

Minutes of Meeting
FY21 Budget Deliberations
June 8, 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 KCSO Sheriff Ben Wolfinger, KCSO Undersheriff Dan Mattos, KCSO Captains Andy Deak, Kevin Smart and Kim Edmondson, KCSO Lieutenants Ryan Higgins and Ward Crawford, KCSO Detention Deputy Daniel Valk, KCSO Administrative Assistant Tamara Exley, Clerk Jim Brannon, Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke, Finance Director Dena Darrow, Staff Accountant – Budget Michelle Chiaramonte, District Court Services Director Marissa Garza, Court Services Manager Kally Young, First Judicial District Trial Court Administrator Karlene Behringer, Trial Court Administrative Assistant Jamie Robb, Prosecutor Barry McHugh, Human Resources (HR) Director Sylvia Proud, Chief Deputy Coroner Lynette Acebedo, Parks & Waterways/Noxious Weeds/Snowgroomers Director Nick Snyder, Solid Waste (SW) Director Cathy Mayer, SW Principal Planner Laureen Chaffin, Airport Director Steven Kjergaard, Veteran’s Services Officer Tom Freeman, Assessor’s Office Administrative Manager Reba Grytness, BOCC Communications Manager Nancy Jones, BOCC Senior Business Analyst Nanci Plouffe and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio. Also present was Contractor Shawn Riley. Captain Deak, Captain Edmondson, Lieutenant Crawford, Mr. Kjergaard, Captain Smart and Ms. Behringer were present via teleconference.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. Business (Action):**

FY21 Budget Deliberations to Include Personnel Requests

Chairman Fillios noted that he would have to leave the meeting at 1:30 p.m. to attend the Governor’s conference call regarding property tax relief.

Finance Director Dena Darrow announced that the current FY21 Budget deficit was \$4,378,492. She said that today’s meeting would focus on personnel requests. She reported that current personnel expenditures were \$65,414,142, including \$4,077,253 from Solid Waste. She stated that new personnel requests that would be reviewed today were \$2,528,367, of which about \$2.4 million were general government and about \$91,000 were from Solid Waste. She pointed out the figures for the Wage Study Adjustment and the 1.8% COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) had been included, but no movement in step and grade or matrices.

Ms. Darrow moved on to discuss the Personnel Summary, including new positions requested, position changes and retirements. She stated that this would be the first year the County had budgeted for known retirements. Ms. Darrow explained that the amount for retirement was the one-time separation cost from the County; after that, the pension expenses were paid by the state.

Commissioner Leslie Duncan suggested that, as a one-time expense, the retirement costs could be covered by fund balance, at least in this initial discussion.

In response to questions from Chairman Fillios, Ms. Darrow offered several projections of how much the budget could be reduced by freezing open positions for part or all of the coming year. She stated these figures did not require any employee furloughs.

Ms. Darrow reported that preliminary revenue figures would be available this coming Wednesday and would include probable URD (Urban Renewal District) closures and new growth. She noted it would not include Kootenai County's share of the COVID-19 relief funds that the state planned to distribute. She added that those funds could not be used for revenue replacement.

Chief Deputy Assessor Joe Johns entered the meeting at 1:16 p.m.

Commissioner Duncan asked Airport Director Steven Kjergaard to verify that the \$116,000 amount could be removed from his personnel request if the reorganization he planned was completed.

Mr. Kjergaard confirmed that two operations specialists would be hired in place of the Assistant Director position and a part-time mechanic position. He said the amounts would roughly balance each other.

The Commissioners agreed to remove the \$116,000 from the budget.

The Commissioners next addressed the 911 personnel requests, in particular, three previously frozen positions and two other slots which were being actively recruited for at this time.

KCSO Sheriff Ben Wolfinger and KCSO Lieutenant Ward Crawford provided additional information, particularly on the effect filling the three frozen positions would have on upcoming overtime needs.

Ms. Darrow explained that overtime was calculated from a standing base amount, to which an additional amount was requested in the FY21 preliminary figures. She reviewed the amounts requested by each KCSO department.

Chairman Fillios exited the meeting at 1:36 p.m. Commissioner Duncan took over as Chair Pro Tem, as requested.

Chair Pro Tem Duncan moved on to the request for a position from Veteran's Services. Veteran's Services Officer Tom Freeman accepted her suggestion that the position be started halfway through the fiscal year.

Chair Pro Tem Duncan stated she would like to see an additional Marine Deputy position added to the personnel requests. She remarked that the Board had done so much work in that area and she wanted to be sure their efforts were supported.

Sheriff Wolfinger commented that he would like to see an additional Marine Deputy position made available but this was lower down on his priorities than other items.

Chair Pro Tem Duncan asked Prosecutor Barry McHugh to comment on their previous negotiation for one AT3 to start in October 2020, another AT3 to start in December of 2020 and a Legal Assistant to start in March 2021.

Prosecutor McHugh confirmed that this would be acceptable to him.

Chair Pro Tem Duncan noted that she was not in favor of offering “on-call” pay to hourly employees in the Prosecutor’s Office.

Prosecutor McHugh exited the meeting at 1:46 p.m.

Parks & Waterways/Noxious Weeds/Snowgroomers Director Nick Snyder stated that a full-time maintenance worker was needed. He explained that he could split the funding of the position three ways, with only \$20,466 coming from General Fund dollars. He said that the position would be responsible for the full range of County properties, not just parks. He voiced his concerns over seasonal employees handling heavy equipment and noted that the additional time required to train them for it each year was a drain on resources.

The Commissioners expressed general agreement with keeping the position request in the budget.

Mr. Snyder exited the meeting at 1:49 p.m.

Chair Pro Tem Duncan asked Clerk Brannon if he would like to address District Court’s requests.

Clerk Brannon noted that, as the Prosecutor’s Office and the Public Defender’s Office received more attorneys and could handle more cases, more and more demands were made of District Court staff. He remarked that they had not requested any additional positions in years.

Court Services Director Marissa Garza confirmed that she would like to receive a Help Desk Coordinator, three Judicial Assistants and a Float Clerk for the Juvenile Justice Center (JJC). She stated that, if necessary, she would cut the Float Clerk and cross train the third Judicial Assistant to help at JJC.

Chair Pro Tem Duncan commented that she had spoken with three of the District Court Judges and received very positive reactions to the work being done by Ms. Garza’s staff, despite being shorthanded.

First Judicial District Trial Court Administrator Karlene Behringer reported that they were planning on having retired judges return to service in order to staff remote locations for some jury trials. She said she needed the two Bailiff slots she had requested as soon as possible to cover these offsite services. She confirmed that Chief Bailiff Pete Barnes was actively interviewing to fill an additional Bailiff opening and a Security Screener. She stated that she definitely also needed the Deputy Trial Court Administrator to take on some of her duties and the Administrative Assistant to help Trial Court Administrative

Assistant Jamie Robb. She added that Court Assistance Officer Jay Sturgell needed more support as well.

Chair Pro Tem Duncan suggested that she call Ms. Behringer after the meeting and discuss the requests further.

The Commissioners expressed no objections to the requests from Solid Waste.

Chair Pro Tem Duncan placed the meeting in recess at 2:10 p.m.

Chair Pro Tem Duncan called the meeting back into session at 2:21 p.m.

Contractor Shawn Riley, KCSO Lieutenant Ryan Higgins, Solid Waste (SW) Director Cathy Mayer and SW Principal Planner Laureen Chaffin exited the meeting during the break.

Chair Pro Tem Duncan asked to move on to KCSO requests. She remarked that she would like to remove on-call pay from the budget.

Sheriff Wolfinger offered a defense of on-call pay. He stated staff who were on-call could not engage in normal daily activities because they had to remain fit and available for immediate duty. KCSO Captains Kim Edmondson and Kevin Smart presented supporting points as well.

Lieutenant Higgins reentered meeting at 2:24 p.m.

KCSO Overtime funding and a request for a stipend for Training Officers were addressed, but no final decisions were made.

Human Resources (HR) Director Sylvia Proud described the different proposals considered for the inclusion of COLA, step and grade system and movement through the matrix for staff.

Sheriff Wolfinger exited the meeting at 2:42 p.m.

The Commissioners briefly examined the request from the Appraiser's Office for funds to support the movement of appraisers through their certification improvements.

Chair Pro Tem Duncan indicated she would support the projected three reclassifications in the Assessor's Office budget as well as the one requested by Parks & Waterways. She closed the meeting and stated that personnel requests would be completed in the Wednesday, June 10, 2020 meeting.

- D. Public Comment (Discussion):** 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 was no public comment.

E. Adjournment (Action): Chairman Fillios adjourned the meeting at 2:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

CHRIS FILLIOS, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk
