

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF MONROE COUNTY, ILLINOIS SEPTEMBER 23, 2015
BUDGET HEARINGS – DAY #2

The meeting of the County Commissioners of Monroe County, Illinois (Budget Hearings – Day #2) 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.

Also present included Linda Lehr, County Clerk Dennis Knobloch, Sheila Wetzler, and Treasurer Kevin Koenigstein. Also present was Mark Altadonna.

Pam Jacobs, presented the budget for the University of Illinois Extension Service. She said the budget amount requested was \$188,000, just as it has been for several years. There was discussion of having Monroe County meetings at the Extension building. Ms. Jacobs said she feels that arrangement is working fine at this point. She also talked about some of the programs currently being offered by the Extension Service.

Kevin Koenigstein went through various General County budget items. He suggested that the Capital Improvement line item be left at \$375,000. He felt that no change needs to be made in the current amounts allocated for Social Security. Under the Tort and Immunity line – Unemployment Insurance will stay at \$30,000, the ICIT assessment at \$20,000 and the CIRMA payment at \$950,000. Following some discussion it was decided that the County's earthquake insurance coverage should be studied to determine the details of our coverage.

It was decided that the IMRF line item would remain at \$700,000. Mr. Koenigstein suggested gradually reducing the amount of support to the Nursing Home since they seem to be doing well financially. He suggested that the employee subsidy remain at \$425,000 for now, but that both the Nursing Home Insurance of \$60,000 and the Nursing Home IMRF subsidy of \$140,000 be phased out completely.

Mary Ann Brand presented the budget for the Circuit Clerk's office. That request included increases for supplies and postage, meetings and audit. There was some discussion regarding how much of the supplies and postage line item is used for supplies and how much is used for postage, since the postage is now being covered under the Commissioner's line item. Mr. Koenigstein will work with the Circuit Clerk's office to determine the proper budget allocation.

John Wagner presented the budget request for the Recycling Center. Mr. Wagner said there is no change in that budget. He reported that the skid steer is currently working fine, but it may need to be replaced in the coming years. He also said that some work needs to be done on the doors of the steel building, but he is having problems getting building contractors to give him a bid on door repair.

Mr. Wagner said regarding the Health Tax budget, he requested that the Tax Levy for that line item remain the same at \$300,651. He said currently his office is doing fine, and can continue to function on reserves even if the State continues to withhold funding. Mr. Wagner said that several other Counties, including Randolph, have already started reducing office hours to make up for the

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funding that is not being received. He said that with this problem occurring in surrounding Counties, he expects Monroe County to get more people coming in for immunizations. Mr. Wagner said he didn't think this would be a problem, because currently they have plenty of product, and they do make some profit on immunizations.

Mr. Wagner said he had a little bit of a problem putting the budget together, because the line items don't match the revised budget procedure. Mr. Koenigstein said that is a work in progress. Chairman Liefer asked if the Health Department was using all of the available office and storage space. Mr. Wagner said all space is being used, and it may be worthwhile for the County to look at some type of added storage space, since many of the county offices are short on space at this time.

The request submitted for the 708 Mental Health Board showed an increase from \$406,871 last year to \$427,180 for the upcoming fiscal year.

Kevin Koenigstein once again mentioned his recommendation that the \$60,000 Nursing Home insurance allowance and the \$140,000 Nursing Home IMRF subsidy be reduced to zero. The Commissioners said they would agree to do that.

There was some discussion of how much new money would be available in the budget. Considering the IDOR cost of living allowance is set at .8% for the coming fiscal year, and we may be looking at about a 2% increase in the County EAV, the County should be looking at from 2.5% to 3% growth in new budget dollars. That would equate to between \$150,000 and \$200,000. Because Monroe County is subject to the PTELL regulations, that is the maximum amount that can be levied as new money. That dollar amount will have to be spread among the various County offices requesting increases in their budgets.

Mr. Koenigstein said later in the budget process, we will need to determine whether there will be a levy for the ICIT A and ICIT B bonds, or whether one or both of those amounts will be abated. He also said the Commissioners will need to determine whether the employee health insurance program will stay the same and what amount of wage increase will be allowed for the employees.

Dana Hutchings presented the budget request for the States Attorney's office. She said there was no change in the dollar amount of the budget. She said she would like to suggest that the County either hire a full-time IT person, or consolidate all of their IT operations with one company. She said she has had problems with securing the email and internet activity in the States Attorney's office, and this is something that the expertise of a computer tech could help solve. Ms. Hutchings also said something needs to be done regarding video arraignments in the Courtroom and equipment for the use of audio and video during Court proceedings. She was wondering if there were leftover Drug Seizure Funds that could be used for this purpose. The Commissioners said that the video arraignment situation is being studied at this time, and that should be included in upcoming work.

Dennis Knobloch presented the budget request for the County Clerk's office. He said the Clerk's side of the budget remains the same from last year. Due to having two elections in 2016, as compared to one in 2015, he said he would need \$44,000 in additional funds for conducting the second election. Mr. Knobloch said as far as the long-term budget for the office, he anticipates

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that in the next few years, either the State or Federal government will require upgrades to the electronic voting devices being used by all of the Illinois Counties. The last time this was done, most of the funding to purchase those devices was provided by the State and Federal government. He said that will probably not be the case this time, and the expense of that equipment could run as much as \$500,000.

Connie Esker and Amy Schwarze presented the budget for the Board of Review. Ms. Esker will be retiring in October, and Ms. Schwarze will be taking her place. There was no change in the financial budget for the office. Chairman Liefer asked about the duties of that office. Ms. Esker said she records all of the information from the land transfer declarations, handles all of the paperwork for property owner exemptions and handles all of the assessment appeals work. She said that in addition to these duties, Ms. Schwarz will also be entering some of the updated assessment information for the Assessor's Office. There was also extensive discussion regarding the new Veteran's exemption program recently signed into law by Governor Rauner.

The budgets for the Commissioners, General County and General Assistance were also reviewed by the County Board. Mr. Koenigstein said one of the variables in the upcoming budget will be whether or not the State comes through with the normal payments to the Counties. That could determine whether the County has a balanced budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

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.