

Minutes of Meeting
Coroner FY22 Budget Review
May 18, 2021
10:00 a.m.

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios, Commissioner Leslie Duncan and Commissioner Bill Brooks met to discuss the following agenda item. Also present were Coroner Warren Keene, M.D., Finance Director Dena Darrow, Staff Accountant – Budget Michelle Chiaramonte and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. Business (Action):**

Review of FY22 Coroner Budget

Coroner Warren Keene, M.D. reported that he had been able to acquire an additional vehicle for his department through Fleet Management, so they now had two. He pointed out that this, of course, meant he needed to increase funding for gas and repairs. He said they had moved into their new office space, which had allowed them to improve the services they offered.

Dr. Keene said he did have a request under the “C” (Capital) Budget: a refrigerated morgue trailer, which he said was essential.

He reminded the Commissioners that they had approved an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) between his office and the Missoula, Montana forensic unit in which they agreed to take up to 15 decedents for Kootenai County, if necessary. He stated the morgue trailer would be essential to provide services and asked that the cost be taken from Fund Balance. He explained that a mass fatality incident would become a transportation issue because bodies would need to be taken somewhere to receive appropriate autopsy services.

Dr. Keene thanked Finance Director Dena Darrow for providing necessary data for his “A” (Personnel) Budget, including salary increases and COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment). He remarked that the other increases were for water service in the office, new utilities and cleaning services.

Commissioner Leslie Duncan asked if Dr. Keene thought he could get a fully equipped trailer with the \$58,000 that he had requested.

Dr. Keene said he could and described the method by which he had estimated the expense.

Ms. Darrow reviewed the CARES (Corona Aide, Relief and Economic Security) Act funding situation, in response to a question from Chairman Fillios. She commented that about \$4 million had been originally allotted to the County, of which only about \$2 million had been used. She explained that the State had sent the County the remaining \$2 million in grant money, which had then been set aside. She said that the funds would be subject to audit, so she urged caution in using it.

Dr. Keene informed the Board that Shoshone County had not had sufficient facilities to handle deceased persons during the COVID pandemic, but had been able to borrow a trailer similar to the one he was requesting from the Second Health District, out of Lewiston. He commented that this had worked out very well, so he had asked Panhandle Health District to order such a trailer, but they had refused to consider it. He said this was why he had included this in his budget.

Commissioner Brooks remarked that the refrigerated morgue trailer would be needed so rarely that he was not in favor of including it at this time.

Dr. Keene pointed out the new limitation imposed by their current agreement with Spokane, which would allow for the transport to their facilities of no more than five casualties within a twenty-four hour period.

Ms. Darrow speculated that some of the cost of the trailer could be offset by allowing other counties to use it and charging an appropriate fee.

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 10:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

CHRIS FILLIOS, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk
