

MALHEUR COUNTY BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
April 20-21, 2021

The Malheur County Budget Committee convened on April 20, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. in the County Court Office of the Malheur County Courthouse to consider the 2021/2022 budget with Judge Dan Joyce and Commissioner Don Hodge present; Budget Committee Members Ron Haidle, Rod Price, and Bob Skinner present; and Commissioner Ron Jacobs present electronically. Also present was Budget Officer Lorinda DuBois. Those persons discussing the budget with the Budget Committee were present electronically or telephonically as were members of the media and public. Notice of the meeting was published in the Argus Observer and on the County website and emailed to the Argus Observer, Malheur Enterprise, and those persons who have requested notice. The meeting was audio recorded. The agenda is recorded as instrument #2021-1857

BUDGET MESSAGE & APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Judge Joyce: We appreciate all of the volunteers for the Budget Committee; we have Bob Skinner, Ron Haidle and Rod Price; and Ron Jacobs on the phone and Don Hodge and myself here with Lorinda who is our Budget Officer and thanks to her for making this work for us.

By consensus Ron Haidle was appointed Chair.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Health Department Director Sarah Poe discussed Pages 27-28 – Health Department; and Page 29 – Medical Investigation. The Health Department serves thousands of people who reside in Malheur county; the Health Department provides services in 17 programs including: WIC (Women, Infant and Children), Vital Statistics, Tobacco Prevention and Education, Sexually Transmitted Disease, Preparedness Planning, Peer Support Services, Oregon Health Plan Application Assistance, Maternal and Child Health, Immunizations, Health Promotion and Prevention, Family Planning, Chronic Disease Prevention, and Communicable Disease – which includes COVID-19. Ms. DuBois explained that in the proposed budget the hours for the Nurse Practitioner were increased from 390 a year to a not to exceed amount of 595; 1.5 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) contract Office Assistant II COVID-19 positions; a Health Promotions Supervisor position that will oversee the Opioid Peers grant; and an Account Specialist Accreditation position which will be a limited term position to complete the accreditation process. Ms. Poe provided a brief update on COVID-19 vaccination efforts and answered questions from the budget committee members.

Page 29 – Medical Investigation – it is difficult to estimate how many autopsies and deputy investigations may be needed in the fiscal year; the medical examiner orders the autopsies.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Building Official Adele Schaffeld discussed Pages 73-74 – Building Department and answered questions from the budget committee members. The building program is a State program administered by the County; and is a special fund that operates solely from revenue received from permit fees that cover the cost of service. State statute requires the program's budget to have a Contingency fund; and the work Ms. Schaffeld performs under a contract with Baker County for

commercial plan reviews is contributing to the Contingency fund. The Building Department provides plan reviews and inspections for all of Malheur county, except for the City of Ontario (Ontario provides their own building and mechanical permits; the County provides electrical and plumbing inspections). All inspections are performed five days a week, except for commercial plumbing. A new position, Permit Clerk, will be added this next fiscal year.

SNAKE RIVER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE (SREDA)

SREDA Executive Director Kit Kamo discussed a request for funding support from the lottery dollars the County receives for economic development uses; \$5,000 was requested. SREDA is a non-profit, investor supported organization dedicated to diversifying the economy by attracting new investment and jobs; it is a public-private partnership that covers three counties in two states. See instrument # 2021-1858 for the written request and other documents.

ONTARIO COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Ontario Community Library Director Darlyne Johnson discussed Page 33 – Ontario Community Library. The library is requesting funding for Bookmobile services outside the District’s boundaries in the amount of \$6,000. The funds are transferred from the Economic Development budget to the Library budget.

COURT SECURITY; DRUG COURT; MEDIATION

Trial Court Administrator Marilee Aldred discussed Page 60 – Court Facilities Security; Page 61 – State Drug Court Fund; and Page 62 – State Mediation Fund. These are special fund budgets and can only be used for specific uses designated for the fund.

JUVENILE DEPARTMENT

Juvenile Department Director Susan Gregory discussed Page 15 – Juvenile Department; Page 57 – Juvenile Crime Prevention; and Page 71 – MS (Measure) 11 Detention Fund; and answered questions from the budget committee members. There is currently a bill under consideration in the legislature that would eliminate juveniles being responsible for paying supervision fees, detention, etc. (SB (Senate Bill) 817). The Juvenile Community Service Coordinator/Tracker position is vacant – four different attempts have been made to fill the position. Ms. Gregory expressed concern about the proposed funding in the Work Crew Expenses line-item; she had requested \$6,000 and the proposed amount is \$3,000. Ms. Gregory also noted an issue she is working on concerning the senior counselor not receiving on-call differential.

The Juvenile Crime Prevention (JCP) plan was submitted the end of March; notification of grant awards should be made in June. Due to the situation with COVID, our youth have become pretty disconnected in regards to education and a lot are failing classes; proposed efforts to help these youth include learning pods.

The court process is slow and youth in detention facilities can be there for a long time.

VETERANS SERVICE

Veterans Service Officer Connie Tanaka discussed Page 31 – Veterans Service; and Page 65 – CVSO (County Veterans Service Officer) Expansion Fund. Mr. Tanaka provides assistance to veterans and family members applying for federal, state and local benefits that they may be eligible for such as service connected disability claims, veteran and survivor pensions, burial benefits, applications for VA health benefits, education benefits, and property tax exemptions. Funding is a combination of County and State.

PREDATORY ANIMAL CONTROL

USDA APHIS (United States Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services)/Wildlife Services District Supervisor Shane Koyle and Wildlife Specialist Scott Phillips discussed Page 20 – Non-Program, Line Item 5-20-8020 Predatory Animal Control and answered questions from the budget committee members; public members Tom McElroy participated in the discussion. Wildlife Services is requesting \$84,500 for the wildlife services program. Mr. Phillips explained that a lot of bird work has been done and he has signed up quite a few new co-operators.

The meeting recessed for lunch.

The budget meeting resumed after lunch.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Environmental Health Director Craig Geddes discussed Page 18 – Solid Waste; and Page 30 – Environmental Health; and answered questions from the budget committee members. Solid waste is for Lytle Boulevard Landfill. A commercial hauler from Idaho (Fox Sanitation) is under new ownership and no longer uses the landfill – this is about a \$50,000 revenue loss. Malheur county 2021 restaurant licensing fees will be refunded using CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security) monies the County received.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Planner Eric Evans discussed Page 17 – Planning/Zoning. Mr. Evans explained that when he started his position as Planning Director the Court expected him to reorganize and optimize the positions within the department. As part of fulfilling this expectation, Mr. Evans would like to reclassify the Management Assistant position to a Planning Manager and reinstate the Clerk position. The Contract Services line-item is for work being performed as a result of obtaining a grant from the Eastern Oregon Border Board.

45TH PARALLEL FUND

Page 72 – 45th Parallel Fund was reviewed; funds can only be expended upon the agreement of the District Attorney and County Court.

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION FUND (STF)

Page 56 – Special Transportation Fund was reviewed. Revenue is ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation) grant funds for transportation purposes and the County subcontracts with Malheur

Council on Aging (MCOA) to provide the services. The “5311 Match” for Snake River Transit is in this budget.

The County budget meeting was closed and the ASD (Ambulance Service District) budget meeting was opened.

AMBULANCE SERVICE DISTRICT (ASD)

ASD Director Bob Dickinson presented the ASD Budget Message; notice of the budget meeting was published in the Argus Observer. ASD Budget Message: *I am pleased to send you the proposed budget for FY (Fiscal Year) 2021-2022. The Ambulance Service District has been in operation now for 31 years. With over \$3.5 million distributed during that period to help fund our providers. Our members are the foundation of our organization, and we are committed to our mission. We recognize and accept the responsibility as public servants extended to us as we serve others. We value the input of all members and rely on their creativity to move this District forward. This job brings with it many responsibilities. Our focus of dedication is resourceful and fiscally responsible. We strive for clinical and operational excellence while keeping outstanding customer service.*

During my budget message last year, I briefly touched on some of the challenges we faced with the Covid-19 pandemic. I nor anyone of my colleagues could have imagined what lay ahead. I am proud to say that I am part of the Malheur County ICS (Incident Command System) Team, a fantastic bunch of Department Heads that came together to focus on a plan for our County to develop a strategy for this worldwide pandemic beyond our traditional roles and responsibilities. I have spent over 150 hours helping with Covid testing sites and over 160 hours as a vaccinator at our various vaccine pods. To this day, I have given over 1650 vaccinations. Countless hours of online meetings, we are developing a strategic approach to testing and vaccinating our Health care professionals, our elderly, our teachers, and our citizens. This teamwork has saved hundreds if not thousands of lives in our County because of our efforts. We are certainly not out of the woods. We need to continue to test, educate and vaccinate.

The Ambulance Service District remains focused on streamlining our operations and being as efficient as possible. We continue to explore alternative sources of revenue generation. Our partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions help us achieve common goals that benefit the entire County. The ASD board's decision-making guides our value of stewardship which requires us to think of future needs as we make choices today. We work within the framework of organizational excellence which, stresses high performance, measurable results, and supplying an outstanding value of our taxpayers' investment. We are appearing as a flexible, forward-looking County capable of meeting challenges and seizing future opportunities.

I am currently serving as Vice-chair of the Malheur County Mental Health, Local Alcohol and Drug Development Disabilities Advisory Committee and appointed by Sen. Findley to the Oregon State Ambulance Association Rural Medicine committee. I also celebrate my 20th year on the TVCC (Treasure Valley Community College) EMS (Emergency Medical Services) Advisory Board.

I want to thank you all for your service to the County and for trusting in me. I am eternally grateful to work with a group of professionals unselfishly giving their heart and soul to help protect and serve others.

Mr. Dickinson reviewed the ASD budget and answered questions. \$16.00 per household is collected to support the Ambulance Service District; this rate has been in place since 1998 and there are discussions about possibly seeking a rate increase.

The ASD budget meeting was closed and the County budget meeting was reopened.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Road Supervisor Dave Tiffany discussed Page 32 – Marine & Park; Pages 39-41 – Road Fund; Page 42 – Major Bridge Fund; Page 43 – Road Equipment Fund; and Page 44 – Road Improvement Fund.

Page 32 – Marine & Park. The boat dock at Bully Creek was recently damaged; parts are on order and an insurance claim will be pursued.

Pages 39-41 – Road Fund. There may be a small decrease in the State Highway Gas Apportionment revenue. The rent revenue from the home at the Brogan property is down; the roof was repaired after it was damaged by high winds but probably should be replaced. It was discussed if additional funds should be allocated to the Asphalt Oil line; Mr. Tiffany determined the amount allocated would probably be sufficient. The Weed Control line-item was increased \$5,000 to cover the increased cost of herbicides.

Page 42 – Major Bridge Fund. A portion of the State Highway Gas Apportionment is transferred to this fund each year.

Page 43 – Road Equipment Fund. \$100,000 from the Road Fund was transferred to the Road Equipment Fund.

Page 44 – Road Improvement Fund.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff Brian Wolf discussed Pages 21-22 – Sheriff; Pages 23-24 – Jail; Page 25 – MCSO (Malheur County Sherriffs Office) Communication Center; Page 26 – Emergency Management; Pages 46-47 – Community Corrections; Page 49 – Boat License Fund; Page 50 – Corrections Assessment; Page 53 – Task Force Fund; Page 58 – 911 fund; Page 59 – Traffic Safety Fund; Page 66 – Search and Rescue Fund; Page 70 – Federal Forfeiture Fund; and Page 76 – Work Release Construction Fund. Also present were Undersheriff Travis Johnson, Lieutenant Rachel Reyna, Lieutenant Rich Harriman, and Lieutenant Jim St. Michell.

Pages 21-22 – Sheriff. The Small Equipment includes funding for body cameras and tasers (the tasers are a five-year contract). The Capital Outlay request includes funding for 4 vehicles and equipment, 2 vehicle cameras, and an ID card machine; the proposed budget includes funding for 3 vehicles and equipment, 3 vehicle cameras, and a card machine.

Pages 23-34 – Jail. The jail houses up to 104 individuals; numbers have been in the forties this year due to COVID restrictions. Small Equipment includes funding for body cameras and facility cameras.

The proposed budget includes funding for a Courthouse Security Corrections Officer (new position); Ms. DuBois explained that discussions regarding the need for this position began a year ago; since that time the front doors of the courthouse have been remodeled and now provide for one-way entrance/one-way exit. Discussions last year were to have the position be a certified corrections officer position (same as used for the Court Security position in State Courts) who would work security at the entrance of the courthouse; and could backfill in the jail if needed. Sheriff Wolfe explained that the position would not solely man the entrance of the courthouse, rather they would work security mainly on the first floor of the courthouse, and provide backup coverage in the jail if needed (their primary responsibility would be courthouse security).

Page 25 – MCSO Communication Center. The center provides dispatch services for 18 entities.

Page 26 – Emergency Management. The majority of this revenue is from state funding and funds 85% of the Emergency Manager position.

Commissioner Jacobs left the meeting.

Pages 46-47 – Community Corrections. State funding is for the County to provide supervision services to individuals on parole or probation.

Page 49 – Boat License Fund. The majority of the revenue is from the Oregon State Marine Board grant.

Page 50 – Corrections Assessment.

Page 53 – Task Force Fund.

Page 58 – 911 Fund. Revenue is from a 911 tax on phones that is distributed to 911 centers.

Page 59 – Traffic Safety Fund.

Page 66 – Search and Rescue Fund. Small amount of funds that the Search & Rescue volunteer members raised in the past.

Page 70 – Federal Forfeiture Fund. Laws have changed and there is not a lot of this type of activity anymore.

Page 76 – Work Release Construction Fund. Funds can only be used on the facility.

Sheriff Wolfe explained the need for construction of a new building that would include an equipment storage facility and an emergency operations center; funds are being saved in the General County Equipment Fund.

WOLF DEPREDATION FUND

Page 69 – Wolf Depredation Fund; this budget is grant funds through the Oregon Department of Agriculture – grant funds were not applied for in the upcoming budget year.

TAYLOR GRAZING FUND

Page 52 – Taylor Grazing Fund was reviewed; funding is used for range improvement projects.

MENTAL HEALTH FUND

Page 63 – Mental Health Fund was reviewed; funds are from the State and passed thru to Lifeways for mental health services and to Valley Family for school based mental health services.

RELOAD/INDUSTRIAL PARK PROJECT

Page 75 – Reload/Industrial Park Project was reviewed; the interest payment of the Special Public Works Fund loan is budgeted in this fund. (The funds are transferred from the Economic Development Fund.)

INSURANCE RESERVE

Page 77 – Insurance Reserve was reviewed.

CAR POOL FUND

Page 78 – Car Pool Fund was reviewed.

GENERAL COUNTY EQUIPMENT FUND

Pages 80-81 – General County Equipment Fund was reviewed.

The meeting recessed for the day.