

2022 Budget Meetings

October 6, 2021

9:01 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, County Manager Erik Martin, Budget Services Manager Becky Butler, Tammy Martin, Austin Majors, Lara McRea, Katie Conradi, Chris Panush (11 a.m.), department / office representatives (listed with each discussion start time)

Citizens Budget Committee members: Frank Corbin, Nancy Keaton, Trish Geist, Omroa Harry Bhagwandin (11 a.m.)

Guests: Lee Grose, Kevin Emerson, Bill Serrahn (11 a.m.)

Recorder: Rieva Lester

WSU Extension

Discussion start time: 9:01 a.m.

Department representative(s): Patrick Shults

Lewis County's portion for the following WSU Extension positions would be as listed:

- Director: \$24,998.00
- Extension Faculty – 4-H: \$ 39,376
- Extension Faculty – Small Farms (part time): \$3,500
- AP – Food Safety (part time): \$4,000
- AP – Master Gardener: \$49,452
- Administrative Assistant: \$53,279.52
- Non-payroll Support (travel): \$500
- Total county contribution: \$175,105.52

Patrick Shults gave an overview of the programs and services WSU Extension provides.

Patrick said he is recommending that the county ask WSU to cover the benefits for WSU Extension Program Educator Jason Adams, which would save the county more than \$13,000. Patrick asked that the county contribute \$500 toward WSU travel costs.

Patrick further discussed the many programs and services WSU Extension provides.

The commissioners approved moving forward with the proposed memorandum of agreement (MOA).

Discussion ended at 9:30 a.m.

IT

Discussion start time: 9:30 a.m.

Department representatives: Matt Jaeger, Steve Wohld

Funding request: \$162,716

Matt Jaeger said IT is requesting funding to purchase Office 365, Microsoft's cloud offerings for Exchange/Email, Office applications and Microsoft Teams Communication platform. Matt said the software is widely used by most other governmental entities across the state. He noted that the county is still on a Legacy licensing model, which prohibits the county from using features Microsoft offers for security, productivity, remote work and collaboration via Teams.

Matt outlined the staffing and software needed to address the proposed change, noting that the county would have one year in which the old and new software would overlap. Matt said additional staffing would be needed during implementation. He and Steve Wohld discussed cost-saving options to meet the implementation needs.

Matt and Steve addressed concerns about potential risks and downtimes.

The group discussed whether American Rescue Plan Act could be used for the purchase.

At 10:08 a.m., the board recessed the meeting until 10:30 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 10:30 a.m.

At 10:31 a.m., the board recessed the meeting until 11 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 11 a.m.

Omroa (Harry) Bhagwandin, Bill Serrahn and Chris Panush joined at 11 a.m.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Discussion start time: 11 a.m.

Department representatives: JP Anderson, Bryan Hall, Meja Handlen

Social Services

JP Anderson said he would like to solidify the interim Deputy Director of Social Services / Administration position.

Becky noted that Social Services does not use money from the General Fund.

Public Health

JP said Public Health will receive an additional \$600,000 from the state's Foundational Public Health Services for the next two years.

JP said he would like to create four new FTE positions, provide funding for two existing positions and expand the duties of one position.

Create four new positions:

- Environmental Health/Code Enforcement Manager.
- Food Inspection Program Supervisor.
- Solid Hazardous Waste Specialist.
- Epidemiologist, Nurse or Health Educator.

Provide funding to continue two positions:

- Epidemiologist II.
- Community Outreach Worker.

Expand duties of one position:

- Communicable Disease Nurse II to Communicable Disease Nurse III, a position that, if approved, would take on additional supervision duties of communicable disease and Community Outreach Worker staff.

Becky noted that the changes would merely reflect a reallocation of existing funding. JP outlined the annual documentation the county provides regarding how it allocates the Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) funding it receives from the state.

JP said the state has committed to two years of FPHS funding and that the state is working on expanding it beyond that timeline.

The group discussed affordable housing, homelessness and veterans' assistance.

The group discussed the improvements the new positions would create for permitting, etc.

Becky noted that the changes would support the goals of the county's Strategic Plan.

Commissioner Swope made a motion to approve the creation of the Environmental Health/Code Enforcement Manager, Food Inspection Program Supervisor, Solid Hazardous Waste Specialist and Epidemiologist/Nurse/Health Educator positions; continue funding for the Epidemiologist II and Community Outreach worker positions; and expand the duties of the Communicable Disease Nurse II position to a Communicable Disease Nurse III.

Commissioner Pollock seconded.

Motion passed 2-0.

At 11:52 a.m., the commissioners recessed the meeting until 1:30 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 1:30 p.m.

Present: Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, County Manager Erik Martin, Budget Services Manager Becky Butler, Tammy Martin, Austin Majors, Lara McRea, Chris Panush, department / office representatives (listed below)

Citizens Budget Committee members: Frank Corbin, Nancy Keaton, Harry Bhagwandin

Guests: Lee Grose, Kevin Emerson, Malynda Wilson, Bill Serrahn, Danielle Brewster (sometime before 2:03 p.m.)

Commissioner Swope made a motion to make the interim position of Deputy Director of Operations and Social Services a permanent position.

Commissioner Pollock seconded.

Motion passed 2-0.

CORONER

Discussion start time: 1:32 p.m.

Department representatives: Coroner Warren McLeod, Dana Tucker, Jason Baker, Stephen Wilson, Alex Gallagher, Chelsie Wilson

Coroner Warren McLeod said he would like to add three additional FTEs. He said the total cost would be \$243,000, which would be offset by a \$50,000 contribution from the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, which has pledged funding from the Lewis County Joint Narcotics Enforcement Team (JNET).

Warren outlined the roles and responsibilities of – as well as the training required for – deputy coroners.

Warren outlined the improvements the office has seen since its staffing was increased by two FTEs the previous year. He noted that response time

Warren said adding the three additional full-time employees would push the total FTEs to seven. He said the change would greatly reduce the need for casual help.

Becky noted that in 2016, the Coroner served as a 0.50 position. Warren noted that when he requested the move to a full-time position, he indicated he would share response duties.

Warren and his staff said the Coroner's Office has seen 716 cases year to date. He noted that it took a month longer to reach that total in 2020 and two months longer to reach that total in 2019.

Warren expressed concerns regarding an increase in the number of deaths countywide as the Oct. 18 vaccination deadline approaches.

Tammy Martin shared a comment from Bill Serrahn, who noted that the three additional FTEs would add 6,500 work hours, a total that far outpaces the number of hours casuals work.

Warren said the addition of the three positions would offset much of the casual hours worked.

Warren said the new positions would be 117, grade 1.

Warren said adding two FTEs would still require the use of casual help.

Danielle Brewster joined via Zoom at some point during the discussion.

Becky and Warren noted that with two FTEs, the Lewis County Coroner's Office is in line with its comparably-sized counties.

Meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.