

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

STAFF MEETING MINUTES

October 28, 2015

The Columbia County Board of Commissioners met in scheduled session with Commissioner Henry Heimuller, Commissioner Anthony Hyde and Commissioner Earl Fisher.

Commissioner Heimuller called the meeting to order.

CABLE COSTS FOR BOARD CONFERENCE ROOM:

The Board was presented with a memo from Jean Ripa, detailing cable costs for the Commissioners conference room. The Board is interested in having access to local channels for updated information on any emergency, weather or other events. Casey Garrett offered the Board an option of purchasing a rooftop antenna that would allow reception of the local channels, thus eliminating a monthly cable fee. The Board was in favor of the antenna option and directed Casey to move forward with the purchase.

MARIJUANA LAND USE AMENDMENTS:

Todd Dugdale, Glen Higgins and Robin McIntyre were present to brief the Board on the amendments to the Zoning Ordinance addressing marijuana uses recommended by the Planning Commission and staff. Todd reviewed Attachment 2 to the Board Communication outlining the proposal for which zones would allow marijuana uses (grows, processing, wholesaling and retailing), by what review processes and according to what standards. There was general discussion regarding the proposal, the process to date and the applicable State law. No action was needed, as this was discussion only in preparation for the Board's hearing on the matter scheduled for Wednesday, November 4, 2015.

FY 16 ACTUAL VS BUDGET BEGINNING BALANCES:

Jennifer Cuellar, Finance Director, discussed variances between the estimates made for the FY16 beginning balances in the budget process and what we now know are the FY16 beginning balances. The funds with higher beginning balances of note are the General Fund, Transit fund and Jail Operations fund. The funds with lower beginning balances of note are Parks, Adult Corrections and the Inmate Benefit Account.

General fund: two thirds of the \$1million additional unrestricted dollars is due to revenues higher than predicted. We already knew that the \$255,000 O&C revenue was intentionally not factored in the budget projections did exist. The general agreement that our budget practice is to budget conservatively and then balance the budget with "rose colored glasses," ; which seems to be working the past few years.

Transit: Is considering creating reserve accounts and this additional funding would help fund that in the FY17 budget process.

Jail Operations: Part of the excess was due to timing - outlays that were expected to happen in FY15 will actually happened in FY16. True excess funds were due to not hitting the aggressive staffing goals for FY15 and higher revenues than anticipated in the first year of the levy.

Parks: Though revenues did come in higher, a series of higher than budgeted outlays were incurred in FY15, some of which will be unrecurring items, which caused the FY16 beginning balance to come in lower than anticipated. This fund will need to be monitored closer this year and will endeavor to tighten up the budget process to get better estimates in the next cycle.

Adult Corrections: The primary driver of the lower beginning balance is due to timing - a retirement happened in FY15 that was budgeted to happen in FY16.

Inmate Benefit Fund: It was a transitional year for managers in the jail so Jennifer believes this issue is primarily due to a disconnect between the staff preparing budget estimates and different jail staff making operational purchasing choices. The Jail and Finance management are aware of the missteps at the close of FY15 and will be working

together more closely to make sure the budgeting process in the next cycle and the actual operational activities will be integrated together.

Additional news for FY16 that have become clear in the last few months since the close of the budget process:

1. An O&C payment is expected in December. This was not budgeted as it could not be confirmed during budget process.
2. PERS rates for the next two biennia (FY18,19,20 and 21) are likely to trigger the rate collaring process, possibly even the second tier of rate collaring measures. FY16 and next year FY17 rates are set and we know that they are too low given the impact of the known investment data, Moro decision and other details that impact PERS rate setting. The Commissioners discussed the importance of getting an analysis of the best use of the PERS reserve funds the County has been setting aside since FY14 in anticipation of a Supreme Court decision that could roll back the PERS rate cuts implemented in the FY14 to FY17 fiscal years. It was noted that professional services to help us do that are included in the RFP project that the commissioners green-lighted two weeks ago.
3. FY16 taxes are now known. Initial analysis reveals that the County will meet the budget estimates for FY16 and possibly exceed them. We will have better indicators of how the tax year will unfold once we are clear of the first property tax deadline in November 2015.

Commissioner Fisher requested that there be a monthly financial report to the Board. Commissioner Hyde suggested every other month. The Finance Director said that preparing more frequent and analytical reports has been on the list for years but staffing level realities simply haven't permitted this level of financial services and given the number of regulatory issues and projects already committed to for the year, getting it done in the short term was not terribly likely.

There was no Executive Session held.

With nothing further coming before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

Dated at St. Helens, Oregon this 28th day of October, 2015.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

By: _____

Henry Heimuller, Chair

By: _____

Anthony Hyde,
Commissioner

By: _____

Earl Fisher, Commissioner

By: _____

Jan Greenhalgh
Board Office Administrator