

**MINUTES  
BUDGET MONITORING COMMITTEE  
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING  
ROOM 113  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 27, 2005  
2 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Ray Stevens and Larry Hudkins, County Commissioners; Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer; Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer; Don Thomas, County Engineer; Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer; Trish Owen, Chief Deputy County Clerk; John Boehm, LIBA Representative; Bruce Bohrer, Lincoln Chamber of Commerce; Peter Katt, LIBA Representative; Jim Gordon, Nebraska Bar Association; Ron Krejci, First State Bank of Hickman; Jim Nissen, Lincoln Chamber of Commerce

**ABSENT:** Coby Mach, LIBA Representative; Mike Thurber, Corrections Director

The Budget Monitoring Committee meeting was called to order at 2:02 p.m.

**1 County Budget Overview - Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer**

Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer, gave an overview of the Lancaster County Proposed Budget for 2005-2006 (Exhibit A). He indicated the General Fund has increased mostly because of the General Assistance Program and the Debt Service has decreased because all of the old bonds have been paid off. The Building Fund has increased because two roofs need to be replaced and he also noted that mental health is still increasing. Kroeker said the overall percent change is 5.12%.

Commissioner Stevens indicated General Assistance is a State mandated function and they are tightening down on who gets assistance and who doesn't.

Commissioner Hudkins reported some counties are instituting mandatory drug testing before anyone can become eligible for general assistance and Lancaster County may soon be doing the same.

Peter Katt asked about the staffing costs to the budget and the general assistance mandates.

Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer, noted general assistance is the original welfare system and the counties are mandated to have guidelines to assist the poor, whether or not they are residents of Lancaster County.

Jim Gordon asked about alternatives to jail.

Kroeker said Community Corrections has been doing several things to keep people out of jail like letting people know when their court date is, community service and using adult drug court.

Kroeker indicated Board of Equalization has increased because the County Assessor is planning on doing a countywide reappraisal and the contingency fund is also up.

Katt asked about the personnel service costs compared to the private sector.

Kroeker said Lancaster County's pay is based on comparison with other counties in a similar tier.

The east beltway and corridor protection was briefly discussed.

Hudkins noted a new jail will probably need to be built in the future or the current one expanded because they are not in compliance with jail standards. He said right now Corrections is going to have to send 50 to 90 people to Platte County which will cost around \$50 a day, plus transportation costs.

Hudkins said the City wanted to fund the Rural to Urban Transition for Streets Program (RUTS) with the wheel tax and the County didn't know if they could come up with half the money to fund it. He said the City is expecting an increase in the wheel tax in 2007 and 2010.

Bruce Bohrer commented on the countywide fuel tax proposal and said he spoke with the chairman of the Transportation Committee who said the City has the authority to put an occupation tax on the sale of fuel and if that happens, the money won't go to Lancaster County, and Lincoln would get less highway allocation funds.

Eagan said the Joint Public Agency can institute certain taxes including a wheel tax or franchise tax, but it would be based on Lincoln's ability to implement a wheel tax. He said how the wheel tax is spent would be determined by what is in the agreement.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:42 p.m.