

Minutes of Meeting
Coroner FY21 Budget Review
May 11, 2020
1:00 p.m.

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios, Commissioner Leslie Duncan, and Commissioner Bill Brooks met to discuss the following agenda item. Also present were Clerk Jim Brannon, Finance Director Dena Darrow, Staff Accountant – Budget Michelle Chiaramonte, Coroner Dr. Warren Keene, Chief Deputy Coroner Lynn Acebedo, Deputy Coroners John Hunt and JoAnn Porter, BOCC Communications Manager Nancy Jones, Senior Business Analyst Nanci Plouffe, and Deputy Clerk Ronnie Davisson. Also present was Contractor Shawn Riley. Commissioner Bill Brooks was present via teleconference.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.
- B. Introductions**
- C. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- D. Business (Action)**

Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Review – Coroner

Coroner Dr. Warren Keene requested to retain the 2% increase provided in the Operating “B” Budget and said that he hoped the professional costs would not increase; however, Spokane County worked on a calendar year budget, so he was unsure if the County’s rates would increase until about September.

Dr. Keene explained potential future expense increases to the Board, including the fact that more first responders were requesting COVID-19 testing for decedents. He then mentioned that out of 66 total confirmed cases in Kootenai County, only 3 were still being monitored. With that, Dr. Keene explained that only four months into the new Fiscal Year, there were already 562 death cases that had been handled, which, all things remaining equal, would give a year end total of approximately 2240. He said that that would be an increase of 400 cases from the year prior, but fortunately most of the recorded deaths were natural. He also requested his part time Deputy Coroner be converted to a full time position and to retain on-call pay.

Dr. Keene said he had one capital request, a Forensics Lab, which had been made in years past. He added that the lab could provide the allowance to contract with a Medical Examiner and perform autopsies for surrounding agencies. Dr. Keene also said that he was requesting a new truck and had requested it through Fleet Management.

Commissioner Duncan said she could not support the Forensics lab again this year and said that she was hoping for a 0% tax increase for the taxpayers due to the amount of them currently out of work. Commissioner Bill Brooks agreed with Commissioner Duncan

that he could not support the Forensics Lab this year with the current situation and suggested putting it off to next year.

Dr. Keene asked if the Board would be willing to set aside money for the design of the Forensics Lab, and Commissioner Duncan said she believed that they were much too tight in the budget this year to even consider the design. Further, she explained that her biggest concern was the unknown factor of the ongoing yearly costs of the lab. Commissioner Duncan also said that she wanted to consider bringing his part time Deputy to a full time position because she saw the need for the conversion.

Chairman Fillios agreed that the ongoing costs were a concern and that it was not just the initial investment of the lab, but also with the current COVID-19 situation, that they were not in a state to even consider the Lab. Chairman Fillios said that he was in favor of the part time to full time employee conversion, but not the Lab or design.

E. Public Comment: This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. Idaho Law prohibits Board action on items brought under this section except in an emergency circumstance. Comments related to future public hearings should be held for that public hearing. There were no public comments.

Chairman Fillios adjourned the meeting at 1:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

CHRIS FILLIOS, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Ronnie Davisson, Deputy Clerk
