

Budget Update

November 9, 2021

2:00 p.m.

Present: Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, Becky Butler, Lee Grose, Wes Rethwill, Austin Majors, Steve Wohld, Erik Martin, Chris Panush, Sherri Dokken, Dusty Breen, Daleyn Coleman, Matt Jaeger, Lara McRea

Guests: None

Citizens Budget Committee members: Usha Sahadeva-Brooks, Frank Corbin, Nancy Keaton, Trish Geist, Omroa Bhagwandin, Brian Mittge

Recorder: Tammy Martin

Erik Martin said there was a budget meeting with the Combined User Committee (CUC) and there are two influences to the budget including operational increases and infrastructure fund increases. The budget subcommittee agreed to approve 2.5% above the 1.2% operational increase. This will collect approximately \$50,000 and will not pay for the entire project. The CUC group asked for an allocation plan on how funds will be spent. Erik said there will have to be other funding sources. Commissioner Pollock felt this would require more discussion. The Board agreed to the 2.7% increase.

Frank Corbin from the Citizens Budget Committee (CBC) reported the group's focus was on items that impacted the general fund and that the group stayed away from items that had their own funding sources. The CBC recommended the risk management position be funded, the human resources position be funded, the Sheriff's Office request included the approval of the cameras and the 1.0 FTE for the support tech, the Treasurer's request was recommended to be funded, the Assessor's Office request was recommended to be funded, and the CBC recommended Coroner's Office could utilize possibly two additional FTEs. The committee recommended reviewing the other positions that were requested.

Commissioner Pollock said the records management position would reduce risk and would streamline records management. Commissioner Swope was concerned the position is still developing and needed better understanding of the mission. He wanted clear guidelines outlining expectations. Chris Panush said the cost of the human resources/risk assistant would be allocated to other departments of Risk/HR. Commissioner Pollock felt she would like to address the HR/Risk assistant position before agreeing to this position. Both Commissioners asked for a complete job description for the position and how that position fits into the strategic plan. Erik said there have been gaps identified in HR that need to be addressed county-wide. Frank Corbin said that these positions would help with liability for fulfilling requests and being more efficient. Steve suggested the hr/risk assistant position start in the second quarter of 2022. This would allow for planning of the position requirements. The Board approved budgeting for the risk management position fully in the 2022 budget and the human resources/risk assistant position at 1.0 FTE contingent upon development of guidelines for the position. This position would not be hired until late 1st quarter or 2nd quarter and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the salary and benefits for the FTE will be budgeted.

The Sheriff's Office request for body cams have been approved. There is a request for 2 patrol deputies and related costs and a support tech 1 position. Commissioner Pollock suggested the support tech position be included with HR for transparency. Commissioner Swope suggested a collaboration with other departments. Wes Rethwill said that could be explored. The position would process evidence for court purposes and Wes feels that having this position being housed within a different department could be problematic. Wes said the public records redaction piece could be housed elsewhere. Wes said the background requirements due to the sensitive nature is important to maintain confidentiality. Commissioner Pollock asked for more information about the position. Commissioner Swope said he was in favor of adding two additional patrol deputies. He said it was important to ensure safety to the community. There have been 20 positions approved in Lewis County and none of them dealt with public safety. Commissioner Pollock said over 80% of Lewis County's budget goes to law and justice and public safety. She feels Lewis County very strongly supports the law enforcement. Commissioner Pollock also suggested compromise by placing the animal control with the Sheriff's Office. This would allow for more interactions to contribute to public safety. She suggested a patrol deputy and a solid plan for animal enforcement. Commissioner-elect Lee Grose said having law enforcement presence in the East County is important and needed. He also feels animal control is an important issue as well. Both Commissioners approved the costs associated to install body cameras. Wes said the animal control position would need approval through civil service commission. Both Commissioners asked for more clarification regarding the positions.

The Assessor's Office is asking for a Chief Deputy Assessor. Vance Consulting Company did recommend the position during their salary study. Commissioner Pollock and Commissioner Swope did not see the justification in creating the new position. The Board did not approve of the position at this time.

The Coroner's Office is requesting 3 FTEs. Both Commissioners agreed the positions could be renamed on-call deputy coroner positions instead of being named a casual employee and having an hourly wage increase. Both Commissioners agreed upon a wage increase of 117 grid step 3. Effective Jan. 1, 2022. FTE's at this time were not approved. This increase would include a budgeted number of hours for the employees. These employees would remain on-call and will seek clarification of calculations on 11/15/2021.

The Treasurer's Office has asked for an increase of \$35,000 to their budget. The office manager would become the chief deputy, a customer service rep in the office would be hired at .5 FTE to assist with customer service. Both Commissioners felt the increase of revenue should offset the costs. They would like the request to be operational.

WSU/Weed is asking for 1 FTE. This request would be offset with assessment fees. Both Commissioners agreed with approving 1 FTE. Commissioner Pollock is asking for performance results. The ordinance that assesses fees will need review in 2022.

Becky Butler said Information Services has discussed moving a position to IT that was previously billed to multiple departments and then charge the position rates going forward in 2023. Resources would be moved from one fund to another to offset costs for 2022. The Board has recommended transferring the FTE position to be funded through the established funds and then moved to IT rates in 2023. Becky requested a follow-up meeting to finalize the IT request and the Sheriff's request on Monday 11/15/21. Becky said she will require direction for resolutions.

Meeting ended at 4:04 p.m.

