

Minutes of Meeting
FY23 Budget Meeting – Auditor/Clerk’s Division
June 8, 2022
2:00 p.m.

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios, Commissioner Leslie Duncan and Commissioner Bill Brooks met to discuss the following agenda item. Also present were Clerk Jim Brannon, Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke, Court Services Manager Kally Young, Elections Manager Asa Gray, Recording Manager Melinda Roeder, County Assistance Manager Shelly Amos, Accounting Manager Grace Blomgren, Staff Accountant – Budget Brandi Falcon, Administrative Assistant Ronnie Davisson, BOCC Senior Business Analyst Nanci Plouffe, BOCC Communications Coordinator Jonathan Gillham and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio.

- A. **Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.
- B. **Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. **Business:**

FY23 Auditor/Clerk’s Division Budget Review with Clerk Jim Brannon, Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke and Department Heads (Action)

Clerk Jim Brannon stated that he and all his department heads had worked hard to keep their requests as flat as possible.

County Assistance

Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke reminded the Commissioners that Senate Bill 1327 had a major impact on the scope of County Assistance’s activities. She explained the changes in revenue collection, the shift of responsibility for involuntary mental health holds and personnel reductions. She remarked that an employee been relocated to another position within the Clerk’s Division. She provided details on other ways their budget had been affected.

Ms. Locke stated that Kootenai County was now responsible for paying the State’s portion of support for PHD (Panhandle Health District), per HB316. She said that the County had previously paid about \$800,000 annually; this would be increased by about another \$824,000. She explained that this expense, among others, would be paid from County Assistance’s remaining Fund Balance, which would be at about \$2,563,806 after covering FY23’s needs. She remarked that the Fund Balance could probably cover about another three years’ worth of the PHD funding. After that, the Commissioners would need to find another source.

Ms. Locke provided details of some of the accounting adjustments which had been made in response to the changes caused by HB316.

Clerk Brannon commented that, if all the Idaho counties had managed their County Assistance Programs as well as Kootenai County had, HB316 would probably have not been seen as necessary. He pointed out that Kootenai County had not needed to levy tax dollars for the program and had, in fact, accumulated a surplus. He stated this was mostly due to the efforts of County Assistance Manager Shelly Amos.

Ms. Amos reported on the actions in which her department would still engage, primarily collection of existing debts and completion of ongoing cases and appeals. She stated that they would still be required to cover indigent cremation burials but asked for Board direction regarding coverage of non-medical items such as rent and utilities. She said that County Assistance rarely had expended money for non-medical items in recent years. Those items, unlike medical expenses, were not reimbursable, so they did not have to follow up on them. She provided details regarding continued collection activities, noting that there was about \$55 million outstanding.

Commissioner Leslie Duncan asked how much of the \$55 million would come to the County and how much would be paid to CAT (Catastrophic Healthcare Cost Program).

Ms. Amos explained the way expenses had originally been funded and the proportion of recovered money that would be paid to each contributor.

Elections

Ms. Locke described the revenue that Elections received each year from the State Election Consolidation Fund and said that Elections Manager Asa Gray believed Kootenai County might receive a larger amount for FY23. She stated that they had a plan to reorganize the department and listed the personnel changes needed: to bring back the Elections Supervisor position, create an Elections Training Specialist, and implement conversions for several Clerk II positions.

Mr. Gray said that they were also asking for the Overtime Pool to be increased from \$11,000 to \$12,000 for FY23, the Election Temp Pool to be increased from \$39,000 to \$43,000. He noted that a mid-year increase for Temps had been previously approved by the Board. He added that his department was able to accomplish more, with fewer people, thanks to improvements in technology, such as the new poll books.

Mr. Gray stated that the requested increase in their "B" (Operations) Budget was mainly driven by the increase in cost for supplies and in vendor fees for printing ballots and coding tabulators. He remarked that they needed to plan for four elections every year, although there was not always one in August.

Mr. Gray provided additional details on the department's projected revenue from the state, estimated at between \$328,000 and \$332,000. He noted that money from the State typically covered about 40% of their expenses, although they receive more during Presidential Primary years. He added that he hoped he and Ms. Locke would have an opportunity to talk to legislators to propose some adjustments in the distribution formula currently in use to determine how much each county receives.

Ms. Locke remarked that they were waiting for the final results from the Wage Study before finalizing their staff salary requests.

District Court

Ms. Locke announced that Magistrate Court Liquor Distribution will hit its maximum of 15% for FY23. Kootenai County District Court anticipated \$400,000 in revenue last year, at the 12% rate; the projected amount for FY23 is about \$600,000.

Court Services Manager Kally Young told the Board they were asking for an additional \$50,000 for their Overtime Pool, bringing it to a total of \$100,000 for FY23. She explained that they have had to come back before the Board for the last few years to request additional funds to cover employee overtime. She said they were also asking for a Court Services Clerk II be increased from Grade 2 to Grade 3 and receive an additional step on the wage matrix.

Ms. Locke stated that District Court had requested two new positions, a Float Clerk Supervisor and a Compliance Supervisor. She explained the justifications for each request and stressed that the Compliance staff had been doing excellent work and bringing in revenue to help support their expenses.

Ms. Young stated that Compliance staff had been increased from one half-time person to four full-time people, engaged in setting up payment plans for people with court fees and helping to arrange community service requirements.

Commissioner Duncan remarked that District Court, unlike some other departments in the County, had not had much turnover of personnel over the past year.

Ms. Young confirmed this and said that they only had three open positions at the moment.

Ms. Locke said that Human Resources had asked that District Court make the request that the four temporary employees hired each year be made into permanent positions. She stated that the positions had been renewed each year for the past five years and said the employees would be placed on Grade 2.

Chairman Fillios commented that all of the requests made by District Court were more than offset by the increased revenue they were collecting.

Clerk Brannon praised the excellent work done by the Compliance staff.

Ms. Locke and Ms. Young provided additional information supporting the requests for the Float Clerk Supervisor, and the other conversions.

Clerk Brannon added that the "B" Budget request had been reduced by \$7,700 for FY23.

Recorder

Ms. Locke said that the workload of the Recorder's Office had slowed somewhat over the past year. She stated that their revenue was projected to increase from \$1,308,500 in FY22 to \$1,484,600 in FY23. She said that the Recording Fees and the HB521 Recording Fee created the most income.

Recording Manager Melinda Roeder explained their fee structure.

Ms. Locke added that the "B" Budget request had also been reduced from FY22. She said that they would keep the Board informed of any changes in projected revenue or expenses.

Auditor

Accounting Manager Grace Blomgren stated that they had one personnel request; they would like the Staff Accountant – Grants to be moved from Grade 10 to Grade 11. She indicated that Human Resources would reevaluate the position. She said that the current employee had been with the County for 15 years and in this position for four years, during which grant revenue to the County had increased greatly. She added that the person had also taken on training of the new Tax Accountant.

Ms. Locke reported that they would submit an updated job description to HR shortly, but they had wanted to be sure that the request was included in the Budget for FY23. She confirmed that the County now received up to \$60 million in grants.

Ms. Blomgren said that their "B" Budget request had only increased by about \$2,500, mostly due to the increase in cost for paper, printing supplies and non-capital software licenses for Adobe. She added that they were also asking for funds to replace broken chairs and to get some standing desks.

Chairman Fillios inquired about the increased amount requested for airfares.

Ms. Blomgren replied that all the Staff Accountants went to conferences each year.

Ms. Locke remarked that the travel budget for herself and Clerk Brannon had been reduced for the past couple of years, but they had increased it by about \$1,100 for FY23, since there would be a new Clerk and Chief Deputy.

- 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 2:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

BOCC SIGNATURE

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk