

Budget Update

September 3, 2019

3:03 p.m.

Present: Commissioner Jackson, Commissioner Fund, County Manager Erik Martin

Guest: Dale Merten (3:54 p.m.)

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Becky Butler reviewed the budget meeting schedule for the 2020 preliminary budgets.

Becky discussed possibly segregating lodging tax funding for museums, events, etc. She said the group earmarked up to \$550,000 for 2020 funding.

Becky said the county has obligated \$3.6 million for Distressed Counties projects, including Mickelsen Parkway and the grain silo. She said a balance of \$1 million is kept in reserves.

Becky asked if the commissioners want to set aside any money for special projects, such as the dam.

Commissioner Fund suggested earmarking funds for the North Lewis County Industrial Access. Erik Martin discussed the possibility of setting aside seed money for a dam district. Commissioner Fund noted that former Commissioner Schulte had said the county could save \$3 million in two years, considering the reserves for the water retention facility maintenance costs.

Becky suggested meeting with the EDC to make sure everyone is on the same page. Becky noted that .09 funding can be used to create training facilities. The group discussed the need to have more loans.

Becky discussed the transfer from the Roads fund that is used to pay for traffic policing. Erik noted that the BOCC and County Engineer need to meet more often to better understand the process. He said it's ultimately up to the BOCC to decide how much to give toward traffic policing and what results the BOCC wants to see.

The group discussed setting up a quarterly meeting with the county engineer that corresponds with the quarterly reports the Sheriff's Office provides.

Becky noted that a shift can be used for any general fund items whereas a diversion must be used for traffic policing.

Becky said the Fair transfer could be reduced by \$80,000 since a large portion was used to cover a position for an individual who has retired.

Becky reminded the group that October would be the deadline by which the BOCC would have to change or terminate the WSU contract, if it planned to go that direction.

Commissioner Jackson said he would meet with Cowlitz County to determine that county's level of happiness with the shared director position.

Becky said there will be a minimal monthly increase to PEBB.

Dale Merten joined at 3:54 p.m.

Becky said the Prosecuting Attorney is asking for a pay increase tied to an increase to the judges' salaries.

The group discussed approving the request and including language indicating it may change based on the findings of the Salary Commission. Commissioner Fund and Commissioner Jackson approved drafting a resolution that all three commissioners could review.

Erik discussed the costs associated with the county's average of 67 public records requests per month (with three requests filled per week) as well as \$195,000 in judgements and attorneys' fees. He recommended increasing the part-time PDR office assistant position to a full-time grade 15 position. He said he also is looking at combining Risk and HR.

Commissioner Jackson and Commissioner Fund approved turning the part-time PDR position into a full-time position.

Meeting ended at 4:11 p.m.