

TERM OF COMMISSION: December Session of the November Adjourned Term

PLACE OF MEETING: Boone County Government Center Commission Chambers

PRESENT WERE: Presiding Commissioner Don Stamper
District I Commissioner Karen M. Miller
District II Commissioner Linda Vogt
Deputy County Clerk Ashley Williams

The regular meeting of the County Commission was called to order at 1:15 p.m.

SUBJECT: Worksession for the 1998 Boone County Proposed Budget

Commissioner Stamper said they did not perceive a tremendous amount of changes in the proposed budget. He said there needed to be a discussion regarding the Circuit Court's automation request, adjusting the level to \$50,000 with the intent of coming back next year.

Auditor June Pitchford said the Circuit Court had made \$70,000 worth of reductions to their original request. She said that while they scaled back part of their computer request, those changes did not account for the full \$70,000.

Commissioner Stamper said his perspective was that the technical request was a Hancock issue, an unfunded mandate that was a responsibility of the state court. He said he wanted to express the Commission's intent to have them refer back to the state. He also said he was concerned with an impending juvenile bill and wondered if the County should extend its exposure any further in court services and the juvenile program. He said that the Commission needed to articulate a statement to the court en banc.

Commissioner Vogt said she agreed that increasing the County's exposure at this time seems unreasonable.

Ms. Pitchford said she did not recall any significant increases in the regular juvenile budget. Although, she said, there was an increased FTE in the grant budgets.

Commissioner Stamper said that his reaction was that they were making themselves vulnerable to House Bill 474. He said they needed to be careful with general revenue dollars going into court services. He argued that money needs to be for stuff, not for personnel. Any new programs, he said, need to go to the state. He said their progressive activity has made the County vulnerable to the entrapment of those funds and that they needed to change their approach to the use of general revenue money.

Ms. Pitchford explained that any item the Commission takes an exception to still has to be decided by the judicial finance review process and the money will be placed in escrow and cannot be spent until a final resolution is made.

Commissioner Stamper said that this year they were talking about information equipment.

Ms. Pitchford asked if they specifically objected on the basis of a Hancock violation or unfunded mandate.

Commissioner Stamper said that they felt it was the state court's responsibility. He said they would be wise to step back and look at House Bill 474 and that it would mean a 35-40% percent increase in budget and would allow the court to hire more positions than the County could house. He said if that was going to be characteristic of the legislation then the Commission needed to take a close look at it.

Ms. Pitchford asked if the Commission would want to engage the court in a discussion of how they would proceed if ongoing maintenance would be required. She asked if a negotiated local County arrangement could be made to restrain the court. Ms. Pitchford said that Mr. Perry had said there was no way the court would use all of the maintenance effort, but reducing the issue to an agreement or rule would take it a bit further.

Commissioner Stamper said that the Circuit Court had not gone to the state to change the legislation.

Commissioner Vogt said she was concerned because no matter what kinds of agreements would be made locally, when the environment changed, the agreements may not be seen as valid and that the law will always stand as the law.

Commissioner Stamper asked Ms. Pitchford to articulate the Commission's reluctance for the data processing equipment and their concern for the future as it relates to maintenance and continuance of effort and to encourage the Circuit Court to engage in a discussion with the Commission on that matter.

Ms. Pitchford said there were rules governing the process of questioned items and asked if the Commission wanted to proceed with filing the necessary documents.

Commissioner Stamper said that yes, if the Circuit Court objects, then they will proceed with the documents.

Commissioner Stamper said there were three or four other areas the Commission needed to schedule for worksessions. They were still interested in the Green Thumb program and said there was an opportunity to take a few part-time positions and put them under the supervision of a Green Thumb type program. He said they were looking for ways to fund the newsletter and that capital construction was another area for an additional dialog. He said the fifth area had to do with the creation of a new position for which they had not identified a target level of funding. He said they were not prepared to take up those discussions today and that the total level of changes were \$120,000 to \$150,000.

Ms. Pitchford said that she had talked to Human Resources Director Mark Stone and felt that it would be beneficial to include him in the discussion regarding the Green Thumb program. She said that he was unfamiliar with the latitude the County would have in recruiting a targeted population.

Commissioner Miller asked about the Recorder's budget and the part-time employee responsible for imaging.

Ms. Pitchford said that the part-time employee may participate in some of the on-going imaging currently done in the office. The scanning of the backlog has been addressed by a part-time employee that Recorder Bettie Johnson hired out of the Record Preservation Fund. The on-going scanning, she said, has been addressed, and the increase of part-time to full-time is in order to keep pace with the regular volume of work. The extra effort towards handling the backlog, she said, comes from the Records Preservation Fund.

Commissioner Miller asked if that was the purpose of the Records Preservation Fund.

Ms. Pitchford said the fund was designed for services, equipment and products necessary to preserve and make available records, above and beyond what is necessary to operate a Recorder's office. She said the fund was borne from problems in other counties who weren't adequately funding the Recorder's office.

Commissioner Miller asked if imaging is above and beyond looking up the paper the County continues to keep.

Ms. Pitchford said that was the question. If, she said, the long term goal is to replace some of the records currently maintained on-site, then she said they were talking about new technology for the same work. Right now, she said, the County is running two parallel systems.

SUBJECT: Facilities and Maintenance 1998 Budget

Ms. Pitchford explained that all departments in the County buy services from Facilities Maintenance. The County assesses a square footage charge to all operating budgets in the County to fund housekeeping and maintenance and charge them a component that goes towards capital

repairs and maintenance. This year, she said, the utility amounts have been broken out so that all user departments are being charged an amount for utilities. That money will be set aside in a utility fund to provide a better mechanism for tracking utilities by building.

Facilities Maintenance Director Chuck Nichols explained the supplemental requests in account 6100 and said that the sidewalks next to the Johnson Building and the courthouse need to be replaced. He said he considered it a safety risk.

Commissioner Miller agreed that new sidewalks were needed. She said she had checked with the city of Columbia on their policy for replacing sidewalks and learned it is the building owner's responsibility to replace sidewalks. She said she didn't think the County had any choice but to take care of the issue.

Mr. Nichols also requested part-time office staff. He said the current staff cannot keep up with all the paperwork and he hoped to hire a part-time person so he could get out and see what was happening with different projects.

Commissioner Miller discussed the possibility of a Green Thumb-type employee in this position and said that in talking with Mr. Nichols they felt their staffing needs might be satisfied with a Green Thumb-type employee.

Commissioner Vogt asked if it was possible that paperwork would get caught up and the part-time pool worker would be free to serve in other parts of the County.

Mr. Nichols said they needed an employee twenty hours a week. He said that he had also asked for a full-time FTE supervisor, but now wanted to modify the request to include a part-time operator to do work on the MKT Trail and a part-time painter. Those requests, he said, were not in the original budget.

Commissioner Miller argued they did not need a supervisor if Mr. Nichols were freed up from office work.

Commissioner Vogt asked if there was someone currently in the department who operates machinery.

Commissioner Miller said that Mr. Nichols did most of that work.

Commissioner Vogt asked if a Green Thumb worker could do that type of work and if it is conceivable that the Green Thumb program could be create a pool of workers who could move to different positions.

Commissioner Stamper said that part of the problem is that the Green Thumb program has not been defined. He said it would not be the answer for every situation, but that there were potential applications that could be made.

Ms. Pitchford said that one of her objectives is to retain the positions budgeted in the appropriate departments. If positions are staffed from a pool, she said, that would be the Human Resource Director's problem. Budgetarily, she said, it is preferable to keep the positions in their respective departments.

Commissioner Vogt said that when the department was originally created to maintain the County-owned buildings and the MKT trail, it was done with the understanding that the department would need to be expanded personnel-wise.

Commissioner Miller requested that Mr. Nichols submit a year-end report that details how many hours facilities maintenance spends in the courthouse, the government center, jail and MKT trail. She said it would be helpful to have that information for decision making purposes.

Mr. Nichols reviewed the budget requests and said he was also requesting concrete sidewalks around the jail on the east side and the front section to the south. He said they have noticed the moisture under the floor is reduced where there are existing sidewalks and he wanted to put walks

around the rest of the building in 1998. He also requested a containment wall for monitoring furniture surplus and a workstation for the support person in the Johnson building.

Commissioner Miller said this was the only office that does not have the proper equipment and that it needed to be brought up to standards. She said they needed to start working to bring the office to the same level as the others.

Mr. Nichols said that the Recorder of Deeds Bettie Johnson had requested that the window in her office be extended so she can see the counter from her desk and that the Sheriff had requested a fence around their dumpster.

Commissioner Stamper asked Mr. Nichols to look into the possibility of privatizing the work needed on the MKT trail, rather than to add an FTE.

Commissioner Miller complimented the staff on their work to the buildings.

Commissioner Stamper noted there was no public comment.

Ms. Pitchford said there were resources available to fund some of the requests in the Facilities Maintenance budget, but they would require a re-evaluation of the square footage budget. She said there was enough of a cushion to fund the scope of changes, but something substantial would need to be done in 1999. This year, she said, she raised it 2-3%.

SUBJECT: Information Services 1998 Budget

Director of Information Services Scott Monnig began the review of the Information Services 1998 Budget with account 1170:

He explained there was revenue created they had not had in the past with the start of the dial up project in September. He said they had budgeted an expected revenue of \$50,000, but that it was still too early to tell if that figure was high or low. Right now the project is still in the pilot phase and as people realize they have to pay for the service, their use might become more efficient.

Class 1, he said, shows an overall decrease of 1%, in spite of COLA and merit increases, a vacant position was not budgeted for in 1998. Class 2 shows no increase. Class 3 decreased 5% due to a reduced amount of travel budgeted for training. Class 4 shows a reduction of 23%, which is misleading he said, because of the change in building costs. Class 5 increased 33% for vehicle expense due to work in the Centralia Clinic and the continued support of substations for the Sheriff's department. Class 6 has decreased 14% because the maintenance costs have gone down. Class 7, he said, remained the same except for a 17% increase in software due to imaging. Class 9 is down 44% from 1997. In 1997 he explained there was a large line item for upgrading the AS/400 and in 1998 the largest line item is \$65,000 for upgrading the personal computers in County government in order to make them capable of running Windows 95. One third of the preliminary budget is to upgrade the imagine system and they are still evaluating that system. He said they wanted an upgrade of printers in the Collector's office. The current printers, he said, pre-date his service and as the tax system has changed it would be good if they could print tax forms on blank paper. He said he had also received a request from the Prosecuting Attorney's office to replace five terminals with PCs. He said there was a request from the Recorder's office for a new printer because they are required to print on more form types than the current printer can handle. In the supplemental requests, he said, he had included an ASCII workstation controller which would enable them to provide 18 simultaneous dial up users. He said they did not need it immediately, but when they started the project, decided to include all the foreseeable costs. He said they were also requesting an internet firewall. Currently, he said, they rent this service from the internet service provider, but they need to bring this capability in-house. Mr. Monnig said it was a necessary piece of hardware and software that will protect the County's system. Also included in supplement requests was \$2,000 for a table top 9-track tape drive for the large AS/400 in the government center. Due to data exchange, he said, they still needed this capability.

Mr. Monnig said that the overall budget request decreased 13%.

He reiterated that the virus/network monitoring software costs were \$10,000. As the County continues to open up and connect networks to external networks and the internet in particular, the exposure, he said, to viruses becomes more real and the need to monitor what's going across the network increases. The programs would run on a PC and continually monitor the system and warn if viruses found their way onto those PCs.

Commissioner Miller asked if the system could monitor access to the internet.

Mr. Monnig said they had not considered that, but it could be considered.

A recurring theme in the IS budget, he said, is a printer for the Treasurer's office. The request has appeared in the budget for the past four years. What they have found is that they have to order pre-printed checks with magnetic ink on the bottom and when the County changes banks, as happened in 1997, leftover blank checks are destroyed. The new printer would allow them to buy blank check stock. Another problem, he explained, is when more than one numbered check gets pulled through the printer and then they have to void 300 payroll checks. He said that may not happen often, but it has happened. He said he had been reminded several times by the Treasurer's office of this request.

Ms. Pitchford said she thought this item had been included in the budget a few years ago and then was pulled at the last minute.

Mr. Monnig said the Treasurer had budgeted for a new printer, but it wasn't this printer.

Ms. Pitchford said she had no opposition to any of the requests, she had just taken Mr. Monnig's groupings and went with his priorities. She said she had also talked to the Treasurer about the printer.

Mr. Monnig explained that a County upgrade to Windows 95 would benefit the users of Boone County and as we continue to have more communication with outside organizations, Windows 95 becomes a more common format. It is a fairly large line item, he said, at \$250 an item for 100 PCs.

Commissioner Miller asked when Mr. Monnig anticipated the upgrade.

Mr. Monnig said the upgrade would take place as soon as possible. He said that it related to other issues, like imaging

Mr. Monnig also discussed a request for SQL, a system for the AS/400 that would benefit the Information Services department internally by allowing them to manipulate data and enhance the ability to program software.

Mr. Monnig reviewed the Geographic Information Systems budget and said it was interesting because its fiscal year does not correspond with the County's fiscal year. After discussions with the Auditor, he said, they decided to budget the second half of the 1997 fiscal year, in addition to the 1998 fiscal year. What we have, he said, is a budget and a half and it explains why the 1998 request is 94% higher than that for 1997. Class 3 was reduced 22% due to a reduction in seminars and conferences; which class 7 increased 78% due to software service costs that will kick in as the warranty on the software wears out. Outside services and professional services also account for most of the budget increase due to the monumentation project that will begin calendar year 1998. Class 9, he said, decreased as the requests for computer hardware went down. The total GIS budget increased 29%, although, he said, it's hard to compare year-to-year. The overall budget request is \$165,000, which includes about one third that will come from the 1997 GIS fiscal year budget. He also explained the County will be reimbursed by the City of Columbia and Boone Electric for a total of \$151,000 in 1998.

Mr. Monnig then reviewed account 1194 Mail Services: He explained that the budget has one change in class 1 from a request initiated by the Sheriff's department for the inclusion of a courier service to be provided between locations in County government. Class 4, he said, was down because of the change in the way the County accounts for building costs and there was no change in the equipment service contract, though software service contract has gone up a small amount.

Class 7, he said, is up 35% due to the changes in building costs and class 8 went from \$26,000 to zero because the mail machine has finally been purchased. Total expenditures for the Mail Services budget, he said, are down 6%.

SUBJECT: Columbia Special Business District

Chairman of the Board for the Columbia Special Business District Bob Roper introduced Jack Waters and the District's Executive Director Judy Hull.

Commissioner Stamper prefaced the discussion by saying they had met with representatives from the Special Business District concerning the loss of revenue when downtown properties are converted from private to public. The District, he explained, has proposed a strategy for making up the revenue shortfall and the County has included \$7,500 in the proposed 1998 budget for that purpose.

Mr. Roper explained that the District's mission is to create a vibrant, healthy, active downtown where the sidewalks aren't folded up at 7 p.m. He said they exist with a special real estate tax that generates \$80,000 to \$90,000 a year. One of their sources of income was lost with a tax change in 1993, resulting in a \$17,000 loss of income. He said they want to ensure they can cover their staffing needs and to retain enough extra revenue to remain successful.

Mr. Waters explained that the District met with County Assessor Tom Schauwecker to help create a list of parcels owned by the three big public entities: the University of Missouri-Columbia, the County of Boone and the City of Columbia. They identified those parcels, identified a square footage and applied an average rate of \$9.49 per square foot to justify their request.

Ms. Hull explained that the District helps with business recruitment and retention so that downtown buildings stay filled. She said that special events, most of which are held in the Courthouse square, are also sponsored by the District. She said they have projects geared towards cleaning up the alleys, getting trash compactors in alleys so that alleys may be used as entranceways. They are also working hand in hand with the Columbia police department to increase downtown security. A major part of their budget, she said, is devoted to holiday lights.

Mr. Roper said that in response to a question from Commissioner Miller, they had checked with churches to make sure they were also being taxed appropriately. He said they called the state tax commission who said that properties not used for standard religious purposes should be taxed at the regular rate. Mr. Roper checked with Mr. Schauwecker who said the churches were all paying their fair share.

The Commissioners then discussed the possibility and costs of lighting the County buildings for the holidays.

Commissioner Stamper thanked the Columbia Special District Representatives for their information and said he did not forecast any changes in their request.

He asked that the record reflect there was no public comment and no public present except for two reports and a set of twins.

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Attest:

Wendy S. Noren
Clerk of the County Commission

Don Stamper
Presiding Commissioner

Karen M. Miller
District I Commissioner

Linda Vogt
District II Commissioner