

Budget Work Session

TERM OF COMMISSION: December Session of the November Adjourned Term

PLACE OF MEETING: Boone County Government Center Commission Chambers

PRESENT WERE: Presiding Commissioner Don Stamper
District I Commissioner Karen M. Miller
District II Commissioner Linda Vogt
County Auditor June Pitchford
County Clerk Wendy S. Noren
Deputy County Clerk Melanie Stapleton

The meeting was called to order at 9:15a.m. by Commissioner Stamper.

Subject: County Clerk's Budget

Wendy S. Noren stated that she had requested for the past two years that the County purchase new ballot tabulation equipment. She stated that she wanted to purchase equipment that was certified to meet the Federal Election Commission's standards. She stated that the National Bureau developed some very detailed standards in the '80s. She stated that in the early '90s, it appeared that most of the equipment that was being sold met those standards. She stated that the Secretary of State (MO) was able to certify the equipment used in elections. She stated that the equipment that the County had been using was certified at that time.

Wendy S. Noren stated that the National Association of State of Election Directors (certifies in every state) did not believe that they had the ability to determine whether this equipment met the standards. She stated that they developed a contract to have an independent testing authority. She stated that the companies (that had been contracted for this) had the equipment tested, but there was reason to question that testing. She stated that in 1994 and 1995, AIS submitted their tabulation line for testing, during that time the equipment that AIS sold failed the certification.

Wendy S. Noren stated that she did not know what part of the certification that the AIS equipment failed because the company paid for the testing and did not have to release failed results.

Wendy S. Noren stated that these standards were not required. She stated that the State of MO would like to adopt them, however it was a Hancock problem to issue regulations. She stated that any new equipment sold in the state did have to be certified. She stated that she had put in a request for \$150,000 for the election equipment.

Wendy S. Noren stated that one of the reasons that her request was so late was that she had a difficult time getting firm (or better) numbers from the company. She stated that there were only two companies certified to sell optical scan. She stated that one of them purchased the other one. She stated that she had received a decent proposal from the company with trade-in numbers. She stated that she had provided two alternates on the request.

Wendy S. Noren stated that her goal was to have three machines by the 2000 Presidential Election. She stated that two machines could be purchased in 1999 and the third in 2000.

Wendy S. Noren stated that she and June Pitchford had spoken about the cost of recovery. She stated that this was a very controversial area (what could be charged to the Election fund) in Missouri. She stated that the State interpreted that equipment could not be purchased out of that fund nor could costs be capitalized out that fund. She stated that there had been a couple of counties that had been charging costs to the April fund. She stated that the State had not been pleased with this. She stated that the result was that the State developed the Presidential Primary Bill that said that they would not have to pay their portion of the cost for the Presidential Primary. She stated that the State would probably still have to pay their costs of the election.

Wendy S. Noren stated that the end result of all those things would probably be a standard for charging costs to the Election fund. She stated that there was a possibility that the State could be forced to lease additional equipment to many counties. She stated that counties had trouble

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getting a market value on the rental of equipment because most companies would not rent to governmental entities.

Wendy S. Noren stated that there were groups that were working on trying to contest elections because the equipment was not meeting standards.

Commissioner Stamper asked about the shelf life of this equipment.

Wendy S. Noren stated that the equipment that they had at present had been used for 15 yrs. She stated that the new equipment had been tested to meet certain standards, therefore it should probably last just as long.

June Pitchford asked if there was a risk that certification standards would change within the time (or shortly after) the equipment had been purchased.

Wendy S. Noren stated that this was one of the concerns that she had. She stated that this was the reason that she had withdrawn her request for funds last year (there had been a possibility that standards would be modified). She stated that the FEC and the National Bureau had not had any appropriations to do election administration research as they did in the 70s and mid 80s. She stated that they would probably not do any standard for the equipment that was presently circulating. She stated that they were more concerned with developing standards for electronic transmission votes.

Commissioner Stamper asked June Pitchford to share her thoughts in making this a supplemental request.

June Pitchford stated that at the time the budget was being put together (in the middle of the November election), the information for this request was not available. She stated that she had stated that this request needed to be a discussion item in a work session. She stated that she was not trying to suggest that this was a request that was not needed.

Commissioner Stamper asked Wendy S. Noren if she had a preference between the two alternatives that she had presented.

Wendy S. Noren stated that she did not. She stated that she would receive a discount as a client vendor (however she was not sure if the allocation of the discount, over two years, would be the same). She stated that she had also been provided with a lease-purchase option with a variable rate.

Commissioner Miller stated that she wanted to see where the County was at and all of its funding options before a decision was made.

Commissioner Stamper asked June Pitchford what budget decisions still needed to be made.

June Pitchford stated that the biggest decision was the Health Department request and some others.

Commissioner Stamper stated that there were some other Healthcare Profitshare discussion items, however this (election equipment) was a General Revenue item.

Commissioner Miller stated that she supported what Wendy S. Noren was trying to do. She stated that due to the tightness of the budget, the second (cheaper) option was probably preferable. She stated that this was not a new request.

Commissioner Vogt asked Wendy S. Noren if either of the options would work for her.

Wendy S. Noren stated that they used three of the 315s. She stated that one was a faster model. She stated that if she did not see a huge amount of interest (closer to the 2000 election) then she would not invest in the third machine. She stated that she anticipated that the 2000 election would be a much bigger election.

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June Pitchford and the Commission began a discussion of the other budget items. June Pitchford passed out a packet of information concerning the Health Department request (and some others).

She stated that the first page was a comparison across the budget areas (what was requested, supplemental requests, and what was budgeted).

June Pitchford explained the layout of the packet, what information was given and how the requests and costs were reflected.

Commissioner Stamper asked how much the contract with the Health Department amounted to after services at the jail were decreased.

June Pitchford stated that this was a separate component under Corrections Health.

June Pitchford stated that Mary Martin had worked with Commissioner Miller to go through the Community Health budget and cost of the programs. She stated that they had deducted the appropriate revenue and came up with the \$315,000 that was essentially the same as what the city of Columbia had turned in for their request.

Commissioner Miller stated that the packet stated that this amount did not include the intergovernmental and management.

June Pitchford explained what she had been referring to in the packet.

Commissioner Miller stated that they had not clarified if a portion of an FTE would be redirected into another program. She stated that her point was that if there was an FTE doing five programs and then two of the programs were cut out, the FTE would still have to be paid full-time. She stated that she had asked Mr. Hargrove if the city of Columbia was going to stand by their request and require the County to make choices.

Commissioner Miller stated that he had stated that there was possibly some flexibility there. However, he stated that he wanted to know what the philosophical position (of the Commission) would be in using the figure for next year.

Commissioner Stamper stated that there were a very significant number of departments that were doing some sliding scale charges for their services. He wanted to know why they would only look at increasing the County's portion, rather than looking at other revenue options.

June Pitchford stated that the County had not been involved in those discussions. She stated that if the County was going to participate at that level (of funding), they needed to have a hand in shaping that budget.

Commissioner Stamper stated that he did not like the fact that the city of Columbia had presented a 43% increase without some prior discussion with the Commission. He stated that if the County was going to begin allocating that kind of increase, then he would begin proposing that the County look around for those services. He stated that he also did not know anything about the city of Columbia's revenue efforts. He stated that he did not know whether they would cut their revenue expenditure for health or whether this was an increase. He stated that he had a general idea that the city of Columbia's health budget was stable, therefore he did not know why they would have to cut services if the 43% increase was not given.

Commissioner Stamper stated that his preference was that the County stay with the budget recommendation of the Budget officer, then over the next budget cycle continue to analyze the needs in the Health department. He stated that he did not feel comfortable making this decision with the level of information that they had received from the city of Columbia. He stated that he felt that they should be held to the same accountability as any other governmental department. June Pitchford stated that they should perhaps be held to a slightly higher level of funding because in other areas there were elected officials heading up those budgets and this area fell under the Commission's authority (and the Commission had not had any discussions with the city of Columbia).

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Commissioner Miller stated that Mr. Hargrove had agreed that in the future there should be more County involvement.

Commissioner Vogt stated that she believed that they all (city of Columbia and Boone County) needed to get together to discuss the way that public health would be addressed in Boone County.

Commissioner Miller stated that the Animal Control budget (Humane Society contract) should be increased because the city had no control over that.

June Pitchford stated that the County was just a little under what the On-site Wastewater was requesting. She stated that the Commission had specified the level of service with this department and asked the city of Columbia to develop costs. She stated that the level of costs were reasonable.

Commissioner Miller stated that she felt the amount included in this budget was justified for the level of service provided.

June Pitchford stated that this was the first year that Community and Environmental Health information had been separated. She stated that when you break down the components, there was only a 1% increase in the Environmental Health component. She stated that the County was also off a little bit in the Animal Control budget, however she felt that it would be appropriate to fund at the requested level.

Commissioner Miller stated that this was her recommendation (for Animal Control and On-site Wastewater) as well. Commissioner Miller stated that she did not feel that the Commission could make any recommendation for change in the Health department budget at this time.

Commissioner Stamper stated that the Commission should give consensus agreement to accept the recommendations as the Budget Officer had presented for those departments.

June Pitchford stated that there were some other items (that had either come up during the hearing or had been brought to her attention after the department had presented its budget) that could have an impact on the 1999 budget.

June Pitchford stated that one item was overtime for the NID Coordinator. She stated that some overtime had been added, but the department felt that additional overtime would be needed. She stated that the Sheriff's department telephone system would be re-budgeted from 1998 to 1999. She stated that the printing and binding for the Personnel Manual would be re-budgeted. She stated that the Public Administrator had experienced a shortfall in mileage this year.

Commissioner Stamper asked how many miles the Public Administrator based her budget on..

June Pitchford stated that she based her budget on 12-13,000 mi.

June Pitchford stated that the Court agreed that they would remove their request for the descendant's payment. She stated that Dan McFarland agreed to transfer money from the Class 7 budget to Class 1 to establish overtime. She stated that they did not have the request that was discussed at the IT presentation.

Commissioner Miller stated that they needed to wait on that request until they had numbers and agreement with all three bodies involved.

June Pitchford stated that the Mail Services budget had run into shortfall this past year and she stated that a little money had been added to fix that problem. She stated that there was a supplemental request (for \$3800) included in the budget that should not have been. She stated that for Public Works, the County was going to have to refund more of the Use tax, which would reduce the carry over for 1999 (meaning that the next years budget would have to be trimmed back).

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June Pitchford stated that Tom Schauwecker, County Assessor, had identified a potential need for outside services in addressing the assessed value for the hospital. She stated that he had alerted her that they needed to provide for a higher level of outside services in the budget.

June Pitchford stated that it had become clear that Fairway Meadows East budget needed to be established and have an underlined contract.

June Pitchford stated that the Commission Association and Dues Budget was used to pay for County-wide membership to NACO, and registration, attendance, meals, lodging, and travel for NACO. She stated that it did not say whether or not the budget was intended to fund the MAC Conference. She stated that she had processed this budget in whatever way the charges came in.

Commissioner Stamper stated that this strategy had been adopted when there was not a lot of national travel. He stated that the Commission had created this fund for elected officials to go to the national meeting. He stated that he did not know if they would prohibit MAC or any of the rest of the conferences. Commissioner Stamper asked if this budget had been utilized a lot.

June Pitchford stated that she believed that an on-going funding level should be established. She stated that the question was, "is this intended to cover MAC expenses?"

Commissioner Vogt stated that a commission had been created to send the members to MAC, therefore it made sense to have this money in the Commission budget.

The Commission and June Pitchford agreed to make it a policy to cover the MAC and NACo expenses. They agreed that they could still make their own travel arrangements.

June Pitchford stated that she had spoken with Major Brewer about the safety vests. She stated that he had identified about \$3500 that could be used toward that purchase. June Pitchford stated that there could also be money left in the Uniform account as well.

The Commission agreed to have the Sheriff's Department utilize the left over resources from this year and then allocate enough money for full coverage in 1999. They also agreed to look and see what was needed thereafter.

Commissioner Miller stated that there was \$15,000 budgeted this year for maintenance of the Lanier Imaging System that would be used. She stated that they needed \$7741 more. She stated that she had spoken with Bettie Johnson, Recorder of Deeds who was willing to share her portion of the budget for this. She stated that Lanier had given them a one-year maintenance contract (at a lower price).

Commissioner Vogt stated that they needed to discuss Healthcare Profitshare and social service issues.

Commissioner Stamper asked June Pitchford to give a brief summary of how much of the Healthcare Profitshare Fund was encumbered.

June Pitchford stated that she would make that information available to the Commission. She stated that the General Revenue received 1.35 million annually. She stated that in the event that this money was tied up, the Commission had some fund balance that would carry the County. She stated that the Commission might want to consider leaving some money available for a contingency plan.

Commissioner Stamper asked when the 1.3 million in Profitshare usually arrived.

June Pitchford stated that this money was usually available in March and the annual fix to the General Fund in September.

Commissioner Stamper stated that they would schedule another work session on the social service issue and then schedule another session to adopt the budget.

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The Commission decided that the second option for election equipment presented by County Clerk Wendy S. Noren would be purchased.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30a.m.

Attest:

Don Stamper
Presiding Commissioner

Wendy S. Noren
Clerk of the County Commission

Karen M. Miller
District I Commissioner

Linda Vogt
District II Commissioner