

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF MONROE COUNTY, ILLINOIS SEPTEMBER 22, 2015
BUDGET HEARINGS – DAY #1

The meeting of the County Commissioners of Monroe County, Illinois (Budget Hearings – Day #1) was called to order at 7:30 a.m. Chairman Terry Liefer, Commissioner Delbert Wittenauer, and Commissioner Robert Elmore were present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Liefer declared there was a quorum present and the meeting was ready for business.

Others present included Sheila Wetzler, Linda Lehr, County Clerk Dennis Knobloch, and Treasurer Kevin Koenigstein. Also present was Joe Leicht of the Monroe County Independent and Mark Altadonna.

Chris Howell presented the Weed Commissioner's budget. His request was up \$300 from \$34,500 last year to \$34,800 this year. He attributed most of that increase to the possible increase in cost of chemicals.

Aaron Metzger presented the budget request for the Highway Department. Mr. Metzger had submitted his 3-hole punched forms, and they were already inserted into the budget Binders. There was discussion of the salary for the Highway Engineer and which account is used for appropriating those funds. Mr. Metzger said he was not happy that he had to change that arrangement, but he would do whatever he was instructed. He reported that his Equipment budget would include a backhoe and tandem during the coming year. He said that even though fuel costs are down, the cost of salt will be higher during the coming fiscal year.

Mr. Metzger said the income for the Highway Department will be roughly the same as during the last fiscal year. He requested a Highway Department tax levy of \$711,300, a Matching Tax Fund levy of \$300,000 and a Bridge fund levy of \$138,000. The Road District CST program was also discussed. The Road Districts have requested \$110,000 in funds for disbursement to the various Road Districts. The Construction Schedule and Equipment Replacement Schedule were also reviewed.

Carla Heise presented the budget for the Ambulance Service. She said the line items for Administrative Overtime and for the Administrative Assistant were reduced significantly due to reducing the hours for that position. Ms. Heise reported that Equipment Purchase included the replacement of a monitor for \$32,500. The vehicle maintenance budget request was up \$7,000 from the previous year due to increasing maintenance costs of the Ambulances, now over \$24,000 for the year. She reported that she thinks the Union is getting close to settling their contract, and they are expecting a 2.5% salary increase for personnel. Ms. Heise also provided a 3-year equipment budget projection.

Kelton Davis presented the budget for the Regional Superintendent's office. His budget request from the two Counties was \$219,964, with \$137,148 coming from Monroe County and \$82,816 coming from Randolph County, and that split is based on the total amount of EAV in each County. The request for Monroe County was up \$5,469 from the previous fiscal year. He reported that just as with other governmental entities, the State of Illinois funds are not coming through as they should be. Mr. Davis said the adult GED classes have been suspended for that reason and other programs may follow. He said his office has been working together with all of

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the local social service providers to make sure they are all providing the services they can. As to office needs, he said he had a thermostat that needed to be moved, he would like to upgrade his door signage, and he is tight on office and storage space. Mr. Davis said he would like to be able to add onto the building at some point to make more space available.

Mark Altadonna left the meeting.

Vicki Koerber presented the budget for the Coroner's office. She said that due to the increasing number of cases she has had this year, the budget for toxicology and autopsies is already over budget by a total of \$4,000, and it could go even higher with several months left in the fiscal year. She said that due to the increasing County population, the increased use of drugs and the aging of the Baby Boomers, she only expected these numbers to continue increasing, and she felt those two line items should probably be increased.

Carl Wuertz presented the budget for the Supervisor of Assessments. He adjusted the Publications line item to show Postage expense moved to the Commissioner's budget. Chairman Liefer asked if there would be any savings in salary due to the retirement of Connie Esker and the hiring of a new employee. He also asked if it was necessary for that position to be full-time, or could the Board of Review Secretary also do Assessor's office work at times. Mr. Wuertz said there should be about \$5,000 in salary savings, and he felt that employee needed to devote most of their time to the Board of Review work.

Mike Fausz presented the budgets for the Zoning Department, Mapping and Platting, and the G.I.S. Department. He said there were no major changes in any of those budgets. Mr. Fausz was asked how things were going with the County Motor Pool arrangement. He said things are going well – he tries to do more preventative maintenance on the vehicles to make sure we don't have major repair bills. He also reported that things seem to be working well with the new postage/mail arrangement. When asked about the new telephone system, he said there were quite a few problems early on, but now there are only isolated problems with the system.

During a lull in the schedule, Kevin Koenigstein said he would present his budget. He said he didn't have punched copies for the Board, but the only change in his budget request was for up to \$10,000 in part-time employee salary. He said that when the tax cycle gets to his office late like it did this year, it complicates the regular office routine. Chairman Liefer asked about the mailing arrangement with MAR Graphics. Mr. Koenigstein said it costs about \$2,000 more to mail the tax bills this way, but it produces a much better copy, and if he did the mailing, he would have to buy better printers and other equipment.

Ryan Weber presented the budget for the EMA Department. He said due to the ever increasing workload and demands of the position, he would like to see the EMA Director established as a full-time position. Mr. Weber said this would also allow him the time to attend all of the necessary meetings, and to spend more time with the programming of radios, since Paul Tipton is reducing the time he spends working for the Department. He said that if the County agrees to the full-time scenario, he would devote any extra time to working with the Ambulance Service and Sheriff's Department when they need help. There was some discussion as to whether these other Departments would then reimburse the County for the time spent working for those other offices.

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Mr. Koenigstein said if the increase in the EMA budget can be absorbed by either the Ambulance Service or Sheriff's Dept. budget, that type of arrangement could be handled in the budget. Commissioner Wittenauer said we are not going to have new money to spend in the budget, so that is the only way it would work.

Mr. Weber said that he deleted the office rent line item, since no other office in the County pays rent for their office space. There was discussion regarding State reimbursement for the rent, and Mr. Weber said he moved that amount into the Director's salary, which also is eligible for State reimbursement. He said currently the County receives about \$21,000 in State reimbursement for salary and office rent. Mr. Weber said his vehicle maintenance budget includes 2 cars, 3 Humvees, 5 trailers and all of the trailer-mounted generators.

Nora Feuquay and Clyde Heller presented the "not-hole-punched" budget for the Economic Development Committee. Mr. Heller reported that to date they have disbursed \$105,000 in business development loans, and borrowers have paid back about \$7,200. Mr. Heller said the two Waterloo breweries who were granted \$45,000 in loan funds, have started to make payments on the loans even though they are not yet open for business. Hopskeller has paid back about \$2,200, and Stubborn German has paid back about \$3,500. Mr. Heller said that Philomena and Ruth, the business on Mill Street, borrowed \$15,000 and has paid back about \$1,400. It was discussed that last year the county advanced \$20,000 to the Economic Development Committee so these business development loans could be funded. Mr. Heller said the Committee would like for the county to increase the annual budget allotment to \$30,000. The ED Committee will then use \$20,000 of that to payback the County for the previous year advance, leaving \$10,000 in the Committee budget for future loan advances. Ms. Feuquay said the previous contributions from the municipalities never went into the ED Revolving Loan Fund, and she said that the ED Committee has also discussed talking with the municipalities in Monroe County again, about possibly making a per capita contribution to help fund the loan account. The Commissioners said since the municipalities are reaping most of the rewards from these funds, especially the sales tax dollars, they would appreciate seeing a contribution from those units of government. Ms. Feuquay said it would be great if Monroe County would qualify for Economic Development grant dollars, but the poverty level is virtually nonexistent in Monroe County, so it is impossible to acquire any of those grants. Mr. Heller said we are fortunate that all of the communities in the County have dedicated their efforts to preserving their local businesses. Chairman Liefer said he was sure the County Board would look at matching dollars if the local cities would come up with some type of contribution to the ED Revolving Loan fund.

Joann Hartmann presented the budget for the Soil and Water Conservation District. She said they are struggling since the State has not been distributing payments as they should. She said the local District is fortunate, because they have kept some funds in reserve, unlike some other local Counties. Ms. Hartmann said they are also suffering with the loss of Wayne Johanning from their office. She said some of the things that have helped are the programs like fish sales, etc. that help to bring extra income into the office. The budget request from SWD was for \$15,000, the same amount they have requested in years past.

Sheriff Neal Rohlfing presented the budget for the Sheriff's Department. He said that due to the increasing population of Monroe County and the related increase of problems, he feels that the Sheriff's Department needs to add a full-time investigator to the staff. He also said that with the

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increase in drug cases, he feels that the County should participate in the local DEA Task Force by providing a dedicated officer to that group. This could also reap the benefits of additional income to the County, since any forfeitures of property and cash seized by the Task Force are shared with the participating agencies. Sheriff Rohlfinding said the amount of return is not guaranteed, but he felt Monroe County could receive a generous amount of income annually from this arrangement.

Sheriff Rohlfinding said the Department has applied for a Federal Cops Grant that would fund 75% of the salary of two new deputies for the first three years of employment. If the grant is awarded, the County would have to agree to keep the deputies and fund their salaries for at least one year following the three-year grant period. He said the Department should hear by October if this Grant will be awarded.

Sheriff Rohlfinding said he wanted to increase the Part-time Deputy Hire from \$7,000 to \$18,000. This would allow the Department to provide more staff for Courthouse Security assignments on those days when Court is in session, and large numbers of people are moving through the Courthouse. He said he felt that the recently-approved increase in Court Security fees would help to fund the payment for these extra personnel.

Sheriff Rohlfinding said he would also like to add one full-time Corrections Officer. Currently there is only one full-time Corrections Officer working each shift. The Department has constantly been cited during Jail Inspections for having only one Corrections Officer on duty. Sheriff Rohlfinding said he has also started housing Federal inmates, and is considering adding double bunks to the cells, which would increase the Jail capacity from 23 to 46 inmates. He said if this change is made, there should definitely be another full-time Corrections Officer at the Jail. The fees taken in for housing Federal inmates, along with the increase in jail capacity by using the double bunk arrangement, should provide the extra funds needed to add this position.

Sheriff Rohlfinding said he would like to purchase (3) new vehicles during the next fiscal year, at a cost of \$27,000 each for a total of \$81,000. This would be up from the \$50,000 budgeted for fiscal year 2015. He also said he plans to convert the entire Department to SUV's as the current fleet of cars needs to be replaced.

Sheriff Rohlfinding said another one of the items requiring replacement is the CAD system. He said the 9-1-1 Board has been looking at various systems, and he only has one price quote at this time – that being \$160,370. The system will cost more than that, but the 9-1-1 Board will pick up the additional expense of the system. He said that more systems are being reviewed, so this may not be the final price, but due to problems with the current system, replacement is necessary.

Sheriff Rohlfinding included a summary report showing the total requested budget of \$3,317,826.74 compared to the 2015 budget amount of \$2,795,342.17 – representing an increase of \$522,484.57. He also included a 3-year outlook detailing the things he would like to replace and improve over the next three years.

Judge Doyle presented the budget for the Circuit Court. He said the only change included in his budget was to increase the line item for Jurors, due to the recent increase in Juror pay approved by the State Legislature. He said he was happy to see the County Board starting to address Courthouse security.

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There being no further business to come before the Board, motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Elmore, with a second by Commissioner Wittenauer. All voting Aye, none Nay and none Absent. Motion carried.