

**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Clerk FY22 Budget Review**  
**May 11, 2021**  
**3:00 p.m.**

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios, Commissioner Leslie Duncan 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, Staff Accountant – Budget Michelle Chiaramonte, Court Services Director Marissa Garza, Court Services Manager Kally Young, County Assistance Manager Shelly Amos, Elections Manager Asa Gray, Recording Manager Melinda Roeder, Administrative Assistant Ronnie Davisson, BOCC Senior Business Analyst Nanci Plouffe and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. Business (Action):**

**Review of FY22 Clerk Budget**

Clerk Jim Brannon introduced Finance Director Dena Darrow and Staff Accountant – Budget Michelle Chiaramonte. He noted that the Managers from each division were present and ready to answer any questions regarding their departments.

Ms. Darrow reported that the Budget request for all the Clerk’s departments, including personnel, operations and capital, was up about 2.7% from last year. She said that overall revenue was down by about .68% and explained that this was primarily due to changes in County Assistance. She offered an overview of each department.

- Administration: She said the Budget request had increased by about 14.7%, or about \$823, from last year, mainly due to travel expenses for election training.
- Auditor: This department was up 18%, due to wage adjustments. She added that there was also a \$55,000 request for a consultant to evaluate all the Clerk’s division’s systems to increase efficiency. She said this had been requested previously, but had been declined by the Board.
- Elections: Ms. Darrow reminded the Commissioners that COVID grant funds had allowed a technology upgrade, including the purchase of electronic poll books. She said that these had a life expectancy of about eight years and suggested that money be set aside to fund their repairs and replacement, starting in FY22. She added that their request for this year was down about 1.79%, mostly because there was no presidential election in 2022, and the revenue was up 1.32%.
- Recorder: She commented that the Recorder’s Office was becoming self-sustaining, due to the fees charged for recording documents and issuing passports. She said the revenue was up 9.17% from last year and their expenses were down 1.48%.

- District Court: Ms. Darrow stated that their request had increased by 13.9% from last year, mostly driven by the need for two more full-time Civil Clerk II positions, one more full-time Judicial Assistant, two promotions and one wage adjustment. She reported that their revenue was up by 15%, thanks to the efforts of the Collections Service staff.
- County Assistance: Ms. Darrow remarked that this department would undergo many changes, due to the Medicare Expansion Plan that would come into effect on April 1, 2022. She pointed out that they would have business as usual for the first half of the fiscal year, but there was no firm picture of how the second half would go. She said their request was 30.26% less than last year and revenue projected to be down about 62.5%.

Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Pat Braden entered the meeting at 3:09 p.m.

Mr. Braden explained the ways that the provisions of HB 316 would affect County Assistance and the funding of Health Districts throughout the state. He said that anyone eligible for the Expanded Medicare Program, private insurance, or insurance through the state exchange would no longer be eligible. He noted that it did not matter if the applicant did not actually have the other coverage; if they were eligible for other coverage, they were automatically not eligible for County Assistance. He stated that the program would still offer mandated services, such as indigent burial.

Mr. Braden pointed out that County Assistance would continue to collect on existing indigent accounts, after April 1. He remarked that other details, including funding the Health Districts, were still being worked out at the state level.

County Assistance Manager Shelly Amos, in response to a question from Chairman Fillios, confirmed that there was currently about \$3 million in the Indigent Fund. She reminded the Commissioners that a Resolution had been passed about 21 years ago that listed the non-medical needs County Assistance was to consider, such as utilities, housing and medications. She said the Board would need to review that Resolution and decide which of those functions, if any, would be continued. She concluded that indigent cremation burial, coverage of DE (Designated Examination) fees and collection of revenue owed on accounts would continue.

Ms. Amos and Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke reviewed the new funding requirements for Panhandle Health District (PHD).

Commissioner Leslie Duncan commented that the County's payment to PHD would be doubled.

Ms. Darrow pointed out that the County would only have to pay half of the increase in FY22, since the new law came into effect April 1, halfway through the fiscal year.

Clerk Brannon stated that County Assistance would continue at its current staffing level for the present, to allow for ongoing business and extended case reviews.

Ms. Amos remarked that there were still over \$66 million dollars in uncollected debt that she and her staff would continue to follow for payment.

Mr. Braden and Ms. Amos exited the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

The Commissioners asked Court Services Director Marissa Garza to come to the podium next.

Ms. Garza said that they had been having some trouble filling open positions. She reported that they had just hired two new employees and had more interviews scheduled. She explained that one of the two new Civil Court Clerks would be assigned primarily guardianship cases and the other would target appeals. She stated that the Judicial Assistant would be assigned to Judge Lamont Berecz, who serves in both Bonner and Kootenai County.

Elections Manager Asa Gray came to the podium last. He thanked everyone involved with getting the electronic poll books for his staff and said the new technology had been enormously helpful. He said he did not need to request any additional staff, but agreed that beginning a fund for the upkeep and replacement of the electronic poll books seemed wise.

Ms. Darrow closed with the promise that she would keep the Commissioners informed of any changes in the information submitted.

- 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 3:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

CHRIS FILLIOS, CHAIRMAN

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk

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