

LANE COUNTY BUDGET COMMITTEE – MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, May 16, 2019

5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Harris Hall

Budget Committee Chair Herb Vloedman presided with Budget Committee members present: Commissioners Peter Sorenson, Jay Bozievich, Joe Berney, Heather Buch and Pat Farr; as well as Citizen Committee Members Larry Abel; Budget Committee Vice Chair, Timothy Morris, Dale Stoneburg and Kamala Shugar.

In addition, County Administrator Steve Mokrohisky and Financial Planning Manager Christine Moody were present. Jill Allen and Joseph Szelesta from the Budget Office were also present.

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Herb Vloedman called the meeting to order.

II. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Chair Herb Vloedman opened revisions and recommendations to meeting minutes for May 9 & 14th Budget Committee meetings.

- Herb Vloedman noted a correction to the May 14th minutes in which Kamala Shugar had asked about losses to revenues in the DA's office, not the Sheriff's Office as the minutes suggested. Kamala Shugar concurred that she thought she asked about both, but the answers revolved around the DA's office. Herb Vloedman asked that the minutes be modified.
 - Jay Bozievich makes a motion to approve the minutes for both May 9th and May 14th as amended, Larry Abel seconds the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Herb Vloedman opens the meeting to public comment with a limit of 3 minutes per presenter.

Leslie Rubenstein raised the problematic nature of \$90k for an assistant to the Board of Commissioners in the proposed budget, and recommends apportioning it equally into five parcels of \$18k into discretionary funding for each Commissioner, or, if unused, back into the general fund.

Jennifer Jacobson spoke in support of AOCC membership, and argued that the association has been instrumental in ensuring Lane County received its fair share in timber revenues, and that these revenues support education, and protects 7,000 families with timber jobs.

Michael Atkinson spoke in support of AOCC membership. He mentioned the AOCC gives voice to Lane County in issues related to the management of O&C forest lands, and ensures that Lane County receives its share of federal timber monies that support education, road maintenance and Sheriff patrol.

Chris Cadwell spoke on the history and economic benefits of membership in the AOCC, and mentioned the federal government mistakenly sequestered 6.2% of the related 2018 funding due to O&C Counties and that the AOCC was instrumental in seeing \$779,000 AOCC is being returned to Lane County.

Gail Colberson asked, as a citizen of Lane County and small tree farmer abutting O&C lands, to stay in the Association for O&C Counties, to promote jobs and resilient forests.

Alice Doyle spoke in appreciation of Commissioner Heather Buch's office and requests an increase in her budget for administrative duties.

Pam Driscoll asked to not approve funds for membership in the AOCC, stating that lobbying group to increase logging on public forests, and there's only 10% of the forest left, and that overwhelming majorities support protecting the forest that is left. She further suggests the ~\$107,000 that is saved to be used to bolster the rural sheriff's office patrol units.

Tina Limeman mentions the letter from the Democratic Platform of Lane County that unanimously passed a resolution to urge Lane County to withdraw from the AOCC, and that the budget that association receives goes towards lawsuits defending deforestation of the Cascade Siskiyou. Tina also asks that medical services in the county jail move back to county governance and not let sit with the current private for-profit firm.

Marie Bowers corrected that dues were \$79,440, and something small like Metro Television had a line item of \$102,000. Maria maintained that AOCC simply wants the federal government to follow the law, and supports education.

Cooper Otte asked at least for the Board to consider cutting the litigation line item for the Cascade Siskiyou lawsuits.

Tiffany Munroe, farmer from Junction City, asks that Lane County stay within the Association of O&C counties, and O&C requirements and acts set boundaries to O&C environmental action. She reiterated the support that AOCC taxed revenue gives to the rural school system.

Herb Vloedman closed the Public Comment section.

III. BUDGET RECAP

Preliminary comments were made from County Administrator Steve Mokrohisky. He presented the following slides and discussions:

- Where Your Property Tax Dollar Goes
- Lane County Secure Rural Schools History
- County Revenue in Oregon
- Tax and Expenditure Limits by State
- Tax Distortion – Comparing “Values”

The 19-20 Lane County Budget was introduced by County Administrator Steve Mokrohisky. He mentions that despite resource issues out of county control, such as a 93% drop in federal timber revenues since FY 01-02, caps on the tax rate imposed in the 90’s and assessment values that are artificially lower than real market values, for the past 3 years Lane County has produced a structurally balanced budget, with no layoffs, and no reductions of service. These efforts have resulted in an improved bond rating, reduction in debt cost, no increases in medical claims, being named the healthiest public employer in Oregon and the 40th healthiest in the U.S. Additionally, we’ve used \$1MM from a tax settlement with Comcast to fund a Behavioral Crisis Center, expansion of the D2D program, new positions and upgrades to various Parks systems and enhancements to our Emergency Management program.

IV. BUDGET COMMITTEE DISCUSSION / DELIBERATION

Herb Vloedman introduced the deliberation and amendment process.

- Peter Sorenson mentioned Item 7 is related to Item 8 and recommended its removal. Chair Vloedman removed Item 7 from discussion.

Chair Vloedman explained that 4 Board votes would be needed to consider an amendment for deliberation/vote.

Kamala Shugar asked whether amendments can be accepted in the process.

- Chair Vloedman responded that this does occur, and that process allowed discussions that stayed within the relevant scope. If the proposed changes go outside of the amendment’s scope it would need to be considered a new item.

Item 1 from Pat Farr: add \$7,200 to Performance Auditor’s extra help budget and decrease General Fund Reserve to balance.

- Pat Farr gave an overview.
- With 6 votes, the Board moved to discuss.
- Peter Sorenson asked if, with 6 votes, that meant the amendment passes. Chair Vloedman clarified that the votes were to determine whether to discuss the amendment, and does not indicate whether the amendment passes.

The Board decided to limit the list first before opening the amendments for discussion.

Item 2 from Joe Berney: providing additional discretionary budget resources for commissioner's constituent support, cutting proposed budget which allowed for 1.0 FTE for this support by 60%. Commissioner Berney added that this was similar to amendment proposal #8 offered by Heather Buch.

- With 5 votes, the topic was approved to be included in discussion.

Item 3 from Timothy Morris: eliminating the AOCC membership dues, as they do not represent values or income for Lane County. He also mentioned that elimination of the dues payment did not preclude Lane County from access to O&C lands, or being allowed to reinstate our membership to the AOCC in the future.

- Kamala Shugar mentioned legal conflict of interest preventing her from participating in AOCC votes since she is involved with a lawsuit involving the AOCC.
- With two votes the topic was excluded from discussion.

Item 4A and 4B from Jay Bozievich: Due to his involvement with the PSCC, Commissioner Bozievich indicated that he is aware that there will be cuts to PSCC funding that will effect positions in the DA's office. Commissioner Bozievich's proposed remedy would be to reallocate federal forest revenues coming into the road fund to the Sheriff's Office since these funds can be allocated for rural patrol. He then suggested an equal amount of General Fund can be moved from the Sheriff's Office to the DA's Office to fund the positions in jeopardy there. In addition, the General Funds for the position proposed for constituent support for the Board of County Commissioners would also be diverted to the DA's Office. He also added that the draw from the road fund will not effect the amount of reserves currently there. Commissioner Bozievich explained that PSCC funding is based on the population under supervision, and without a fully staffed DA's Office to prosecute, Lane County's population decreases and will significantly effect future PSCC funding.

- Kamala Shugar asked if 4B was a separate or subsidiary proposal and if it stood alone or if they voted on both together. Jay Bozievich explained that it would not make sense to do one without the other. Christine Moody explained that the proposed amendments needed to be broken out by fund, and that 4A describes movements in General Fund, while 4B describes movements in the Road Fund.
- With 6 votes the topic was approved to be included in discussion.

Item 5 from Peter Sorenson asks to supplement the Veterans Service Office since state funding is planned to be reduced. The proposal involves diverting funds currently allocated to AOCC membership.

- With 3 votes, the topic was excluded from discussion.

Item 6 from Peter Sorenson asks to divert the AOCC membership and put funds into CAO contingency budget.

- With 4 votes, the topic was approved to be included in discussion.

Item 7 had previously be removed from discussion.

Item 8 from Heather Buch proposed that excess money from the removal of the 1.0 FTE Commissioner Assistant line item go to Sheriff's Office for rural patrol.

- With 7 votes, the topic was approved to be included in discussion.

Chair Vloedman moved to start with 1, 2, 4a and 4b, 6 & 8. Christine Moody added that the Committee could consider them in whatever order they chose. Chair Vloedman agreed, stating that deliberation item #1 stood alone, they should then move to 4A and 4B, and then on from there.

Chair Vloedman asked Pat Farr for any additional comments regarding Item #1. Christine Moody was asked by Peter Sorenson about the amount of reserves in the general fund. She answered that the policy was 20% (17% for cashflow and 3% for service stabilization) and confirmed that at \$19.7M the suggestion is within policy bounds.

- Commissioners Abel and Morris voiced their approval.
- Pat Farr moved to approve.
- Larry Abel seconded.
- Motion was approved unanimously.

Chair Vloedman asked Jay Bozievich for any additional comments regarding Items #4A and 4B. Commissioner Bozievich added that the reason he proposed using General Funds from the elimination of the 1.0 FTE support position for the BCC was because the estimated road fund revenue was not sufficient to fund the \$363,001 needed in the DA's office.

- Peter Sorenson was asked about this item replacing Item 8 Program Specialist package.
- Kamala Shugar moved to combine Item 4 with Item 8 and eliminate Item 2. Christine Moody asked for clarification as both item #4 and item #8 propose use of the funding from the eliminated 1.0 FTE Program Specialist position. Kamala Shugar responded that the General Fund reserves would be the additional source of funds.
- Buch seconds that motion.
- Larry Abel mentioned that Item #2 and #8 differ in the amounts allocated to the Commissioner's accounts. #2 allocates \$8,000 while #8 allocates \$11,000.
- Jay Bozievich moved to combine with Item 4 with Item 2 and eliminate Item 8, because it requires less impact on General Fund Reserves.
- Kamala Shugar spoke in support towards Item 8 being included because it supports the Sheriff's Office and because the \$11,000 would bring the support for Commissioner's into parity with the amounts earmarked for support to the Performance Auditor.
- Joe Berney clarified the intent behind their requests: public participation that would be aided by constituent support services.
- Larry Abel suggested putting 40k into Sherriff's office rather than general fund.

- Pat Farr mentioned his support either way, but mentioned that the Commissioner's workload is significant.
- Peter Sorenson mentioned his support of the amendment.
- Joe Berney called the question
- Chair Vloedman asked Kamala Shugar to restate the proposed amendments to items 4A, 4B and 8. She restated that General Fund Reserve would provide the funding needed to fully fund the DA's Office needs that the road fund did not.
- Peter Sorenson asked for clarification about the amount needed from General Fund Reserves, and Jay Bozievich replied the amount was \$94,978.
- Chair Vloedman asked that the Committee check with Christine Moody as to whether the amendment as proposed was 'within the realm of possibility.'
- Steve Mokrohisky asked for clarification as to whether this amendment provided \$40k support to the Sheriff's Office. Pat Farr clarified that it would.
- With 6 votes, the amendment proposed by Kamala Shugar passed.
- The proposal as amendment was discussed.
- Joe Berney asked whether there was any new information regarding whether the loss of PSCC funding was actual or anticipated. Steve Mokrohisky responded that no new information since the Committee last convened was received, but that the committee should base its decisions on the 'best information available.'
- Jay Bozievich clarified that there is definitive information that at least funding for 1.2FTE in the DA's Office would be cut by the PSCC., and the rest of the loss, while still technically speculative, was in his estimation likely.
- Kamala Shugar asked what would happen if the cuts do not happen as Commissioner Bozievich described; would the DA's office have a 'windfall?' Christine Moody replied that in that case the BCC could make an amendment to correct. Peter Sorenson reiterated that the Board always has the power to amend and make corrections and has 4 supplemental budget opportunities during the year to do so. Jay Bozievich added that in the case that the PSCC budget cuts do not happen, there are shortfalls in Parole and Probation where the funds could be allocated.
- Kamala Shugar voiced her appreciation for Commissioner Bozievich's clarification that the funding, if not cut by the PSCC, would stay within Public Safety.
- Commissioner Sorenson added that this proposal would allow him to do more constituent outreach.
- Timothy Morris added that the job of providing this outreach is a great opportunity for younger workers to gain experience in the public sector.
- Joe Berney called the question. Pat Farr mentioned that it requires a vote to call the question, and he seconded Joe Berney's motion. The motion to call the question passed unanimously.
- The motion to approve the amendment passed unanimously.

Chair Vloedman clarified that Item #8 (included in the passage of Items 4A & 4B) was 'off the table' and Item #2 was made redundant by Commissioner Berney.

Item 6 was re-introduced by Peter Sorenson and made a motion to approve. And Timothy Morris seconded. Chair Vloedman mentioned there was additional discussion.

- Jay Bozievich mentioned his support of AOCC membership and countered with what he perceived as misinformation, and gave context for the lawsuit regarding the Cascade Siskiyou monument.
- Joe Berney stated how the climate change political discussion overwhelms the discussion and mentioned his intention to seek an accountability-based solution.
- Timothy Morris noted the symbolic stance to protect the Cascade Siskiyou and National Forest.
- Chair Herb Vloedman mentioned defunding AOCC would have an impact on future budgets. He further mentioned the fair federal allocations would have to be replaced for rural residents if timber revenues disappears.
- Heather Buch noted her desire for future policy discussion and that it deserves more future community input.
- Item 6 Pat Farr called the question and the motion to vote passed unanimously.
- With 2 votes for passage and one abstention, the motion failed.

The Committee then moved through the motions to establish tax rates and the overall budget.

Peter Sorenson moved to approve Motion 1: Move approval of the FY 2019-2020 Lane County Permanent Tax Rate of \$1.2793 per \$1,000 of Assessed Value

- Larry Abel seconded.
- Motion passed unanimously.

Timothy Morris moved to approve Motion 2: Move approval of the FY 2019-2020 Local Option Tax for Jail & Critical Youth Services in the amount of \$0.55 per \$1,000 Assessed Value with \$0.50 for Jail Services and \$0.05 for Youth Services.

- Heather Buch seconded.
- Motion passed unanimously.

Larry Abel moved to approve Motion 3: Move approval of the FY 2019-2020 Local Option Tax to support 4-H and OSU Extension Programs in Lane County in the amount of \$0.015 per \$1,000 Assessed Value.

- Timothy Morris seconded.
- Jay Bozievich noted he will vote asked OSU to “clean up their house” and that their 4H coordinator had received complaints.
- Pat Farr mentioned his support for the motion but is happy for further discussion.
- Joe Berney noted his support of Pat Farr’s comment.
- Motion passed with one opposed.

Heather Buch moved to approve Motion 4: Move approval to allow the use of transient room tax dollars for operational purposes consistent with Lane Code 4.175(5) & (6) and ORS 320.350 as follows:

- Lane Events Center – \$1,005,526
 - Lane County Parks Division - \$746,805
- Joe Berney seconded.
 - Motion passed unanimously.

Pat Farr moved to approve Motion 5: Move approval of entire FY 2019-2020 budget with all adjustments approved by the Budget Committee.

- Timothy Morris seconded.
- Heather Buch declared a potential conflict of interest with certain items related to the TAC report and Vincent de Paul due to her father being director, but declared her intention to vote.
- Peter Sorenson, Timothy Morris, Kamala Shugar, Jay Bosievich, Larry Abel, Joe Berney, and Chair Herb Vloedman noted the accomplishment of the Lane County Budget preparatory staff and gave gratitude.
- Motion passed unanimously.

Steve Mokrohisky gave a round of applause to budget staff and gave words of gratitude to Christine Moody.

VI. ADJOURN

Chair Herb Vloedman adjourned the meeting.

Note: A webcast (the “official” record of the meeting’s events) is available at:
https://lanecounty.org/how_do_i/view/webcasts