

TERM OF COMMISSION: December Session of the November Adjourned Term

PLACE OF MEETING: Roger B. Wilson Boone County Government Center
Commission Chambers

PRESENT WERE: Presiding Commissioner Don Stamper
District I Commissioner Karen M. Miller
District II Commissioner Skip Elkin
Deputy County Clerk Shawna Victor
Boone County Auditor June Pitchford

The budget hearing was called to order at 11:12 a.m. by Commissioner Miller.

Commissioner Stamper was absent for this budget hearing.

Budget Hearing: Department 2010 (Assessment)

Tom Schauwecker, Boone County Assessor, was present on behalf of this budget hearing.

There were no significant changes to this budget.

The Assessment Fund balance at the end of 2001 was \$673,759. At the end of 2001, the revenues exceeded expenditures by \$179,711.

Mr. Schauwecker noted the Assessment Fund has never gone to the General Revenue. The Assessed Valuation in Boone County has doubled over the last 10 years, from \$675 million to \$1.5 billion.

There are two sources of revenue for the Assessment Fund. One revenue source is a State reimbursed \$6.20 per parcel, which is about \$300,000. The other revenue source is one-half of one percent of what is collected by the County Collector of Revenue, which is another \$500,000.

Mr. Schauwecker reviewed the goals and objectives, performance measures, and personnel detail for this department.

Mr. Schauwecker noted there was \$135,000 budgeted for a digital rectified orthophotography.

The proposed revenue for this department for 2003 is \$831,225, which reflects a 3% decrease from the 2002 budget. The proposed expenditures for this department for 2003 are projected to be \$922,390, which reflects a 25% decrease from the 2002 budget. Classes 2-8 expenditures are proposed for 2003 are proposed to be \$248,810, which reflects a 56% decrease from the 2002 budget.

He noted the use of the internet by the public has saved a lot of man hours in this department, the equivalent of one full-time employee.

Mr. Schauwecker stated ESRI would like to use Boone County as a demonstration pilot county. ESRI has offered to permit Boone County the use of their software for six months free. This software will cost this department \$8,700 for additional software. If the Commission approves this upgrade he is requesting the Commission to give consideration to reinstating two computers for the mappers in the Assessor's Office.

Mr. Schauwecker is requesting an addition of \$17,900 that was not in the original budget submitted to the Auditor's Office for ESRI upgrades in software and hardware, training and travel.

Commissioner Miller asked if the \$17,900 includes the two computers. Mr. Schauwecker stated this amount does include the two computers. The \$17,900 is the total request which includes \$8,700 for software, \$6,200 for hardware, \$2,000 for training, and \$1,000 for travel.

Commissioner Miller stated ESRI is willing to bring the training here if the County can get the City of Columbia to join in this program. She believes there is a lot of value with this program and will benefit many County offices and departments. This would be paid from the Assessment Fund.

Mr. Schauwecker discussed the implementation of the pay plan and his request to bring the employees in this department up to mid-point and to make these raises by using the Assessment Fund.

Commissioner Elkin excused himself from the budget hearing.

The budget hearing recessed at 11:27 a.m.

Commissioner Stamper arrived to the budget hearing.

The budget hearing reconvened at 11:31 a.m.

Mrs. Pitchford noted the State would allow the County to include more Information Technology costs in the calculation that is currently being done. Mr. Schauwecker there are certain expenditures that would qualify for reimbursement from the State.

Commissioner Miller stated the County should be doing this because it would allow the IT Department to upgrade software programs that are used by the whole County.

Mrs. Pitchford discussed how the Auditor's Office computed the figures for the salaries

and the impact on the pay plan. She used the calculation provided by the Consultant of salaries below the mid-point and the difference between those salaries and the mid-point. In 2002, the County funded bring salaries up to the base of the range and used Option I provided by the Consultant for implementation.

At Personnel Advisory Committee meetings, elected officials voiced strong support for having a pool of funds that can be administered at their discretion. The Sheriff has expressed his intent to bring everyone to mid-point, not addressing anyone above mid-point. Other officials have said they want discretion in awarding the money.

Mrs. Pitchford has computed it consistent with the Consultant's computations. She has made the computations for all salaries below mid-point and pooled that money together and that can be awarded as the elected official desires. Theoretically, someone who has worked for the County for 20 years and is above the mid-point can receive an increase but the increase would be at the elected officials' discretion.

Mrs. Pitchford has proposed including in the 2004 budget is the same amount that is in the 2003 budget. She has calculated the full cost for 2003, measured the full cost and split that cost between 2003 and the remainder in 2004. She is proposing not to make any recalculations in 2004.

Commissioner Miller asked about new hires. Mrs. Pitchford stated she believes the County should reconsider the amount included in the budget for vacant positions. She believes it makes sense for the Sheriff's Department, where there is full implantation, that vacate positions be budgeted at mid-point. She is proposing for the remaining offices in 2003 that vacate positions be budgeted at 90% and in 2004 budgeted to mid-point. From there on out, all vacant positions would be budgeted at mid-point. This is consistent with the implantation of the pay plan schedule. She believes this will give flexibility in hiring and the Commission has pending an item from the Personnel Advisory Committee a recommendation regarding the flexible hiring policy. Currently, the County budgets vacant positions at the base of the range. She believes the budget policy and other administrative policies should be consistent with one another.

Mr. Schauwecker stated the information he received from the Auditor's Office shows no increase for employees who are already at mid-point and who are long tenured.

Commissioner Miller asked if all the employees in the Assessor's Office are equal in merit. Mr. Schauwecker stated no.

There was no public comment on this budget.

There was no further discussion on this budget.

Budget Hearing: Department 1510 (Economic Support – Regional Economic Development, Inc.)

Vicki Pratt, Regional Economic Development, Inc. President, was present on behalf of this budget hearing.

REDI promotes economic expansion and growth in Boone County.

REDI has received level funding from the County since 1998 in the amount of \$35,000. This amount is what REDI requested for 2003.

Vicki Pratt reviewed the total tax summary of companies in Boone County. In 2001, the total personal property taxes paid was \$2,475,000, real estate property taxes paid was approximately \$649,000. The County secured \$130,546 in taxes paid by these companies. The area schools received \$2,493,418 in taxes paid by these companies.

The marketing plan and budget are submitted to the REDI board on an annual basis. The marketing strategy for 2002 includes attraction of biotech, high tech, light industrial, and back office operation centers. This is consistent with the type of industry the State Department of Economic Development is hoping to attract.

Ms. Pratt noted 77,000 jobs were lost in the State in 2001. Retention of existing employers is a major issue in the State.

REDI received good feedback from investors during the development of the REDI Master Plan. REDI is trying to hold graduating college seniors in Boone County/City of Columbia and link them with existing job opportunities.

REDI is promoting life sciences and high technology efforts in five surrounding counties.

Ms. Pratt stated the State needs to be more competitive in site selection for major projects and companies.

REDI's FY03 budget projection is \$6,000 less than what was projected for FY02. REDI is continuing to project a deficit. Ms. Pratt noted she cut the REDI budget by 3% for FY03. She did not project an increase in investor dollars for FY03.

Ms. Pratt noted REDI is working from a trust fund but eventually this fund will run out.

There was no public comment on this budget.

There was no further discussion on this budget.

The budget hearing adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Attest:

Don Stamper
Presiding Commissioner

Wendy S. Noren
Clerk of the County Commission

Karen M. Miller
District I Commissioner

Skip Elkin
District II Commissioner