

**Minutes of Meeting
Auditor's Office
February 7, 2022
1:00 p.m.**

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios and Commissioner Bill Brooks met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were Clerk Jim Brannon, Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke, Finance Director Dena Darrow, Coroner Warren Keene, M.D., KCSO Undersheriff Dan Mattos, KCSO Captains Andy Deak, Stuart Miller, Brett Nelson and Kevin Smart, KCSO Lieutenants Ryan Higgins, Scott Maxwell and Mark Ellis, Adult Misdemeanor Probation (AMP) Director Keith Hutcheson, AMP Administrative Supervisor Lynnell Smith, AMP Probation Supervisor Melissa Miller, Human Resources (HR) Director Sylvia Proud, Community Development Director David Callahan, Parks & Waterways (P&W)/Noxious Weeds/Snowgroomers Director Nick Snyder, Buildings & Grounds (B&G) Operations Manager Greg Manley, B&G Administrative Secretary Kristi Koehn, Prosecutor's Office Administrative Supervisor Jacklyn Little and Administrative Secretary Carissa Cox, BOCC Senior Business Analyst Nanci Plouffe, BOCC Communications Coordinator Jonathan Gillham and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio. Commissioner Leslie Duncan was excused.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. Business:**

Budget Planning for FY 2023 (Discussion)

Clerk Jim Brannon welcomed everyone to the start of the FY 2023 Budget Season. He announced that there would be some changes made this year. He said they would try to minimize the number of meetings, with groups meeting with their liaisons first, to streamline the process as much as possible.

Finance Director Dena Darrow walked those present through the agenda she had prepared for the Budget. She pointed out that everyone had to cope with staffing issues, so that was part of the reason she was working to simplify things and save time. She announced that the computer test environment had been opened and that she would be offering one-on-one training for anyone that felt the need. She encouraged budget teams to explore the testing environment fully before their documents needed to be submitted.

Ms. Darrow said that she wanted to get initial direction from the Board today on how they would like to approach the Budget this year. She noted that the Budget would not actually be opened until March 21, 2022, at which point the teams could begin submission of their completed documents. She said she would be sending materials out to the groups shortly.

Ms. Darrow stated that Commissioner Leslie Duncan had asked BOCC Senior Business Analyst Nanci Plouffe to speak on her behalf today.

Ms. Darrow remarked that the inflation rate at this moment was 7.3%, an almost 40 year high. She said this needed to be kept in mind, especially when considering Personnel and the cost of commodities. She stated that supply chain interruptions and component shortages needed to be taken into account as well.

- Ms. Darrow proceeded to her list of questions for the Board. She asked if the Board was amenable to groups bringing forward new positions for FY 2023, in addition to those which were already vacant.

Commissioner Bill Brooks acknowledged that some new positions would probably be necessary, but groups would need to demonstrate real need before they would be added.

Chairman Fillios agreed and suggested that filling the open positions should receive the most attention.

Ms. Plouffe reported that Commissioner Duncan had said there were probably a couple of positions that would have to be added, such as for Buildings & Grounds, but to keep it to a minimum.

- Ms. Darrow asked what the Board would like to do with position changes and promotions.

Chairman Fillios said these should be included in the Budget. Commissioner Brooks agreed. Ms. Plouffe said Commissioner Duncan had no comment on this.

- Ms. Darrow asked what the Board wished to do regarding Pay Plan Steps. She said that all County employees were now part of Pay Plan Matrices and would receive one step.

Ms. Plouffe said she thought Commissioner Duncan felt this needed to be included.

Ms. Darrow noted that the Board did not necessarily have to approve the Steps, but that they would be presented as part of the initial material. She added that people would move ahead based on their anniversary dates, rather than everyone on October 1.

Ms. Plouffe reported that the cost of moving all staff ahead on anniversary dates would be about \$632,000, unloaded, or about \$1 million loaded.

Chairman Fillios stated that the cost of the Pay Plan Steps would represent between 1% and 2% of the County's maximum tax rate increase of 3%. He pointed out that this did not include a COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment). He said that, according to the available data, the cost of living was increasing faster than wages across the U.S. He cautioned those present that, the more that went into Personnel, the less there would be available to spend elsewhere, so they should plan accordingly.

Ms. Plouffe remarked that these figures also did not include the current salary study.

Human Resources (HR) Director Sylvia Proud said that they would not have any information available from the salary study until at least the end of February.

- Ms. Darrow asked if the Board wished to include COLA in the initial budget calculations and at what percentage.

Ms. Plouffe said she did not have a response from Commissioner Duncan on this. She remarked that she did not think that the annual CPI would be 7%.

Ms. Proud provided details on the increases included in the General Pay Plan Matrix and the Sheriff's Matrix by year.

Ms. Plouffe stated that the important part about including COLA was that it kept the rate within market.

It was generally agreed to wait for the results of the salary study before making a decision about COLA.

- Ms. Darrow asked if the Board wanted an examination made of Overtime Pools, to try to predict what would be needed.

Ms. Plouffe reported that Commissioner Duncan had requested no Overtime Pool increases.

Chairman Fillios asked that an examination be made, but that no decision on increases would be implied. Commissioner Brooks agreed.

- Ms. Darrow asked if any other pool increases should be contemplated: Temp. Pool, Holiday Buy Back, etc. She noted that they might want to look at the Sick Leave/Termination Pool, in light of expected retirements.

Chairman Fillios and Commissioner Brooks encouraged her to analyze that as well. Ms. Plouffe said that Commissioner Duncan said she would not favor any increases here.

- Ms. Darrow moved on to On Call Pay and Standby Pay.

Ms. Plouffe said that Commissioner Duncan had said she would not support increases on this. Chairman Fillios agreed. Commissioner Brooks said he would support an increase, but evidently would not have the votes to get it through.

- Ms. Darrow asked how the Board wished to handle bonuses in the upcoming fiscal year.

Chairman Fillios remarked that this was a difficult topic, since sometimes bonuses were offered when salary increases could not be given.

Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke said that the County typically looked at salary savings at the end of the year before deciding on bonuses.

Commissioner Brooks said no and added that, if the other things were done correctly, there would be no need of bonuses.

Ms. Plouffe reported that Commissioner Duncan said she would say no also, with the exception of some recognition bonuses.

Chairman Fillios said no, for the time being.

- Ms. Darrow asked whether the Board wanted to consider inclusion of new programs in the budget.

Commissioner Brooks stated he would prefer to see the emphasis placed on Personnel, "A" Budget, rather than new programs. Chairman Fillios agreed.

Ms. Plouffe reported that Commissioner Duncan said she would consider including a new program if it saved time, positions and, ultimately, money.

Ms. Darrow suggested that any new programs be reviewed by the Elected Official and liaison, then, if it would be self-funded or met the criteria, it could be brought forward for Board consideration.

Chairman Fillios indicated that if they found they had more revenue from sources such as URD (Urban Renewal District) closures, these topics could be revisited.

Clerk Brannon remarked that other income such as ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds could be factored in as well. He said the Auditor's Office would try to provide the BOCC with a snapshot of that data much sooner this year.

- Ms. Darrow asked whether the Board would like to start Non-Capital Items at a zero base again this year.

Chairman Fillios and Commissioner Brooks agreed. Ms. Plouffe said Commissioner Duncan had left no comment.

- Ms. Darrow said that everyone was aware that inflation was high. She asked if, when the "B" (Operations) Budget was opened, they wanted to keep it flat for now or have a flat percentage built in for everything.

Commissioner Brooks commented that the increases would be higher in some areas than others and that he would suggest they leave it flat for now.

Chairman Fillios agreed. Ms. Plouffe did not offer a comment from Commissioner Duncan.

- Ms. Darrow asked if there were any other areas on which the Commissioners wished to address.

Commissioner Brooks said that groups should take a very hard look at travel expenses.

Chairman Fillios agreed and pointed out that so many things were available via Zoom or other sources that travelling might not be as necessary.

Ms. Plouffe said Commissioner Duncan had not left a comment on this.

- Ms. Darrow moved on to discuss Capital Expenditures, “C” Budget. She provided a graphic illustrating the Capital Expenditure trends for each Elected Official and the type of purchases made for the last several years. She suggested this be used as a planning tool.

Commissioner Brooks expressed approval.

Ms. Darrow said she could provide a template for the departments to use and training in its use.

Ms. Plouffe said that Commissioner Duncan’s two requested areas of focus were Facilities Expansion and the Salary Study.

- Ms. Darrow asked if there were other areas the BOCC would like considered or excluded. She suggested that each Commissioner discuss these items with their liaison groups.

Commissioner Brooks said he did not approve of the Facilities Expansion. He indicated he thought the County had enough other places to put people. He said they should stick to funding things that were absolutely necessary, but not flinch at the cost of those things.

Chairman Fillios said he wanted the Facilities Expansion project left in.

- Ms. Darrow asked if the Commissioners supported getting the Fleet Management Group back together.

There was general agreement expressed for this.

- In regard to Revenues, Ms. Darrow asked if the Commissioners wanted groups to analyze their fee structures this year.

Chairman Fillios and Commissioner Brooks voiced agreement. Ms. Plouffe said Commissioner Duncan had not left a comment on that.

Ms. Darrow explained how meetings between the groups and their liaisons would be scheduled this year and offered to provide standard forms for them to use. She asked for the Commissioners' input on the content of the documents and the presentations. She offered a more detailed review of the calendar dates and deadlines. She said the first summary meeting with the BOCC would be planned for May 25, 2022 and final deliberations would be July 15, 2022.

Clerk Brannon stressed that the mandated versus non-mandated services would be clearly indicated for the Commissioners in the submitted documents. He also remarked that time spent practicing and getting familiar with the computer program now, during the testing/training period, would save everyone time later.

Ms. Locke reminded those present that the County would be picking up the rest of Panhandle Health District's state portion in FY23, which would be around \$800,000, on top of what was already being paid.

D. Public Comment: This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. Idaho Law prohibits Board action on items brought under this section except in an emergency circumstance. Comments related to future public hearings should be held for that public hearing. There were no public comments.

E. Adjournment (Action): Chairman Fillios adjourned the meeting at 1:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

BOCC SIGNATURE

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk