

Minutes of Meeting
FY24 Budget Deliberations
June 14, 2023
2:00 p.m.

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chair Leslie Duncan, Commissioner Bruce Mattare and Commissioner Bill Brooks met to discuss the following agenda item. Also present were Assessor Bela Kovacs, Residential Appraisal Manager Troy Steiner, Administrative Manager Shelly Amos, Clerk Jennifer Locke, Chief Deputy Clerk Grace Blomgren, Finance Director Brandi Falcon, Staff Accountant – Budget Arrow Gidney, KCSO Sheriff Robert Norris, KCSO Undersheriff Brett Nelson, KCSO Captains Andy Deak, Stuart Miller and Kevin Smart, KCSO Lieutenants William Klinkefus and Ryan Higgins, KCSO Patrol Deputies Aaron Roach, Patrick O’Neill, Andrew Mohawk, Nick Franssen, James Melton and Ryan Flory, KCSO Detention Deputies Evan Smit and Jay Lillifloren, KCSO Jail Control Room Operator Zack Knox, KCSO Chief Budget Officer Stephanie Drobny, KCSO Personnel Administrator/Administrative Manager Marcia Heglie, KCSO Administrative Assistant Lisa Roberts, KCSO Maintenance Supervisor Tom Reed, Chief Deputy Coroner Lynette Acebedo, Chief Deputy Treasurer Jill Smith, Adult Misdemeanor Probation (AMP) Director Keith Hutcheson, Human Resources (HR) Director Sylvia Proud, HR Generalist – Employee Relations Dorothy Cross, Community Development Director David Callahan, Certified Building Official Christina Garland, Planning Manager Ben Tarbutton, Solid Waste (SW) Business & Finance Manager Angela Burgeson, Buildings & Grounds (B&G) Operations Manager Greg Manley, BOCC Communications Coordinator Jonathan Gillham and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio.

- A. Call to Order:** Chair Leslie Duncan called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. Business:**

FY24 Budget Brief including “A” Budget – Personnel Expenses

Finance Director Brandi Falcon listed possible COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) amounts for County employees and the estimated impact to the FY24 Budget.

- 0% COLA – This would place the County at \$2.7 million ahead in revenue, if a 3% tax increase was in place.
- 6% COLA – This would create a \$421,000 deficit.
- 5% COLA – This would put the County \$112,000 ahead in revenue.
- 4.5% COLA – This would put the County \$380,000 ahead in revenue.

She reminded those present that the interest revenue, as projected by the Treasurer, was high for this year. She said it was recommended that one-time expenses be funded with one-time extra funds, which would be about \$2 million.

Five Year Matrix – Sheriff’s Office

Ms. Falcon stated that movement of Patrol and the Command Staff to within 3% of Coeur d’Alene Police would cost \$1.2 million. She asked Board direction whether to keep that or cut it from the Budget.

Prosecutor Stanley Mortensen entered the meeting at 2:04 p.m.

KCSO Sheriff Robert Norris offered his view of the context in which payment for Sheriff's Office employees should be considered and the costs inflicted by loss of trained personnel. In response to a question from Commissioner Bill Brooks, he confirmed that there was a greater chance of employee injury at the Jail if the staffing shortage continued.

Commissioner Bruce Mattare remarked that he felt the focus should be on retention of current employees. He indicated that he would support moving the pay to within a reasonable percentage of that offered by the Coeur d'Alene Police.

Chair Duncan agreed that Deputies should be offered pay sufficient to encourage them to remain with KCSO. However, she said she did not like some aspects of the Five Year Matrix provided by Sheriff Norris, since certificates had been taken out. She remarked that there were more complex issues which needed to be addressed and suggested that the Nine Year Matrix be retained, with the rates brought to within 3% of Coeur d'Alene, for now. She said that there were too many unexplored ramifications to moving to the proposed Five Year Matrix, plus that plan would benefit Captains much more than other sworn officers in that plan.

Sheriff Norris voiced his objections to Chair Duncan's points. In response to Commissioner Mattare's questions, he provided further information regarding officers' certifications, requirements to be met in order to advance in Steps and ICRMP's (Idaho County Risk Management Program) recommendations.

Commissioners Mattare and Brooks said they wanted the Five Year Matrix to be kept in the Budget at this time.

Chair Duncan disagreed, but acknowledged that having two Commissioners in favor meant it would be retained for now. She indicated that she felt certifications for training and educational degrees needed to be considered.

Commissioner Mattare qualified his previous agreement, stating that he was in favor of the Five Year Matrix, but that professional standards that had to be met should be included in order for progression in the matrix to occur.

Chair Duncan said she would like to see a five year projection of the cost for maintaining this particular Five Year Matrix, as well as one for 911 and the Jail.

Sheriff Norris said he would like the projection for the Jail to be based on a seven year plan and 911 as five.

Ms. Falcon confirmed that the Five Year Matrix would be retained in the Budget at this time. She asked the Commissioners which COLA level they would like to select for the rest of the County.

Chair Duncan and Commissioner Mattare agreed that the 4.5% COLA should be used. Commissioner Brooks indicated that he thought it should be a higher amount.

Chair Duncan pointed out that County staff would also be getting a Step on the appropriate matrix as well as the COLA, so the total increases would be about 6.5% to 8.5%.

Personnel Requests

Ms. Falcon said she would review requests for new personnel department by department.

- Assessor's Office

New Customer Service Technician I, loaded cost \$65,000. Chair Duncan asked whether this position would be needed in the slower seasons as well as the busiest one. Assessor Bela Kovacs said he would have the metrics assembled and send them. The position was left in the Budget for now.

- Airport

Airport Operations Specialist, loaded cost \$75,000, with an additional \$8,600 in on-boarding costs. Ms. Falcon confirmed that the on-boarding costs were also to be covered under special programs. Chair Duncan said she felt Airport Revenues would cover it. The position was left in the Budget.

- Buildings & Grounds (B&G)

Facilities Director, loaded cost \$142,000. Ms. Falcon reminded the Commissioners that, if they thought a given position would not be filled until later in the year, they had the option of funding it at 50%. Chair Duncan remarked that, with the Justice Center Expansion, the Jail Pod project, the addition of two courtrooms at Juvenile Detention, possible sale of the 3rd Street Elections building and possible sale of the Juvenile Justice Center (JJC), she felt this position was a necessary addition.

Chair Duncan reminded those present that the other three new positions requested by B&G were to allow janitorial services to be brought in-house, rather than using an outside contractor. She pointed out that the B&G "B" (Operations) Budget would be reduced by the contract amount and those dollars shifted over to the "A" (Personnel) Budget.

It was agreed to keep all four positions in the Budget, funded at 100%.

- Community Development

Landscape Architect, loaded cost \$124,000, plus \$3,600 in on-boarding costs. Community Development Director David Callahan explained the duties covered by this position. He remarked that they had no one besides himself on staff that

had the credentials required to be able to review Site Disturbance Permit Plans, including their storm drainage plans, variances, CUP's and subdivisions. He said Welch Comer's services were called upon in the most difficult cases currently and this new position would be kept busy throughout the year.

Ms. Falcon confirmed that increases in fees charged by Community Development would be published at the end of June and implemented October 1, 2023. She said these increases had not been factored into her initial preliminary summaries.

It was agreed to keep this position in the Budget, funded at 100%.

- Juvenile Detention

Ms. Falcon reported that the Juvenile Detention Maintenance Staff had been incurring some expenses for overtime, so they were asking for an overtime budget of \$1,000, with a loaded cost of \$1,200.

This was approved.

- Public Defender

Ms. Falcon said that a new Social Worker position had been requested, but that the Public Defender currently had 17 open positions. She suggested converting one of the open slots to Social Worker for the time being.

Chair Duncan said that she felt they should not discuss a conversion without Public Defender Anne C. Taylor present. She remarked that the position would be needed and, since they were to be funded mostly through sales tax and grants, it could be left.

It was agreed to keep this position in the Budget, fully funded.

- Veteran Services

New position for Veteran Services, with a loaded cost of \$83,000 and on-boarding cost of \$4,000.

Commissioner Mattare remarked that the work load to support another position was present.

It was agreed to keep this position in the Budget.

- Prosecutor

Legal Assistant, loaded cost \$73,000, onboarding cost of \$2,000.

It was agreed to keep this position in the Budget.

- Auto Shop

New Mechanic, loaded cost \$69,000.

KCSO Captain Andy Deak remarked that repairs and fabrications performed in the Auto Shop had gone up 40% in just the last year. He said they currently had two Mechanics and one Supervisor and that it had been 20 years since a position had last been added there. He said they would be satisfied with a mid-year addition.

Chair Duncan said the position could be added and funded at 50%, assuming a mid-year hire.

It was agreed to keep the position and fund it at 50%.

- Hayden Deputies

Ms. Falcon reminded those present that the three Hayden Deputy positions had been funded at 50% in the FY23 Budget.

Sheriff Norris stated that these had been assigned, but not hired because they still had 13 vacancies on the force. He said he was still discussing these positions with the City of Hayden and asked if they could be left in and revisited in another meeting.

It was agreed to leave the positions in, but mark them as contingent upon future consideration.

Changes to Existing Personnel

- Assessor

Request for conversions from Customer Service Technician (CST) II to CST III, with a total loaded cost of \$2,200. Assessor Kovacs informed the Board that there was a CST II that had been performing additional duties for about six or seven months. He confirmed that the required levels of training and experience had already been achieved by this individual. He provided some history regarding position shifts prior to his becoming Assessor which he felt related to the request, as well as projected retirements and training needs which would result.

There followed some discussion about staffing needs in the Assessor's Office in this area.

It was agreed that the position would be left in the Budget for now and that Commissioner Mattare and Assessor Kovacs would engage in additional discussions.

Five requests for Residential Appraiser I's to Residential Appraiser II's after achieving certification, with a total loaded cost of \$21,000.

Chair Duncan asked how many Appraiser II positions were needed to maintain a balanced ratio in the department.

Assessor Kovacs explained that his department had been hiring mostly Appraiser I's because it was very difficult to find candidates with higher qualifications. He noted that these new hires needed to work for one full year under the direct supervision of a certified Appraiser and complete coursework and exams in order to qualify as Appraiser II. He noted that people received an increase in wages when they achieve the higher level.

Chair Duncan expressed her preference for promotion into an open position over conversion of an existing position.

It was agreed that this request would not be cut from the Budget at this time and that Commissioner Mattare and Assessor Kovacs would include it in their later discussions.

Two requests for conversion of their Technician II/Comptroller positions to Business Intelligence Analyst, with a total loaded cost of \$11,000.

Chair Duncan asked whether the two people in the initial positions had the qualifications for the conversion right now.

Assessor Kovacs confirmed that they did. He said that they had helped to dramatically increase the efficiencies of the department's operations.

Commissioner Mattare voiced his support for this request.

Assessor Kovacs said that he would be interested in having the Business Intelligence Analyst positions re-examined by HR to ensure that the employees were being paid what they were worth.

It was agreed to retain the request for conversion of two people to Business Intelligence Analyst in the Budget as requested.

Two requests to convert two Commercial Appraiser I's to Commercial Appraiser II upon certification.

It was agreed that these two conversions would be left in the Budget for now, contingent upon the further discussions between Assessor Kovacs and Commissioner Mattare.

- Airport

Ms. Falcon said there was a request from the Airport to increase their overtime pool from \$20,000 to \$30,000, resulting in a loaded cost of \$12,000.

Chair Duncan inquired whether this would be needed, since another person was being added to Airport staff already.

It was agreed to mark this as a possible cut.

- Adult Misdemeanor Probation (AMP)

Ms. Falcon stated that the request from AMP did not have a cost impact but still required Board approval. She said it was for a “call out/comp. time” policy and read the description of the proposed policy into the Record.

Chair Duncan remarked that this request should be part of a larger discussion. She said she had identified ten departments that had the same requirements, so if some were allowed this, then it should be considered for all ten.

Commissioner Brooks agreed that, if all ten departments were identical, if this were done for one department, it should be done for all. He said he did not, however, think that the ten departments were identical.

Chair Duncan said that the departments asking for on-call pay for non-exempt staff had on-call duties listed as part of their job descriptions. She added that offering it to all ten departments had appeared to be cost prohibitive when considered in previous years.

No final decision was made on this item.

- Coroner

Ms. Falcon stated that the Coroner’s Office had also requested on-call pay, because their staff was not allowed to earn overtime. She said that she understood the situation to be that only one person in the department was allowed to earn overtime.

Chief Deputy Coroner Lynette Acebedo explained that her department had one full time employee and three part time employees. She provided additional information on the way staffing was managed, since the Coroner needed to provide service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Chair Duncan said she had been considering approving overtime for the person who was eligible, but the on-call staff got paid for any hours they actually worked.

Ms. Acebedo said that the on-call staff had to carry a phone 24 hours a day, either four days per week or three days per week.

Chair Duncan commented that this was also part of the larger discussion, as previously noted.

Ms. Acebedo described the complications that could ensue in carrying out their duties all over the County. She said she would convey Chair Duncan's proposal to Coroner Duke Johnson, M.D. and see what he thought.

No final decision was made on this item.

Ms. Falcon asked if the Board intended to use the same reasoning regarding the Prosecutor's and the Detectives' requests for on-call pay.

Chair Duncan pointed out that Detectives were non-exempt and the Prosecutor's staff were exempt employees. She said this was the significant difference in her mind, which justified the non-exempt people not being paid an additional amount for on call time.

- Prosecutor

Ms. Falcon asked if the Board planned to approve the Prosecutor's request for \$18,000 loaded for on-call.

Chair Duncan said she would like to keep that, then have the discussion with the other departments making the request.

- Detectives

Ms. Falcon reported that there was \$10,000 requested for on-call pay for the Detectives.

Chair Duncan indicated that she felt this should be considered further, as previously proposed.

There followed substantial discussion of on-call pay for the different departments, including the Sheriff's Office, the Coroner's Office and AMP.

Commissioner Mattare agreed that the additional discussion was necessary.

Ms. Falcon stated that all the on-call requests would be set aside, pending additional consideration.

- AMP

Ms. Falcon reported that AMP had asked for a \$2 per hour stipend, based on possession of certification. She said the total loaded cost would be about \$28,000 based on the certificates currently in place.

Chair Duncan said that this was similar to circumstances in Patrol, in which there were different certificates awarded for different training or degrees. She stated that AMP Director Keith Hutcheson had asked for this instead of requesting a specific matrix for his staff.

It was agreed that this item would be retained.

- B&G

Ms. Falcon reported that B & G had asked to increase their overtime pool from \$2,000 to \$3,000, with a loaded cost of \$1,100.

It was agreed that this item would be retained.

- Community Development

Ms. Falcon stated that there were three requests to convert Building Inspectors to Senior Building Inspectors, with a Total loaded cost of \$18,000.

Certified Building Official Christina Garland said that two of their three people had two certifications already and were working on their third certifications. She predicted that they would have completed requirements by October and the third person would do so later in the year.

Mr. Callahan said he felt this adjustment would improve staff retention and productivity.

Chair Duncan suggested that the first two people's conversions should be funded at 100% and the one person who would qualify later in the year should be funded at 50%.

It was agreed this item would be included as suggested.

Ms. Falcon asked how the Board would like to handle the request for a conversion to Code Compliance Officer II.

Chair Duncan asked whether all Code Compliance Officers should be at level II or if there should be a mix of I's and II's.

Commissioner Mattare said that if the Director felt the County was receiving more value for the dollars spent, the request should be approved.

Mr. Callahan confirmed that this was the case.

Ms. Garland confirmed that the person had the experience and qualifications to be converted to the higher level right now.

It was agreed that this item would be approved.

Ms. Falcon said that Community Development wished to convert a Customer Service Technician I to an Administrative Secretary, with a loaded cost of \$4,000.

Mr. Callahan confirmed that the person was providing those services now and that HR had agreed to the proposal.

It was agreed that this item would be retained.

Ms. Falcon stated that Community Development also wanted to regrade a Customer Service Clerk, with a loaded cost of \$3,500.

Mr. Callahan confirmed that HR had said this proposal was appropriate.

It was agreed that this item would be retained.

- Noxious Weeds

Ms. Falcon stated that Noxious Weeds had put in a request to freeze their seasonal funding, with a decrease of \$17,000 to their Budget.

This was approved.

- Parks & Waterways (P&W)

Ms. Falcon reported that there was a request to regrade their Administrative Assistant to an Administrative Supervisor, with a loaded cost of \$4,800. She added that P&W did not get their Budget request for annual bonuses in by the deadline. She said that they had sent an email to the Commissioners and she needed the agreement of two of the three Commissioners to add them to the overall Budget.

Chair Duncan and Commissioner Brooks voiced their agreement.

- Resource Management Office (RMO)

Ms. Falcon said that RMO requested that the Public Transportation Manager be converted to Senior Program Manager, with a funding source change and a loaded cost of \$6,900. She confirmed that there was also request to freeze a position.

Commissioner Mattare said he was not yet able to make a decision on the requests from RMO since he was not yet comfortable with his grasp of the changes in their situation.

It was agreed that these requests would be revisited.

- Solid Waste (SW)

Ms. Falcon said SW had requests for increases under several of their different overtime Budgets, totaling \$68,000. She reminded those present that SW was self-funded, so this would not come from tax dollars.

It was agreed that these requests would be accepted.

- Auditor's Office

Ms. Falcon reported that the Auditor's Office had requested that three Payroll Accountants be regraded, based on analysis done by HR. She said that the Auditor's "A" Budget was still on track to be less than FY23, even with this request.

It was agreed that this request would be granted.

- District Court

Ms. Falcon said District Court Clerks had asked to convert three positions to Clerk III, with a total cost of \$8,100.

Clerk Jennifer Locke explained that this request was based on the increased responsibilities taken on for some time by these employees. She pointed out that the cost would be covered by the increased revenue projected from the Magistrate Liquor Apportionment. She said there should be another \$72,000 available that did not have to come from tax dollars.

It was agreed that this request would be granted.

Ms. Falcon said there was also a request to convert a Judicial Assistant position to a Juvenile Justice Services Court Supervisor, with a loaded cost of \$10,000.

It was agreed that this request would be granted.

- Elections

Ms. Falcon reported that Elections had asked to increase their overtime from \$12,000 to \$14,000, with a loaded cost of \$2,300.

Clerk Locke explained that staff from other departments put in extra time during Elections and this amount was to compensate for their incurred overtime.

It was agreed that this request would be granted.

Ms. Falcon said Elections also asked to increase their Temporary Worker Funding Pool from \$43,000 to \$47,000, based on a pay increase to be offered.

It was agreed that this request would be granted.

- Prosecutor

Ms. Falcon said the Prosecutor's Office had asked to increase their overtime fund from \$1,000 to \$11,000. She reported that they had spent \$728 so far this year. Prosecutor Mortensen reminded those present that a Supreme Court decision effective June 1, 2023 required that certain documents be filed within 24 hours. He said this would require his Legal Assistants to work on Saturdays, Sundays and possibly on Monday holidays. He stated that this was the most sensible way to deal with the situation.

Chair Duncan suggested that the request be included in the Budget for now and, if this requirement were eliminated by the end of August, the Board would be able to remove it.

- 911

Ms. Falcon reported that 911 had asked to increase their overtime budget from \$204,000 to \$279,000.

Chair Duncan remarked that this was necessary, based on their staffing challenges.

It was agreed to leave this item in the Budget.

- KCSO Administration

Ms. Falcon stated that the Sheriff's Office Administrative Staff had asked that their overtime be increased from \$1,500 to \$2,500, with a total loaded cost of \$1,100.

Sheriff Norris said this was intended for his staff in Background Investigations.

It was agreed to leave this item in the Budget.

- Jail

Ms. Falcon said the Jail had asked to increase their overtime allowance from \$675,000 to \$925,000. She reported that they had already spent \$1 million for overtime in FY23 so far and had not had enough in salary savings to cover the overage.

Sheriff Norris explained that this was mostly due to the Jail population, which averaged 100 inmates per day more than last year.

This item was approved, with Chair Duncan specifying that this was for minimum staff requirements not for rewards.

Ms. Falcon stated that the Jail had also requested to increase their temporary and seasonal pool from \$85,000 to \$245,000. She noted that they had already spent \$236,000 for FY23.

Chair Duncan explained that these were people who had retired from the Jail and returned as part-time help.

This item was approved.

Ms. Falcon said that Sheriff's Office Maintenance had asked to regrade the Maintenance Supervisor, based on a similar job description elsewhere in the County. She reported that the loaded cost would be \$6,300.

Chair Duncan remarked that this would be tied to the creation of a Facilities Director. She asked to revisit this item after she had a chance to speak to HR.

It was agreed that this item would be revisited at a later date.

Ms. Falcon stated that the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) had asked to convert their Administrative Assistant to a Grants Administrator, with a loaded cost of \$4,700.

Chair Duncan expressed reluctance to proceed with this before additional information on the grants process was presented.

It was agreed that this item would be revisited.

- Treasurer

Ms. Falcon said there was a request to convert a Treasury Specialist I to a Treasury Specialist III and to convert a Treasury Specialist II to a Treasury Specialist III, with a total cost of \$12,800.

It was agreed that the conversion of the Treasury Specialist II to III would be funded at 50%, since it was projected to come midyear, and the other would be funded in full.

Service Awards and Bonuses

Ms. Falcon listed the different items in this category and the Commissioners indicated whether they approved or not.

- HR \$8,100 from General Fund for employee referrals – accepted.
- AMP \$1,600 annual employee bonuses – accepted.
- HR \$16,950 for service awards – accepted.
- Sheriff's Office \$100,000 for sign on and relocation bonuses for Patrol, Jail and Dispatch – accepted.
- Treasurer \$1,700 for annual non-exempt employee bonuses – accepted.

Solid Waste (SW) Business & Finance Manager Angela Burgeson informed the Board that SW no longer did cash employee bonuses. She said they had offered hams and turkeys last year instead and people had been very pleased.

Chair Duncan suggested that the deferred items be addressed during the June 21 Budget Deliberations meeting, if possible.

D. Adjournment (Action): Chair Duncan adjourned the meeting at 3:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JENNIFER LOCKE, CLERK

BOCC SIGNATURE

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk