

MALHEUR COUNTY BUDGET BOARD MEETINGS

April 21 -22, 2020

The Malheur County Budget Board continued its meeting on **April 22, 2020** with Judge Dan Joyce, Commissioner Don Hodge and Commissioner Larry Wilson present; Budget Board Members present were Richard Eiguren, Ron Haidle, and Rod Price; and Budget Officer Lorinda DuBois. Those persons discussing the budget with the Budget Board were present electronically or telephonically as were any members of the media and public.

VETERANS SERVICE

Veterans Service Officer Connie Tanaka discussed Page 31 – Veterans Service; and Page 65 – CVSO (County Veterans Service Officer) Expansion Fund. Approximately \$10,000 is received from the State to help support personnel and office expenses. The CVSO Expansion Fund is funding from Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs and is used to support personal services expenses, advertising, travel, and office supplies. A part-time staff member was hired (0.4 FTE (Full Time Equivalent)).

Page 31 – Veterans Service; and Page 65 – CVSO Expansion Fund were approved.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Road Supervisor Dave Tiffany met with the Budget Board and 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.

A grader needs replaced in Jordan Valley; Commissioner Hodge offered to secure financing for the purchase of a replacement.

Page 32 – Marine & Park. A Small Equipment line-item was added; a new air conditioning unit is needed for the Bully Creek Caretaker's house as well as a printer.

Pages 39-41 – Road Fund. No funding in the BLM (Bureau of Land Management) Co-op Agreement as work will not be performed in those areas this next fiscal year. Motor Fuels/Fluids line-item was increased. It was discussed if an additional fuel storage tank should be purchased. JV (Jordan Valley) Weed Control line-item was also increased; and JV Other Materials was reduced.

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

Page 43 – Road Equipment Fund. Need to purchase a grader for Jordan Valley.

Page 44 – Road Improvement Fund.

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 were approved.

CLERK'S OFFICE

Clerk Gayle Trotter met with the Budget Board and discussed Page 5 – County Clerk; and Page 68 – Clerk Records Fund. There will be two elections in the next fiscal year; the presidential election in November 2020 and the special district election in May 2021. Small Equipment request is for a printer and blinds for the office windows. Permanent records are digitized/archived with funds in the Clerk Records Fund.

Page 5 – County Clerk; and Page 68 – Clerk Records Fund were approved.

RELOAD/INDUSTRIAL PARK PROJECT

Page 77 – Reload/Industrial Park Project was reviewed and approved. The interest payment of the Special Public Works Fund loan is budgeted in this fund. (The funds will be transferred from the Economic Development Fund.)

INSURANCE RESERVE

Page 79 – Insurance Reserve was reviewed and approved.

CAR POOL FUND

Page 80 – Car Pool Fund was reviewed and approved. Vehicles assigned to Juvenile Department and Health Department need to be replaced.

GENERAL COUNTY EQUIPMENT FUND

Pages 82-83 – General County Equipment Fund was reviewed and approved. Funds are being set aside to replace the jail control board and the project should take place in the next fiscal year.

POVERTY TO PROSPERITY (P2P)

Dirk DeBoer requested financial support in the amount of \$10,000 to support the continued efforts of Poverty to Prosperity; this year there were 230 students involved in the P2P programs. Mr. DeBoer also requested \$40,000 be set aside to support a possible study and research effort.

A written request was received from Poverty to Prosperity requesting \$40,000 to support a county-wide COVID-19 recovery response development program/position. Commissioner Wilson noted that the City of Ontario had agreed to contribute \$30,000; Poverty to Prosperity may contribute \$15,000; and the cities of Vale and Nyssa will be asked to contribute. Commissioner Wilson asked that Greg Smith phone into the meeting regarding the request; after discussion with Mr. Smith the Court asked that answers to several questions be sought.

SNAKE RIVER TRANSIT

Malheur Council on Aging (MCOA) Executive Director Sandy Shelton and Transportation Project Manager Brittany White requested funding in the amount of \$15,000 to help support public transportation services. Ms. Shelton gave a brief update of their agency. MCOA is following all recommendations related to the COVID-19 pandemic recommended by the Oregon Health Authority. Buses are sanitized daily from top to bottom. Ceilings, walls, seats, and floors receive a thorough sanitizing with approved agents. Drivers are well trained and equipped to keep themselves and riders safe. A Plexiglas barrier has been installed around the driver in one vehicle, similar to those on commercial buses, in order to transport symptomatic people when and if

needed. Bus stops are also sanitized daily. As ridership decreases flexibility must increase. A free grocery pickup service for Malheur County residents needing assistance is now available; groceries can be ordered from Walmart, Albertsons or Red Apple and MCOA will deliver to their home. A delivery was made in Brogan last week to an 83-year-old gentleman. These are difficult times and MCOA is meeting the needs of County residents in a number of ways.

Ms. White reviewed the transportation services offered through MCOA. SRT-Malheur Express currently provides accessible transportation services such as fixed route services around the city of Ontario; paratransit services for those who are unable to utilize a fixed route system; commuter route services to the outlying areas of Vale and Nyssa; general public door to door services; non-emergent medical transportation services; and veteran medical transportation services. The funding requested is used as match funds for transportation grants; it is anticipated that approximately \$1.3 million in formula and discretionary grant funding will be generated for the 2019-2020 fiscal year which flows back into the local economy. MCOA is currently the only general public transit service operating and servicing Malheur County. Individuals use the services to get to work, the store, medical appointments, supportive services, loved ones and so much more. Without local support and funding MCOA could not provide these services. These services not only support the general public, but also the low-income, elderly and disabled populations. MCOA uses funds to provide voucher programs to Lifeways and EOCIL (Eastern Oregon Center Independent Living) and connects individuals to DHS (Department Human Services) resources to provide needed transportation services. This current year 23,745 individuals have been transported and of those riders 15,436 were senior or disabled; these individuals would not have been able to access needed services without these transportation services. Malheur County recently received the formula award for the Statewide Transportation Improvement Funds (STIF); this funding helps with improved and expanded services; however, the funding cannot be used to supplant funds used to maintain current services. Ms. White expressed appreciation for the support the County provides for the benefit of public transportation services.

ONTARIO COMMUNITY LIBRARY

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

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Health Department Director Sarah Poe discussed Pages 27-28 – Health Department; and Page 29 – Medical Investigation. The Healthy Start program and budget ended September 2019 (Page 64 – Healthy Start). Home visits through the Healthy Families program are now done through the Babies First program. In the last year, over \$485,000 of competitive funding has been awarded; these funds are split over the current and next fiscal years. The department is committed to securing new funding for additional revenue. A large grant for an Opioid Peer Project was received; funding will be for the current fiscal year and the 2020/21 fiscal year. Funds for COVID-19 response were received recently and another allocation of funding is expected. It is hoped that the Family Connects program will start July 2020; to qualify for this home visiting program you must live in Malheur County and have a new baby; the reimbursement rate for these visits has increased with this new program. A crucial need for two Office Managers has been identified; it is proposed to

reclassify one Accounting Specialist to an Office Manager and hire a grant funded Clinic Manager for one year; these changes will improve quality assurance, procedural flow and efficiency. It was also requested to hire a second Nurse Practitioner for one day a week to increase the availability of provider-level services; this will also allow for the establishment of more patients and to bill at a higher rate for visits. (This request is not in the proposed budget.) The Capital Outlay request is for repair of a portion of the sidewalk in front of the Health Department building. (This request is not in the proposed budget.)

Judge Joyce requested Ms. Poe speak to the current COVID-19 pandemic. Malheur County currently has five (5) positive cases; neither Harney County nor Malheur County has done a ton of testing; and Harney County is much more isolated than Malheur County. Ms. Poe explained she would be in support of trying to reopen a little sooner than the State if it was truly shown that new positive cases were not coming in and testing capacity was increasing.

PREDATORY ANIMAL CONTROL

USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) APHIS (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services)/Wildlife Services Acting District Supervisor Brian Thomas and Wildlife Specialist Scott Phillips discussed Page 20 – line-item 5-20-8020 Predatory Animal Control; public member Tom McElroy also participated in the discussion. Wildlife Services is requesting \$68,488.50 for the wildlife services program. The County budget for Predatory Animal Control also includes the County’s landowner match helicopter fly program/cost share program and Mr. McElroy requested that an additional \$5,000 be added to the program; he also requested an additional \$5,000 for the current fiscal year. Mr. Phillips noted he was notified only one time that a landowner needed assistance and inquired who and where the assistance was provided through the fly program. Mr. Thomas explained that Wildlife Services’ airplane should be available soon and \$3,800 will be available for its airtime in Malheur County (the plane is based in La Grande.) See instrument [#2020-1446](#)

The meeting recessed for lunch.

Budget meetings resumed after lunch.

ONTARIO JUSTICE COURT

Judge Mahoney discussed Page 13 – Ontario Justice Court and requested a \$50,000 reduction in the Justice Court Fines line-item.

Page 13 – Ontario Justice Court was approved with the revenue reduction requested.

WEED DEPARTMENT

Weed Inspector Gary Page discussed Page 36 – Weed Control. The BLM (Bureau of Land Management) grant agreement is on a reimbursement basis; efforts are made to treat public ground that is adjacent to private ground. Taylor Grazing consistently contributes funding to the Weed Department for range and weed control projects. The Capital Outlay request was for a Kubota RTV-900; the request is not in the proposed budget; however, BLM has now offered to pay half the cost of the Kubota.

Page 36 – Weed Control was approved with \$7,600 added to the Capital Outlay line-item to be used towards the purchase of a Kubota RTV-900.

TREASURER/TAX OFFICE

Treasurer/Tax Collector Jennifer Forsyth discussed Page 8 – County Treasurer/Tax. Small Equipment request is for a tax statement printer and a cash counter/authenticator.

Page 8 – County Treasurer/Tax was approved.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff Brian Wolf discussed Pages 21-22 – Sheriff; Pages 23-24 – Jail; Page 25 – MCSO (Malheur County Sheriff's 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 71 – Federal Forfeiture Fund; and Page 78 – Work Release Construction Fund.

Pages 21-22 – Sheriff. New position for a School Resource Deputy with the Vale School District; the school district will fund the position all but the summer months. Investigation Expenses and Crime Prevention line-items were increased \$500; Small Equipment request is for body (deceased) transport equipment for transport to the State Medical Examiner; and for replacement of some body cameras. Capital Outlay request is for three vehicles and cameras; the proposed budget includes two vehicles and cameras.

Pages 23-24 – Jail. Valley Family is now providing jail medical services; Sheriff Wolfe expressed appreciation to Malheur Memorial for their years of providing the service. Small Equipment request is for the purchase of a gun; ballistic vests; and the copier lease. Equipment Reserve Transfer is to build a savings for unexpected facility costs.

Page 25 – MCSO Communication Center. The center provides dispatch services for 17 entities.

Page 26 – Emergency Management. Majority of revenue is from state funding; the Emergency Manager is currently spending many hours on COVID-19.

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. Majority of revenue is from the Marine Board grant; funds a full-time deputy and 5 months of another deputy.

Page 50 – Corrections Assessment. Funds a portion of the Program Coordinator position.

Page 53 – Task Force Fund.

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

Page 59 – Traffic Safety Fund. The local traffic safety commission is actively meeting again.

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

Page 71 – Federal Forfeiture Fund. Seizure laws have changed and there is not a lot of this type of activity anymore.

Page 78 – Work Release Construction Fund. Funds can only be used on the facility.

Pages 23-24 – Jail; Page 25 – MCSO 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 71 – Federal Forfeiture Fund; and Page 78 – Work Release Construction Fund were approved.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Consensus was to increase the DA Supplement to \$10,000 as reflected in the proposed budget.

Pages 9-10 District Attorney; Page 11 – VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) Grant/DA (District Attorney); Page 12 – CAMI (Child Abuse Multi-Disciplinary Intervention) Grant/DA; Page 14 – CFA/DA; and Page 51 – DA Enforcement were approved.

JUVENILE DEPARTMENT

Consensus was to approve the Juvenile Department budget as proposed; the request for an existing staff member to be made a senior counselor was not approved.

Page 15 – Juvenile Department; Page 57 – Juvenile Crime Prevention; and Page 72 – MS 11 Detention Fund were approved.

COMMUNITY IN ACTION

\$1500 was approved for Community in Action for homeless services; Commissioner Hodge noted he is on their Board and abstained from the discussion.

SREDA (Snake River Economic Development Alliance)

\$1000 was approved for SREDA.

POVERTY TO PROSPERITY (P2P)

\$10,000 was approved for Poverty to Prosperity as requested.

COUNTY FAIR

No additional funding was allocated to the Fair Fund. The insurance proceeds line-item was adjusted as requested; and the repairs/maintenance line-item was reduced \$10,000 and that \$10,000 was allocated into the various expense line-items as was requested.

Pages 54-55 – County Fair Fund were approved.

The County budget meeting was closed and the ASD session 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 submit to you the proposed budget for FY 2020-2021. I am excited to report that we are celebrating 30 years as an Ambulance District, and I have been blessed to be the Director for the last 20 of those years. As I sat in preparation for this budget message I thought about how far we have come in Emergency Medicine. Stagnation is the opposite of innovation. Keeping things, the same or the idea of “if it isn’t broke don’t fix it” leads to crumbling systems that don’t serve anyone in the community. A lack of innovation affects public and private system’s alike. It is seen in outdated equipment, poor management techniques, and field providers that long for the “good ole days”. Frankly, our industry is mired in traditional practices. It’s time to move on.*

Who would have guessed that our world would be in a virtual lockdown? Unlike any of has ever experienced, and hopefully will never experience again. Malheur County EMS remains strong in readiness and response preparedness to COVID-19. We continue to address information sharing and coordination internally and with partner first responders. Information and guidance on COVID-19 continues to grow and change as more is learned. Our Medical Director Dr. Brian Kitamura is working with other physicians locally and across Oregon and Idaho to learn from what is being seen, and what measures we need to develop and adopt here should we see growth in our exposure. So far very few of our staff has been “exposed” to COVID-19, due to readiness and appropriate use of personal protective equipment on COVID-19 calls. Continuous monitoring of the current COVID-19 situation is showing some positive trends, but the threat of increase and additional “waves” loom, and are taken into consideration for our continued preparedness and response. I’ve trained my entire career to prepare for and handle emergencies. But I can’t see the enemy on this one to worry about my people. I worry about it constantly. One of the biggest adjustments to all of this is the mental strain it has on our EMS (Emergency Medical Services) personnel. After 30 plus years as a Paramedic, this has been one of the hardest things to deal with. To help with this, I have secured several mental health counselors to assist our EMS personnel should they need someone to talk too, not only during this crisis, but after any traumatic event.

I have sent several directives to dispatch in the past several weeks as new information surfaces about the Virus. Dispatchers screen calls in advance so that we can use the equipment we have more strategically. When we first encountered the news of this virus, I gambled on a hunch, and started shopping for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Dr. Kitamura, Lt. Rich Harriman and I discussed the possibilities of a depleted supply of Personal Protective Equipment nationwide if this should get worse. The gamble paid off. I started receiving supplies, gloves, masks, gowns, safety glasses etc., I am pleased to say we are in a really good position, to keep our providers safe.

Treasure Valley Paramedics has had contact with several COVID -19 patients, and thus have designated one ambulance as a COVID-19 transport vehicle. Our staff are using surgical face masks on every call, as well as placing a surgical mask on the patient, regardless of potential of COVID-19. This is to provide a higher level of safety for our staff, to better ensure continued EMS response to our community. Malheur County EMS is learning many things from our response, and

identifying gaps in preparation to COVID-19. To which we are planning for better routine practices beyond this pandemic as budget and grant opportunities allow.

In our County most, agencies are supported entirely via reimbursements from Medicaid, Medicare, and private insurers. The problem is that reimbursements represent a fraction of the actual costs. A majority of Insurers, meanwhile send the checks directly to patients who often fail to pass them along.

Compounding the financial strain are long-standing recruitment and retention issues. I predict these problems will worsen as the pandemic reaches rural EMS agencies. But as a whole the ASD is financially sound. We have been good stewards of the taxpayer's money and the PPE's that we have purchased will have little if any impact on our current budget.

I believe that we will have to hunker down this next year and that our revenue will certainly be affected, but it is my belief that this budget allows us to continue to deliver outstanding medical services to our citizens in a fiscally conservative and prudent manner. It's a pleasure serving you!!

Mr. Dickinson reviewed the ASD budget and answered questions.

The Budget Board approved the Ambulance Service District budget.

The ASD session was closed and the County Budget meeting was reopened.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Consensus was not to approve the request to add another 1 day a week Nurse Practitioner; and not to approve the request for \$25,000 for repair of the sidewalk.

Pages 27-28 – Health Department; and Page 29 – Medical Investigation were approved.

PREDATORY ANIMAL CONTROL

Consensus was to allocate an additional \$5,000 to the County's landowner match helicopter fly program/cost share program as requested by Mr. McElroy.

SURVEYOR/ENGINEER

Surveyor/Engineer Tom Edwards reviewed Page 37 – County Surveyor; and Page 45 – Surveyor Corner Preservation Fund. No changes from last year's budget in the County Surveyor budget.

Mr. Edwards referred to ORS 203.148(1): *The county governing body may establish by ordinance a fund to be known as the Public Land Corner Preservation Fund. Moneys in the Public Land Corner Preservation Fund shall be used only to pay expenses incurred and authorized by the county surveyor in the establishment, reestablishment and maintenance of corners of government surveys under ORS 209.070.* Mr. Edwards explained that the County established this fund many years ago and emphasized the maintenance portion of the statute. Mr. Edwards requested that the Contracted Work line-item be increased from \$2,000 to \$12,000. Mr. Edwards said he will be meeting with private surveyors and discuss what will be the best bang for their buck on what should be monumented, re-monumented or maybe receive some maintenance. Mr. Edwards also

explained that he has been trying to build this fund in order to hire someone seasonally to do additional work.

Public member Lance King from CK3 explained that a proposed policy on the usage of the corner preservation fund was submitted to County staff and inquired if it had been considered. Staff explained that the Court had not reviewed/discussed that proposed policy yet and that it would be a topic for a future County Court meeting rather than the budget meeting; changes could be made to the budget before its adoption in June if needed.

Public member Dan Cummings thanked Mr. Edwards for putting more funds in the Contracted Work line-item and for his willingness to meet with the surveyors to review/update the corner preservation fund policy.

Page 37 – County Surveyor; and Page 45 – Surveyor Corner Preservation Fund were approved with the \$10,000 increase to the Contracted Work line-item.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Consensus was to approve the purchase of two vehicles with cameras not three as requested; and Pages 21-22 – Sheriff was approved.

NON-PROGRAM

Page 20 – Non-Program was reviewed and approved; this budget includes \$1,500 in the Aid to Indigent line-item for Community in Action's request to support homeless services; an additional \$5,000 to the Predatory Animal Control line-item; and the Dog Control line-item includes Ani-Care Animal Shelter's funding request to continue their contract for the next fiscal year.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND

Page 38 – Economic Development Fund was reviewed and approved. A new line-item for Public/Media Relations was added; this would be for professional contracted services on an as needed basis. The transfers in this budget were reviewed – County Fair, Extension Service, Special Transportation Fund, Bookmobile, Reload/Industrial Park Project. The Technical Assistance line-item includes funds for SWCD (Soil & Water Conservation District), SREDA, and P2P.

TAYLOR GRAZING FUND

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

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION FUND (STF)

Page 56 – Special Transportation Fund was reviewed and approved. Revenue is ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation) grant funds for transportation purposes and the County subcontract with MCOA to provide the services. The "5311 Match" for Snake River Transit is in this budget.

GENERAL COUNTY CONTINGENCY

Page 19 – General County Contingency was approved at the amount calculated by Ms. DuBois after all agreed upon changes were made to the budget. Agreed upon changes can be found on instrument #[2020-1459](#)

APPROVALS

Mr. Eiguren moved to approve the budget for the Malheur County Ambulance Service District for the 2020-2021 fiscal year in the amount of \$342,010. Mr. Haidle seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Price moved to approve the budget for the Malheur County Agricultural Educational Extension Service District for the 2020-2021 fiscal year in the amount of \$1,209,334; and moved to approve property taxes for the 2020-2021 fiscal year at the rate of \$0.23 per \$1,000 of assessed value for operating purposes in the District Special Fund. Mr. Eiguren seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Haidle moved to approve the budget for the 2020-2021 fiscal year in the amount of \$33,505,464; and moved to approve property taxes for the 2020-2021 fiscal year at the rate of \$2.5823 per \$1,000 of assessed value for operating purposes in the General Fund. Mr. Eiguren seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned.