

MINUTES
DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET HEARINGS
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING, ROOM 113
THURSDAY, MAY 31, 2007
1:00 P.M.

Commissioners Present: Bob Workman, Chair
 Bernie Heier, Vice Chair
 Larry Hudkins
 Ray Stevens
 Deb Schorr

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

The Chair opened the meeting at 1:02 p.m.

Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer, gave an overview of Lancaster County, Property Tax Funded Budgets, Fiscal Year 2008 Requested Compared to Fiscal Year 2007 Adopted (Exhibit A) and indicated that property tax will need to increase by \$3.2 million to fund the budget (does not include increases in personnel, additional TRIM licenses, the jail project or Building Fund projects).

COUNTY CLERK (602)

Present were Dan Nolte, County Clerk, and Tim Genuchi, Accounting Operations Manager for the County Clerk's Office.

Nolte and Genuchi gave an overview of the budget request.

Nolte said he did not budget for temporary salaries, as the need for temporary employees to assist with the property valuation protest process has not been determined.

COUNTY TREASURER (603)

Present were R.J. Nuernberger, County Treasurer, and Liz Thanel, Accountant in the County Treasurer's Office.

Nuernberger and Thanel gave an overview of the budget request. It was noted that revenue has increased by approximately \$450,000 due to better interest rates and an increase in property values.

Thanel indicated plans for a tax software conversion in October and said the budget includes printers and scanners to work with the program. She said if the conversion does not occur on schedule, there will be a one year delay and the funds will not be spent.

COUNTY ASSESSOR/REGISTER OF DEEDS (605)

Present were Norm Agena, County Assessor/Register of Deeds; Rob Ogden, Chief Field Deputy Assessor/Register of Deeds; and Scott Gaines, Chief Administrative Deputy Assessor/Register of Deeds.

Agena gave an overview of the budget request. He noted an increase of \$131,000 and attributed \$104,000 of that amount to personnel costs. Agena indicated that he will be turning back approximately \$150,000 out of the Fiscal Year 2006-07 budget, due to salary savings.

In response to a question from Meyer, Ogden said the increase in Computer Software Maintenance/License (Object No. 64175) reflects a phasing-in of the Eagle recorder and the assessor's software (the cost was part of the original bond issue and is now reflected in the budget).

COUNTY ENGINEER/GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) (703, 615)

Present were Don Thomas, County Engineer; Larry Worrell, County Surveyor; and Jim Langtry, County Engineer Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Mapping Division Head.

Thomas gave an overview of the County Engineer budget request. He said the 10.18% increase in personal services reflects step increases for thirteen employees following a salary survey and a retirement payout for the County Surveyor. Thomas noted an \$18,000 increase in Right-of-Way (Object No. 67120) and said that item has become increasingly expensive, due in part to the Rural to Urban Transportation System Program (RUTS). He said there won't be much to spend on roads as revenues are leveling off and costs have increased significantly.

Schorr arrived at the meeting at 1:50 p.m.

Langtry gave an overview of the GIS budget request, noting the increase in Personal Services reflects funding of a joint City/County GIS Program Manager. The expense will be reflected in the GIS budget but funding will also be through the following partners: County Assessor/Register of Deeds; Public Works & Utilities; Building & Safety Department; Planning Department; Lincoln Electric System (LES) and the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (NRD).

Langtry was asked to share the names of finalists for the position with the Board.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT (648)

Present was Brian Pillard, Records & Information Manager.

Pillard gave an overview of the budget, explaining the need for new microfilm equipment (Object No. 67450).

Discussion took place regarding whether to charge for records retrieval with consensus to schedule additional discussion on a Staff Meeting agenda.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT (066)

Present was Don Killeen, County Property Manager.

Killeen gave an overview of the budget.

Meyer noted that capital outlay items will be built into the Building Fund.

Hudkins asked whether there are sufficient funds in the budget to re-equip Trabert Hall for Adult Probation.

Killeen said the space is in pretty good shape.

Parking issues at Trabert Hall and Lancaster Manor were also discussed.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (693)

Present was Doug Ahlberg, Emergency Management Director.

Ahlberg gave an overview of the budget.

In response to a question from Heier, Ahlberg said every department that has a 800 megahertz radio is charged a \$300 per year, per radio surcharge by the City. The funds are used to help support the infrastructure. The expense is reflected in Equipment Maintenance Agreements (Object No. 64170).

Schorr asked whether there should be a breakdown of the expenses reflected in Other Miscellaneous Equipment (Object No. 67495) as it is the largest expense in the budget.

Ahlberg said the expenses are all related to warning sirens.

Ahlberg also reported on a recent operations exercise and the lack of adequate space in the Emergency Operations Center.

COUNTY SHERIFF (651)

Present were Terry Wagner, Lancaster County Sheriff, and Bill Jarrett, Chief Deputy Sheriff.

Wagner gave an overview of the budget. He noted an overall budget increase of \$410,663 and attributed most of it to personnel costs.

Discussion took place regarding the radio surcharge which is reflected in Communications Equipment Repair & Maintenance (Object No. 66265). Meyer was asked to contact the City to: 1) Request a breakdown of the fees; and 2) Verify whether the fees are used to help pay for communications towers.

Heier questioned the increase in Uniforms (Object No. 63220).

Jarrett said the existing contract expired and new orders have been held, pending signature of a new contract.

Wagner gave an overview of capital improvement projects.

Meyer said those projects are part of the Sheriff's Sinking Fund (see Justice System Budget (628), Page 8).

Wagner said there may be a need to hire four new employees over the next budget year. Two would assist with courtroom security and prisoner transport and the remaining two would be needed if Waverly and Hickman follow his recommendations and contract for an additional deputies.

Thorpe was asked to add reimbursement of court security costs to the legislative priorities list.

DIVERSION SERVICES

Present was Eric McMasters, Diversion Services.

McMasters gave an overview of the budget and program goals, referring to 2006 Annual Report and Budget Supporting Materials, Fiscal Year 2007-2008 (Exhibit B). He said the budget request remains the same - \$35,000 from the County and \$35,000 from the City.

Masters said the Safety Training Option Program (STOP) has been significantly impacted by a new state law that only allows a person to take a STOP class once every three years. The Lancaster County STOP Program had permitted individuals to participate once every two years. He said a competing program, Traffic Safety Plus, is seeking to be included as a provider and said that could further impact STOP revenues.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Schorr moved and Stevens seconded to adjourn the meeting at 3:44 p.m. Hudkins, Heier, Schorr, Stevens and Workman voted aye. Motion carried.

Dan Nolte
Lancaster County Clerk

NOTE: Documents referred to are included in Proposed Budget Fiscal Year 2008 (a copy is on file in the County Clerk's Office).