

Minutes of Meeting
FY24 Budget Deliberations
June 21, 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 items. Also present were Clerk Jennifer Locke, Finance Director Brandi Falcon, Staff Accountant – Budget Arrow Gidney, Court Services Director Kally Young, Elections Manager Asa Gray, Assessor Bela Kovacs, Chief Deputy Assessor Ben Crotinger, Coroner Duke Johnson, M.D., Chief Deputy Coroner Lynette Acebedo, Prosecutor Stanley Mortensen, KCSO Sheriff Robert Norris, KCSO Undersheriff Brett Nelson, KCSO Captains Andy Deak and Jeremy Hyle, KCSO Lieutenants Zachary Sifford, Ryan Higgins and Justin Arts, KCSO Jail Sergeant Chris Wagar, KCSO Chief Budget Officer Stephanie Drobny, KCSO Administrative Assistant Lisa Roberts, KCSO Jail Maintenance Supervisor Tom Reed, Adult Misdemeanor Probation (AMP) Director Keith Hutcheson, Community Development Director David Callahan, Certified Building Official Christina Garland, Administrative Manager Reba Grytness, Planning Manager Ben Tarbutton, Planner III Adam Knight, Trial Court Administrative Assistant Acacia Hildreth, 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:**

Continuation of FY24 Budget Brief “C” Budget – Capital Expenses (Action)

Finance Director Brandi Falcon reported that she had created a Preliminary Summary incorporating a 4.5% COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) and a 3% tax increase. She said that this resulted in the overall budget being \$13,000 in deficit.

Ms. Falcon reminded those present that it had been agreed to use about \$2 million for one-time expenses to offset the extra \$2 million the County will receive this year in interest revenue. She explained the other steps that would need to be taken to permit this.

Chair Duncan said she would approve most of the items indicated by Ms. Falcon, but had been unsure about the District Court requests. After some discussion about fund sources, she suggested that the District Court request remain as one of the items to be funded by the one-time revenue. This received general agreement.

FY24 Budget Brief Including “B” Budget – Operating Expenses (Action)

Ms. Falcon asked the Commissioners if they had any cuts they would like to propose in this area.

Chair Duncan reviewed a list of potential cuts and questions.

- It was agreed that the Community Development Landscape Architect position would be funded, while the \$20,000 increase in consultant fees for site disturbance permits would be removed.

KCSO 911 Communication Services Administrator Collin McRoy entered the meeting at 2:06 p.m.

- KCSO Lieutenant Ryan Higgins explained that the office chairs for 911 priced at \$2,400 each were specifically designed for dispatch centers. It was generally agreed that this was necessary and would be funded from tax dollars.
- KCSO Jail Maintenance Supervisor Tom Reed explained that the line item for “unexpected tools and equipment” covered their need to purchase hand or power tools every year. There was general agreement to keep this request in the Budget.
- KCSO Lieutenant Zachary Sifford said he would look over the chairs that came with the Kootenai North building, to see if these were satisfactory in quality and condition. He remarked that the request to purchase new chairs for the KCSO office could potentially be reduced or removed, depending on what he found.

KCSO Undersheriff Brett Nelson commented that he felt the furniture left at Kootenai North was in good condition.

KCSO Sheriff Robert Norris asked whether a final decision had been made to move the Sheriff’s Office to Kootenai North.

Chair Duncan confirmed that the decision had been made and that the money for design costs had been approved previously.

It was agreed that the Board would wait until Lieutenant Sifford had evaluated the furniture at Kootenai North.

- KCSO Captain Jeremy Hyle reported that they were providing suppressors for all their rifles to avoid ear injuries that would lead to Worker’s Compensation claims. The funding request received general approval.
- Chair Duncan noted that \$113,000 had been approved for ammunition for FY23, of which only \$20,000 had been spent as of May 31, 2023. She stated that the FY24 request was for \$93,000.

Undersheriff Nelson indicated that they were replacing supplies after the shortages that occurred during the COVID pandemic. He said the ammunition would be needed for training purposes. The request received general approval.

- Captain Hyle explained that four night vision scopes needed to be available between the City of Coeur d’Alene and KCSO, but they only had three right now, with the funds for a fourth one included in this budget. He said that they would

not need another night vision scope until they added another sniper. The request received general approval.

- KCSO Chief Budget Officer Stephanie Drobny explained that the \$25,000 requested for the Search & Rescue building's kitchen was intended to cover both replacement of the old appliances and the renovations needed. The request received general approval.
- Chair Duncan asked whether the other Commissioners felt that the BOCC should continue to pay for memberships in the different Chambers of Commerce. She pointed out that they were paying about \$1,800 per year for memberships, including meals. She stated that the BOCC had authority only in the unincorporated parts of the County, not in the cities.

Commissioner Bill Brooks remarked that what happened in the cities affected the County as a whole.

Commissioner Bruce Mattare voiced agreement and said that the city residents still paid County taxes, so they were still the BOCC's constituents. He did express concern that the dues paid were used, in part, for political advertising, which he said he felt was not appropriate.

Chair Duncan suggested that the Commissioners commit to attending the meetings and participating, without continuing the paid memberships.

Community Development Director David Callahan disagreed with the suggestion and said he felt the memberships should be retained.

It was generally agreed that this would be added to the list of possible cuts.

- Chair Duncan asked whether the \$20,000 requested for the Museum of North Idaho reflected the proper role of government, in that it was a private organization that would receive taxpayer dollars.

It was generally agreed that this would be added to the list of possible cuts.

Ms. Falcon listed the other Community Support Services requests: \$5,000 for the Animal Damage Control Board, \$20,000 to the Board of Community Guardians, \$500 to the Harrison Senior Center, \$800 to the Hayden Senior Center, \$10,000 to Kootenai Recovery Center, \$2,400 to Lake City Senior Center, \$10,000 to the North Idaho Crisis Center, \$2,400 to the Post Falls Senior Center, \$2,000 to the Rathdrum Senior Center, \$3,000 to Safe Passage Women's Center, \$10,000 to the Soil and Water Conservation District, \$1,800 to the Spirit Lake Senior Center, \$156,519 to the University of Idaho Extension Office and \$1,800 to the Worley Senior Center. She asked if the Commissioners wished to make any adjustments to these.

Chair Duncan said that the Soil and Conservation District had received \$6,000 in the past and that she would suggest that their \$10,000 request be reduced to that level. Her suggestion received general agreement.

Ms. Falcon asked if the Board wished to grant the Assessor's request to add \$150,000 for Phase I and \$250,000 for Phase II of the Aumentum project, for which funding had been proposed as coming from their Fund 46 Balance. She reported that there was \$878,000 in that Fund Balance Account and the Assessor had indicated plans to spend \$260,000 from that for Highland services and \$64,000 for a vehicle, leaving about \$554,000 left. She pointed out these Phase I and Phase II requests had come in after the Budget deadline and asked if the Board wanted to permit them to be added to her calculations.

Commissioner Mattare stated that he did not want to impede the Assessor in any way in getting the necessary tasks done, but the money in that fund was not unlimited. He said that there would be about \$154,000 left in the Fund 46 Balance after these requests and it would take time for that account to restore itself.

It was generally agreed to add the Phase 1 and Phase II requests.

Ms. Falcon reported that Parks & Waterways (P&W)/Noxious Weeds/Snowgroomers Director Nick Snyder had asked to reallocate some "B" (Operations) budget expenses, which would actually result in a net decrease to his FY24 request. This request received general approval.

Continuation of FY24 Budget Brief "A" Budget –Personnel Expenses

Ms. Falcon asked whether Commissioner Mattare had been able to work with Assessor Bela Kovacs on his personnel requests.

Commissioner Mattare said they were still trying to meet, so those requests would need to remain on hold for now.

It was generally agreed that the requests for three Patrol Officers for Hayden would also remain on hold, pending information on funding from the City of Hayden.

Ms. Falcon asked if any conclusions had been reached regarding on-call pay for various departments.

Chair Duncan explained that the Coroner's Office, due to its particular circumstances, would receive part of its funding request in the overtime account and part would be allotted to on-call pay. She indicated that this would be similar to the treatment provided to the Prosecutor's Office.

Mr. Callahan exited the meeting at 2:38 p.m.

There followed substantial discussion regarding the requests for the Coroner's Office for on call and overtime pay, plus their staffing needs. Chair Duncan suggested that Coroner

Duke Johnson, M.D.'s request for an additional position be added to the Budget now and funded at 50%.

Mr. Callahan returned to the meeting at 2:43 p.m.

Community Development Administrative Manager Reba Grytness exited the meeting at 2:44 p.m.

Chair Duncan suggestion for the Coroner's Office was generally approved. She also proposed that the Prosecutor's Office be granted their request for on-call pay, based on their circumstances. She indicated that she was not in support of the request for on-call pay for Detectives and provided her reasoning for that.

Dr. Johnson and Chief Deputy Coroner Lynette Acebedo exited the meeting at 2:46 p.m.

Undersheriff Nelson expressed his position regarding in favor of on-call pay for Detectives.

Sheriff Norris stated that, if the Board did not approve on-call pay for Detectives, they would be going against every other agency in the Pacific Northwest.

Commissioner Brooks indicated that he felt the restrictions placed on Detectives' activities while on-call were sufficient reason to allow the extra pay.

Commissioner Mattare said he would like to review more information before making a final decision.

It was generally agreed that these items would be left in the Budget for the time being and considered further.

It was generally agreed that the request for a re-grade of the Maintenance position previously requested would remain in the Budget, while re-grading of positions requested by the Resource Management Office (RMO) and the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) would not be decided until additional clarification regarding the grants process was received.

Chair Duncan speculated that all the required information might not be received in time for the planned June 27, 2023 meeting.

Ms. Falcon said she would be able to provide the Board with updated financial calculations by that date. She added that she would have information related to the Matrix Steps for the 26 KCSO personnel who would be eligible on their anniversary dates. She confirmed that she would also include any changes in revenue for Community Development, if their proposed fee changes were approved.

Adult Misdemeanor Probation (AMP) Director Keith Hutcheson and Captain Hyle provided additional information regarding the request for a new Jail Transport Van.

Captain Hyle reported that there was a 50 month buildout delay, so if the van were ordered now, only a partial payment would need to be made in FY24 and the rest could be put on the next year's Budget.

The Commissioners indicated they were willing to consider this.

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): Chair Duncan adjourned the meeting at 3:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JENNIFER LOCKE, CLERK

BOCC SIGNATURE

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk