

May 14, 2020

The Board of Ellis County Commissioners met in Special Session on the 2021 Budget Work Session at 8:00 a.m., Thursday, May 14, 2019, at the Ellis County Administration Center, 718 Main Street, Hays, Kansas.

Chair Schlyer called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Commissioners present were: Chair Robert "Butch" Schlyer, Commissioner Dustin G. Roths and Commissioner Dean F. Haselhorst.

Also present were Interim County Administrator Darin Myers, County Counselor Bill Jeter, and County Clerk Donna J. Maskus.

Departments had been asked to reduce their current 2020 Budget by one percent (1%) for their 2021 Budget proposal.

2021 BUDGET REQUEST FROM COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

<u>Department</u>	<u>2020 Budget</u>	<u>Proposed 2021 Budget</u>
<u>EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)</u>	\$3,103,522	\$3,252,105

Health Services Director Jason Kennedy addressed his capital budget needs which are equipment and vehicles. They look at replacing ambulances every 10 years with around 150,000 miles on them. The vehicles must be reliable and the ability to provide EMS services.

The two newer ambulances are gasoline engines and all other vehicles run on diesel fuel. They have taken added precautions, so EMS personnel are aware of the gasoline engines when adding fuel to those trucks. Kennedy is hopeful that the maintenance cost is reduced, and funding will be saved with the gasoline engines. The older vehicles with the diesel engines are currently being used primarily for the ambulance service.

Kennedy stated that his 1% Budget cut for the 2021 Budget is that he has decided not to hire the assistant EMS Director position this year with the COVID-19. Kennedy stated that he has 26 full-time and 6 to 10 part-time staff. He highly complimented his staff in stepping up and being a great team through the COVID-19 in Ellis County.

The increase in their 2021 Budget is a transfer of \$175,000 for future purchase of ambulances.

Interim County Administrator Myers stated that he has already put in the approved salary wages and adjustments to the 2021 Budget in personnel cost for all departments.

<u>HEALTH SERVICES</u>	\$586,216	\$600,557
-------------------------------	------------------	------------------

Health Services Director Kennedy said that in the Capital Budget he has no changes.

With the approval of the Sales Tax Questions and tax collections starting in October we should be seeing tax funding starting in November. This sales tax funding will be available to help support the Health and EMS Budgets.

Kennedy stated that people do need to get back and see their medical providers so they can stay healthy. Chair Schlyer asked if Kennedy put funding in the budget so when they do have a vaccine for the COVID-19 they will be able to provide the vaccination. Currently no vaccine is available, but he believes grants and assistance will be available when that time comes. With the nurse practitioner at the Health Office they are providing additional services to the public and hopeful they can see additional revenue. They do see the cost of medicine on the rise.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

\$866,542

\$777,282

County Attorney Tom Drees presented his 25th County Budget. Drees again discussed that a prosecuting attorney and assistant is needed in his office to help with their volume of work. He estimates a cost of \$130,000 for these two positions. Drees' budget is made up of 96% personnel cost. Drees announced that the courts will be getting a new on-line court data system possibly in 2021 or 2022. Pilot Counties are currently testing the new court data system. Drees presented documentation showing the work that is being done by his office compared to similar populated counties with most showing Drees' office ranks high in the number of cases that they process with less staff.

Drees stated that the partnership with Community Corrections saves the County with supervising and keeping them out of the jail. Community Correction Director John Trembley was complimented for the job that they do.

Drees said that they are not able to handle all cases with their current staff and asked that if they can find the funding that they need to reinstate a prosecuting attorney and assistant in the County Attorneys' budget.

COUNTY APPRAISER

\$579,634

\$573,750

County Appraiser Lisa Ree stated that she was able to reduce her proposed 2021 Budget by the requested 1%. She will no longer have the cost in rent of a building with storage of records. After visiting the Underground Storage facility in Hutchinson, Kansas, she brought back her materials and has them stored in a vault in the basement of the Administrative Center. Ree noted that she had to increase her budget item on postage since a new postage machine has been purchased and her cost has been increased by the Treasurer's Office at 2 ½ percent (2 ½%) as she is required to do several large mailings through her office.

Ree addressed a 2015 retirement position that she has not been able to hire with the budget circumstances. The Appraiser's office has a staff of 6 full-time and 2 part-time positions. Other comparable counties have a staff of 10 or more. It was noted that she has had to ask for extensions in getting their work done to meet state deadlines. She had contracted work done by a prior County Appraiser employee on commercial analysis which has worked well. She hopes to retire in possibly three years and would like to see her staff trained, educated and in place to handle the work required. She would like to see a position for a data collector out in the field at an estimated cost of \$75,000.

Ree stated that with the tablets that were purchased a few years ago they can do data entry while out in the field and that has shown a valuable time saving in the office.

Ree shared her wish list in getting current office staff trained to assist with the commercial property work. She sees that it would take at least two years for an employee to learn the job then she could remove the contract labor cost.

She is pleased with the new tax program to process personal property mobile homes that has saved entry time.

Ree looks forward in using a new personal property software package starting in 2021 where owners can enter their personal property data information on-line and will not need to come to the Appraiser's office and file this information every year. An even larger time saver will be an oil and gas software package for owners to enter their data and send electronically to the Appraiser's Office. Ree looks forward to her new tools in reporting data information electronically.

Ree asked to add outside attorney fees to her budget as there are times when County Counselor Bill Jeter cannot take on a legal matter and the County Attorney Office does not have time to serve as legal counsel on some of these legal matters as the State Board of Tax Appeals Hearings. Therefore, she asked to have some budget to hire other legal counsel when needed.

Chair Schlyer announced that they will take a 15-minute break at 9:21 a.m.

Open session resumed at 9:30 a.m.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

\$659,546

\$651,036

Informational Technology Director Mike Leiker stated that he had two employees retire last year so his personnel cost is now lower. Leiker was pleased with the Dane G. Hansen Foundation Intern Program that he has utilized and plans to apply again in the Fall semester. He manages the phone lines, computer system, camera security and internet services. He is utilizing more on-line training to stay on top of technology so not having as much travel and subsistence cost.

SHERIFF

\$3,735,072

\$3,697,721

Sheriff Ed Harbin presented the Sheriff's 2021 Budget proposal. Harbin stated that he was able to cut the 1% of current budget for the proposed 2021 Budget as he reduced contractual and overtime cost. They have been housing less inmates. Harbin announced that they have 37 inmates in the jail currently. They have been housing fewer inmates in out of County jails, so he was able to reduce that budget line item. He has 17 deputies, 18 full time staff in the jail, 1 part-time jailer, and 3 office personnel staff. With the COVID-19 they are taking precautions and trying to keep everyone healthy and safe.

Capital Budget needs include a future new transport van, computers, video cameras in the vehicles and on the officer, laptops and live scan stations used for fingerprinting services. They are trying to find extra space to store the camera equipment. Commissioners thanked Harbin for sharing activities of their department by presenting monthly departmental reports.

COUNTY TREASURER

\$520,006

\$515,491

Treasurer Lisa Schlegel reported that she is asking for \$515,491 for her 2021 proposed budget. At 9:00 p.m. last night she had sent out a revised budget for 2021 to all Commissioners through an email. Chair Schlyer stated that the County budgets were due on May 1st. Commissioners asked about the \$10,500 advertise funding. Schlegel stated that she statutorily must publish items as the tax delinquencies. They have eight full time staff in the Treasurer Office and 2 ¾ staff for motor vehicle.

Sharp words were given between Schlegel and Chair Schlyer. Sheriff Ed Harbin was asked to escort Treasurer Schlegel out of the meeting.

Commissioners continued the discussion on the Treasurer Budget. The Treasurer had been checking on the cost to install bullet proof glass for her office personnel. Roths stated that he would like some clarification on the postage line item.

Commissioners gave direction to Interim County Administrator to make the following adjustments to the Treasurer Budget: 1) remove the salary position during the time the Commission asked for no new employees to be hired in case a position would not be included in the 2021 Budget. 2) \$4,000 for subsistence. 3) \$1,550 for registration fees. 4) No budget for employee incentives.

Commissioners had concerns with the camera system that was taken out of the Treasurer's office by Schlegel.

On the camera system upgrade IT Director Mike Leiker was asked to address. Leiker stated that a licensing fee of \$3,000 to put the system back on the outside of the Treasurer Office, front entrances and other areas of the Administrative Center.

Public Works Director Bill Ring stated that their security cameras let them know how their fire

started at the Landfill. Sheriff Harbin also stated that a camera system can be very helpful in seeing what went on if a situation would arise.

Chair Schlyer asked County Counselor Jeter about the authority that the Treasurer has in making changes to her office in the Administrative Center. Jeter stated if she needed a building permit then the County Commissioners should be asked when making changes to the building.

Interim County Administrator Myers stated that he will remove the vehicle shown on the Capital Budget proposal as he felt this was an error.

Commissioners also asked to remove the bullet proof glass project from the Capital Funding.

<u>COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR</u>	\$273,217	\$261,915
------------------------------------	------------------	------------------

Interim County Administrator Darin Myers stated that they may need to do some salary adjustments depending who they hire in this position regarding salary and benefits.

<u>COMMISSIONERS</u>	\$216,209	\$190,069
-----------------------------	------------------	------------------

Interim County Administrator Darin Myers reported that he did take off the registration dues for the Northwest Kansas Planning and Development. He did increase the registration fee since the past usage has been up and if a new commissioner or commissioners; two positions on the ballot, there usually is a new commissioner training with registration and subsistence cost. He did increase some budget items since the usage shows more costs.

<u>COURTHOUSE GENERAL</u>	\$166,733	\$179,776
----------------------------------	------------------	------------------

Interim County Administrator Darin Myers stated that he increased the Courthouse General Budget with an increase of liability cost.

<u>CORONER</u>	\$86,445	\$86,948
-----------------------	-----------------	-----------------

Interim County Administrator Darin Myers stated that with an increase in use of the Coroner Budget he has increased this fund.

<u>JUVENILE DETENTION</u>	\$24,000	\$48,370
----------------------------------	-----------------	-----------------

Juvenile Detention fees shows twice as much is being utilized therefore the 2021 Budget was increased to \$48,370.

<u>FAIR</u>	\$84,540	\$99,800
--------------------	-----------------	-----------------

The budget for the Ellis County Fair Association under Departments 054 and 056 was discussed. Myer reported that the cost of lighting the speedway will now be split between the Fair and RPM Speedway. Department 56 has had some line items showing increased usage so budget increases were given for 2021. Myers said the electricity cost of the fairground had increased and solar energy might be a good option, but the startup cost is a big investment.

<u>DEBT SERVICES</u>	\$529,500	\$1,145,741
<u>CONTINGENCY</u>	\$3,157,714	\$3,375,092

Interim County Administrator Darin Myers discussed the sales tax questions that were approved by the Ellis County voters. This funding they hope to use in assisting High Plains Mental Health Center and Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas. They hope to be able to invest in a bond for possible bridge and road projects, and to put funding back to the Soil Conservation District to restore some of their programs. They would like to put funding back for the County Attorney’s Office, if funding is available, to reinstate the prosecuting attorney and one staff member.

The Aging Council Board will be meeting with the Senior Citizen Agencies on their 2021 Budget request on June 8, 2020.

REVENUES

Interim County Administrator Darin Myers discussed revenues that they will have for the 2021 Budget are the wind farm pilot payment, motor vehicle collections and oil valuations. He estimated a decrease of \$650,000 with the loss of oil and gas valuation to the property tax roll.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business Chair Schlyer stated that the meeting will be adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

On May 15, 2020, a Special Budget Session Meeting, Ellis County Administrative Center, 718 Main Street, Hays, Kansas, at 8:00 a.m.

The next regular schedule Commission Meeting is Monday, May 18, 2020, at the Administration Center, 718 Main Street, Hays, Kansas, at 5:00 p.m.

BOARD OF ELLIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ROBERT “BUTCH” COMMISSIONER CHAIR

DUSTIN G. ROTHS, COMMISSIONER

DEAN F. HASELHORST, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

DONNA J. MASKUS, ELLIS COUNTY CLERK