could be part of the Board's strategic planning discussion.

- Outsourcing specific duties

There was consensus to consult the Human Resources Department, Purchasing Department and Management Team regarding outsourcing cleaning/maintenance services.

- Contracting out the housing of prisoners and conduct a jail study

Wiltgen said he supports doing a jail study based on Legislative Bill (LB) 605 which changed classification of penalties, punishments, probation and parole provisions and provisions relating to criminal records and restitution. A separate component would be efficiencies in current jail operations.

- Eliminate the Commissioners' personal Post Employment Health Plans (PEHP)

Eagan indicated any changes to the Commissioners' compensation would have to be done as part of the resolution that sets their salaries every four years.

- Whether there is a need to fund the County Extension Office to the current extent

There was consensus to invite Mach to attend a scheduled budget discussion with Karen Wobig, Lancaster County Extension Urban Unit Leader.

- Work with state senators to replace the Commission of Industrial Relations (CIR)
- Halt any plans to change the retirement plan
- Explore opportunities to save costs on health insurance.

Wiltgen asked Meyer how the budget looks after recent adjustments to revenues and expenditures. Meyer estimated the budget deficit has been decreased by approximately \$1,800,000, adding he will have the General Fund balance next week. He also indicated inheritance tax collections increased by approximately \$1,000,000 and YSC has received more revenue through Probation than anticipated. Meyer pointed out the Board will need to make decisions on the Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD) levy, highway and bridge funding, and a possible tax increase.

Meyer was asked to: 1) Contact the Purchasing Department to see what the cost might be if the County contracted for 90% of its motor fuel needs at today's prices for the rest of the year; and 2) Bring back projections of what a property tax increase could generate.

## 6 ACTION ITEMS

- A. Accept Letter of Notification of Change in Retirement Date from Gary Chalupa, Veterans Service Officer/General Assistance Director

Gary Chalupa, Veterans Service Officer/General Assistance Director, appeared and gave an update on transition plans.

The Chair thanked Chalupa for his service.

**MOTION:** Wiltgen moved and Hudkins seconded to accept the letter. Hudkins, Schorr, Wiltgen, Avery and Amundson voted aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Chalupa's exit interview was scheduled for July 14<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was recessed at 10:45 a.m. and was resumed at 10:56 a.m.

## **7 CONSENT ITEMS**

There were no consent items.

## **8 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT**

### **A. Legislative Bill (LB) 126 (16% Combined Pension Match)**

There was consensus to explore the fiscal impact.

### **B. Department Tours (September 22, 2015)**

There was consensus to tour the 605 Building (former jail facility) with Don Killeen, County Property Manager and the construction team at 9:00 a.m. on September 21<sup>st</sup>. The Board will also tour departments in the County-City Building on September 22<sup>nd</sup> from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m.

### **C. Agenda for Village Meeting (July 9, 2015, 8:30 a.m.)**

- 1) Southeast Nebraska Development District (SENDD) - Dave Taladay, Executive Director; Craig Eberle, Business Loan Officer/Assistant Director
- 2) Citizens Institute for Rural Design (CIRD) "My Town" Update - David Cary, Acting Planning Director, Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department; and Stacey Groshong Hageman, Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department
- 3) Introduction of Mitchel Sump, Aging Partners Public Rural Transit Program Director
- 4) Cooperative Purchasing Opportunities - Bob Walla, Assistant Purchasing Agent

Informational only.

### **D. July Management Team Meeting Date and Agenda Items**

The following agenda items were suggested: 1) Outsourcing cleaning/maintenance services; 2) Director job descriptions; 3) Attendance at County Board meetings; 4) Wellness; and 5) Roundtable discussion.

### **E. 2015 Food Bank Drive Employee Picnic Volunteer Opportunity**

Informational only.

## F. Wind Farm Letters

Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, reported the Planning Department is posting comments related to the proposed wind energy text amendment on their webpage: <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/dev/wind/index.htm>. The Planning Department will provide copies of all letters it has received to the Board as part of their Fact Sheet once the Planning Commission takes action on the matter.

## 9 PENDING

There were no pending items.

## 10 DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS

### A. Information Services Policy Committee (ISPC) - Wiltgen

Wiltgen said they discussed the need for a universal policy on password usage, the County's decision not to move forward with a time and attendance system and the need to update the City-County Internet homepage. The group also received an update on the Novell software migration.

### B. Economic Development Annual Breakfast - Amundson, Avery, Hudkins, Wiltgen

No report was given.

### C. Meeting with Planning Department - Amundson, Hudkins

Amundson said they discussed wind farms and economic development projects in Bennet and Hallam, Nebraska.

### D. Chamber Coffee - Amundson

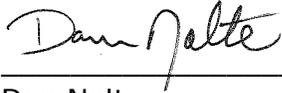
Amundson said they received information on a variety of topics including: 1) Tourism; 2) The City's Disaster Recovery Program; 3) Growth in the Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) District; 4) Crowdsourcing (the process of obtaining needed services, ideas, or content by soliciting contributions from a large group of people); 5) Prison reform; 6) Property taxes; 7) Budgets; and 8) Flood damage.

## 11 EMERGENCY ITEMS AND OTHER BUSINESS

There were no emergency items.

**12 ADJOURNMENT**

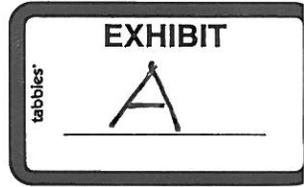
**MOTION:** Schorr moved and Wiltgen seconded to adjourn the meeting at 11:25 a.m. Schorr, Wiltgen, Avery, Hudkins and Amundson voted aye. Motion carried 5-0.



Dan Nolte  
Lancaster County Clerk



## Salary Information 2015



Name	Department	Class title	Current salary	2.5% increase	3% increase
SMITH,VERNICE M.	DISTRICT COURT	BAILIFF I	\$46,624		\$48,023
HOUGH,SHARON MARIE	DISTRICT COURT	BAILIFF II*	\$57,293		\$59,012
FOLSOM,KIM R.	DISTRICT COURT	BAILIFF II*	\$57,293		\$59,012
LAMPE,SHERI A.	DISTRICT COURT	BAILIFF II*	\$57,293		\$59,012
PETERSEN,MARIAN G.	DISTRICT COURT	BAILIFF II*	\$57,293		\$59,012
RHYNALDS,CHRISTINE L.	DISTRICT COURT	BAILIFF II*	\$57,293		\$59,012
SCHMIDT,BERNADETTE L.	DISTRICT COURT	BAILIFF II*	\$57,293		\$59,012
DRAPER,KRISTIN	DISTRICT COURT	BAILIFF II*	\$57,293		\$59,012
ROWE,KAREN M.	DISTRICT COURT	BAILIFF II*	\$57,293		\$59,012
WOOD,JANICE K.	DISTRICT COURT	BAILIFF II*	\$57,293		\$59,012
NEUBERGER,ANGELA R.	JUVENILE COURT	BAILIFF II*	\$57,293		\$59,012
POFAHL,ANGELA M.	JUVENILE COURT	BAILIFF II*	\$57,293		\$59,012
LEE,LESLI L.	JUVENILE COURT	BAILIFF II*	\$57,293		\$59,012
PAUL,DIANNE E.	JUVENILE COURT	BAILIFF II*	\$57,293		\$59,012
GAU,ELIZABETH OSTERMAN	DISTRICT COURT	DISTRICT COURT JUDGES LAW CLERK**	\$42,000		\$43,260
BARNES,CAITLIN R.	DISTRICT COURT	DISTRICT COURT JUDGES LAW CLERK**	\$42,000		\$43,260
GILLEN,SUSAN L.	DISTRICT COURT	CHILD SUPPORT REFEREE	\$100,267	\$102,774	

\* The Board has stated they would like to equalize the Bailiff II to the Paralegal II.  
 The Paralegal II is currently paid \$59,012 at the maximum.

Lancaster County



Expenditures by Dollar Amount Increase -	Beginning	10% Calculation	VOIP	Other Exp Changes	
Corrections	7.13% 1,488,264	148,826	14,207	400,300	
County Sheriff	6.87% 752,775	75,278	7,142		
County Attorney	4.88% 336,038	33,604	7,142		added employee
General Government	2.91% 328,516	32,852			
YSC	4.83% 290,971	29,097	5,555	(15,632)	
County Engineer	6.60% 262,708	26,271	3,194	118,587	
District Court	8.88% 238,955	23,896	4,762	174,000	
Public Defender	5.69% 217,339	21,734	3,889		added employee
Community Corrections	5.91% 162,295	16,230	1,984	8,895	
County Assessor / ROD	4.12% 160,404	16,040	4,762		
Human Services Misc	3.63% 149,539	14,954		50,000	
BOE	33.33% 118,750	11,875		(1,050)	
Clerk of the District Court	5.19% 87,502	8,750	2,381		
Justice Misc	2.21% 51,358	5,136		(19,966)	
Records Management	6.50% 38,851	3,885	397	(1,208)	
County Court	4.44% 38,781	3,878	7,301		
Juvenile Court	2.01% 38,155	3,816	1,825		
Juvenile Probation	11.31% 33,005	3,301	4,762	2,880	
Adult Probation	9.33% 32,177	3,218	5,555	(5,807)	
County Clerk	3.17% 31,733	3,173	1,270		
County Treasurer	0.86% 29,252	2,925	7,936		
Veterans Services	3.31% 26,645	2,665	794		
Administrative Services	5.24% 20,534	2,053	952		
Extension	1.74% 18,545	1,855	3,968		
Budget & Fiscal	5.76% 18,474	1,847	238		
Emergency Management	2.75% 14,674	1,467	2,778		
Board of Commissioners	3.45% 9,574	957			
Mental Health Board	0.72% 1,003	100			
General Assistance	-0.17% (3,915)				
Jury Commissioner	-6.52% (10,084)		159		
ROD Technology	-6.27% (23,206)				
Human Services	-9.47% (40,638)		794		
Information Services	-9.88% (92,052)				
Election Commissioner	-21.71% (294,755)		2,222	(2,435)	
	4,532,167	499,682	95,969	708,564	

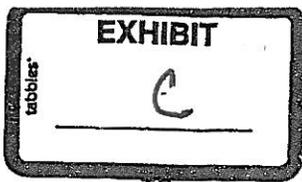
Lancaster County  
Capital Outlay - Account 67's

	Actual 13-14	Actual 14-15	Budget 14-15	Budget 15-16
County Clerk	-	1,903.00	200.00	200.00
County Treasurer	17,113.99	39,869.20	50,000.00	45,000.00
County Assessor	213,576.43	15,415.99	11,500.00	17,500.00
ROD Technology	-	899.97	169,903.00	197,000.00
Election Commissioner	4,201.00	10,226.20	11,000.00	-
Information Services	107,330.24	121,069.62	150,000.00	150,000.00
BOE	1,177.65	-	-	-
Clerk of District Court	1,343.81	4,166.41	1,750.00	3,200.00
County Court	2,981.55	4,484.28	4,671.00	4,850.00
Juvenile Court	4,783.23	1,680.63	3,250.00	9,500.00
District Court	16,109.22	5,404.13	18,200.00	30,450.00
Public Defender	21,320.68	12,859.31	5,300.00	9,300.00
Extension	11,231.72	92,767.60	6,817.00	7,800.00
Records Management	2,615.00	2,370.00	3,000.00	-
County Sheriff	231,752.40	298,734.52	242,532.00	263,509.00
County Attorney	5,486.20	-	3,000.00	3,000.00
Corrections	80,620.11	6,419.26	-	-
Juvenile Probation	25,203.28	1,890.87	2,000.00	2,000.00
Adult Probation	-	167.78	2,000.00	2,000.00
Community Corrections	3,514.07	562.94	17,500.00	15,000.00
Youth Services Center	18,353.98	3,866.10	36,150.00	43,370.00
Emergency Management	1,609.05	3,242.63	4,500.00	4,500.00
County Engineer	181,564.87	170,869.24	206,455.00	7,000.00
Veterans Service	2,189.26	1,086.00	-	-
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>954,077.74</b>	<b>799,955.68</b>	<b>949,728.00</b>	<b>846,779.00</b>
Breakdown by type:				
Right of Way	140,158.46	149,220.00	150,000.00	-
Repair to Buildings	3,634.65	65,572.16	5,017.00	6,000.00
Vehicles	381,083.15	222,516.00	210,000.00	229,000.00
Office Equipment	50,374.49	62,095.77	31,520.00	18,150.00
Training Equipment	910.27	294.99	500.00	500.00
Building Maint Equip	10,217.32	3,601.48	300.00	300.00
Communication Equip	12,604.05	2,820.86	8,050.00	22,800.00
Microfilm Equip	15.00	-	-	-
Food Equipment	1,882.84	3,850.00	100.00	100.00
Tools	588.93	-	50.00	50.00
Furniture & Fixtures	38,282.01	49,695.29	54,701.00	55,500.00
Engineering Equipment	14,524.85	18,949.24	20,955.00	4,000.00
Computer Equipment	177,405.34	146,195.26	345,903.00	411,650.00

Voting Equipment	3,949.00	-	-	-
Other Equipment	75,871.16	72,444.63	90,132.00	98,729.00
Building Security Equip	17,142.42	-	-	-
Engineers and Architects	17,333.80	-	25,000.00	-
Appraisers	<u>8,100.00</u>	<u>2,700.00</u>	<u>7,500.00</u>	<u>-</u>
	954,077.74	799,955.68	949,728.00	846,779.00
Other Funds:				
Bridge & Road Fund	3,044,927.42	2,021,339.74	6,045,561.00	7,088,342.00
Highway Fund	1,967,723.17	2,952,876.73	2,887,288.00	6,578,900.00
Grants Fund	241,303.05	485,489.83	3,574.00	-
Keno Fund	53,682.54	4,310.44	160,424.00	156,975.00
Building Fund	63,654.31	75,480.70	780,037.00	971,330.00
Jail Savings	75,385.61	19,264.56	877,699.00	855,968.00
Crisis Center	-	-	3,930.00	4,296.00
Noxious Weed	3,454.18	1,902.38	2,000.00	1,500.00
Property Management	8,992.46	90,477.73	23,476.00	47,936.00
City Building Maint	<u>19,747.72</u>	<u>32,298.00</u>	<u>357,696.00</u>	<u>337,200.00</u>
TOTAL	6,432,948.20	6,483,395.79	12,091,413.00	16,889,226.00

Lancaster County  
Motor Fuels - Account 63510

	Actual <u>13-14</u>	Actual <u>14-15</u>	Budget <u>14-15</u>	Budget <u>15-16</u>
County Assessor	12,967.51	8,605.34	15,000.00	15,000.00
Extension	3,649.11	2,499.58	4,250.00	4,250.00
Records Management	2,515.05	1,945.25	2,800.00	2,800.00
County Sheriff	226,457.11	194,774.70	238,865.00	238,865.00
Corrections	12,642.05	8,551.63	16,000.00	15,000.00
Community Corrections	7,066.03	6,298.75	7,300.00	6,540.00
Youth Services Center	2,285.16	1,452.29	2,000.00	2,000.00
Emergency Management	<u>6,628.33</u>	<u>4,787.07</u>	<u>7,500.00</u>	<u>8,000.00</u>
 TOTAL GENERAL FUND	 274,210.35	 228,914.61	 293,715.00	 292,455.00
 Bridge & Road Fund	 422,470.24	 339,014.79	 620,000.00	 440,000.00
Highway Fund	642,800.57	473,782.54	730,000.00	730,000.00
Grants Fund	747.03	348.12	-	-
Crisis Center	18,182.10	46.53	300.00	250.00
Noxious Weed	6,579.71	5,236.96	8,000.00	8,000.00
Property Management	6,629.26	5,158.97	7,300.00	7,240.00
City Building Maint	<u>2,988.26</u>	<u>2,712.24</u>	<u>5,000.00</u>	<u>5,000.00</u>
 TOTAL	 1,374,607.52	 1,055,214.76	 1,664,315.00	 1,482,945.00



**TO:** Lancaster County Board of Commissioners  
**FROM:** The Lincoln Independent Business Association  
**RE:** 2016 Budget  
**DATE:** June 30, 2015

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The Lincoln Independent Business Association (LIBA) would like to recognize and thank the Lancaster County Commissioners for their work to avoid property tax increases. We know that last year you had to reclaim part of the RTSD levy in order to do that, and we supported you. You have held the county levy rate steady since 2012 and we sincerely appreciate your efforts.

This year, the early projections contain a deficit when compared with requests from county officials and department heads. Already the county jail has worked to reduce its increase by \$400,000 which will help you close the gap. However, more work needs to be done to avoid a tax increase. LIBA is not going to suggest it has all the answers, but we have questions that may help your efforts to balance the budget. We have listed our questions below and hope you will take the time necessary to investigate each item.

1. What would be the effect of cutting the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) by 5%? The JBC web site on Lancaster.ne.gov does not have any newsletters posted after 2012, and the budget page has not been updated since 2013. We recommend keeping this page current so the citizens of the community know what the JBC is doing.
2. Last week, Commissioner Bill Avery asked a question that we find important. He asked what would happen if you asked department heads to come forward with a 10% cut to their "increased spending" requests. This could be a good exercise for the county. In fact, a zero based budget might be a better place to start.
3. Does Lancaster County have an effective grant writing program? When was the last time a year-over-year comparison was done to see if we are bringing in more or fewer dollars from grants?
4. Has the county attempted to outsource specific duties such as:
  - A. Security Guards
  - B. Building Cleaning (janitorial)
  - C. Crisis Center Services
5. The Lancaster County Jail is spending \$90 per day to house prisoners. When we were last contracting-out our prisoners, we were paying \$45 per day. We understand that we had to pay transportation and medical costs; however, we believe it would be appropriate to issue and RFP to area jails to again house our prisoners. This year we will have a \$21 Million jail budget. Since 2011, our jail costs are up over \$7 Million. That is a 33% increase in 5 years.
6. The State of Nebraska is embarking on a prison study. We are wondering if the Lancaster County Jail should conduct its own study. This might give us some ideas on how to save resources.

7. Would the County Commissioners consider eliminating their personal PEHP plans?
8. Does Lancaster County need to continue to fund the County Extension Office to the extent we currently do? According to their web site, in Lancaster County we have five Extension Educators, an Extension Educator Leader, sixteen Extension Assistants, and six support staff.
9. LIBA would like to encourage the County to work with the state legislature to seek an alternative to the state Commission on Industrial Relations (CIR). The current rules and regulations under the CIR make it nearly impossible to control employee expenses and benefits. Between Fiscal years 2014 and 2015 the County anticipated reducing employment by 55 employees yet budgeted payroll costs are increasing by over \$6,000 per employee.
10. The County Board should halt all discussion about changing the retirement plan. If you implement your new idea, it will cost you more than the old 150% retirement plan. (see attached)

Finally, we would ask that you explore all opportunities to save costs on Health Insurance. This should include lowering the percentage paid on health plans and vigorously shopping your plan to all viable insurance providers.

Again, today LIBA is only recommending that you continue to ask tough questions as you attempt to balance your budget.

## Lancaster County

1:1.5 match at 13% of salary

Employee Contribution	5.2%	\$2,600
County Contribution	7.8%	\$3,900
Total:	13%	\$6,500

1:1 match at 13% of salary

Employee Contribution	6.5%	\$3,250
County Contribution	6.5%	\$3,250
Total:	13%	\$6,500

1:1 match at 16% of salary

Employee Contribution	8%	\$4,000
Employer Contribution	8%	\$4,000
Total:	16%	\$8,000

Examples assume a yearly salary of \$50,000

Previous to 2012 Nebraska statute required Lancaster County to match employee contributions to their retirement plan 1:1.5 with a maximum combined contribution of 13% of employee salary

In 2012 the law was changed to allow Lancaster County to move to a 1:1 match with a maximum combined contribution of 13% of salary. As of 2015 all new hires except those in the sheriff's deputies union receive this level of retirement benefit.

In 2015, at Lancaster County's request, LB 126 was passed increasing Lancaster County's maximum combined contribution to 16% of salary.

If and when this provision is implemented the county would pay a higher retirement benefit under the 1:1 match than previously paid under the 1:1.5 match.

This change could cost the County an additional \$125,000 per year.

This number was calculated using the County average salary of \$46,910 applied to the 793 employees currently receiving the 1:1.5 match and 80 employees receiving a 1:1 match and assumed all employees would switch to the 1:1 at 16% retirement contribution.

Lancaster County does allow retired employees to stay on County health insurance. The retired individual must pay the entire premium cost. Currently 14 retired County employees remain on County health insurance.