

Coös County Commissioners  
Budget Session  
Coös County Nursing Hospital - W. Stewartstown  
October 23, 2017

Present: Commissioners Tom Brady, Paul Grenier and Rick Samson; County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Superintendent Ben Champagne; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris.

Commissioner Brady opened the budget work session at 8:30 a.m. and welcomed everyone.

Commissioner Brady explained that the purpose of the work session was to review the nursing hospital budget with the administrator prior to the budget work session on November 1. The review will allow for questions to be answered and changes to be made to the budget. Ms. Mills explained that the majority of the departmental increases were employee related. The estimated health insurance increase budgeted in each department was 25%. County Administrator Jennifer Fish explained that the not to exceed rates will not be available until mid-December.

The totals for each departmental budget was as follows:

- Administration -22,124: One of the noted decreases included that the payroll clerk position has been moved to the county finance department.
- Dietary +70,195: The increases in this department were related to health insurance, salaries and benefits.
- Nursing +232,070: The increases in this department were related to health insurance, salaries and benefits.
- Health Information +6,881: The increases in this department were related to health insurance, salaries and benefits.
- Staff Development +5,000: The increases in this department were related to health insurance, salaries and benefits.
- Quality Management +5,755: The increases in this department were related to health insurance, salaries and benefits.
- Plant Operations -34,965: The decreases included a reduction in the plant manager's salary line item due to last year's resignation and two outside services charges were moved to the housekeeping department.

Commissioner Samson asked what happens to the excess funds in the fuel line item at the end of the year. Ms. Mills replied that it goes to the general fund surplus.

Ms. Mills also noted that the two nursing hospital vehicles are getting old and new vehicle purchases may need to be budgeted in 2019.

- Laundry +6,075: The increase in this department were related to health insurance.
- Housekeeping +71,885: The increases in this department were included an anticipated retirement, one anticipated resignation, health insurance and outside services costs transferred from the plant operations budget.
- Activities +22,268: The greatest increase in this budget was salary related.
- Social Services +4,410: The greatest increase in this budget was salary related.
- Physical Therapy +42,960: The greatest increase was related to health insurance.
- Items requested under Specials totaled \$41,630.

Commissioner Brady asked what the percentage of the budget increase was related to salaries and health insurance. Ms. Mills replied \$396,660 of the \$473,910 increase was related to salaries and health insurance.

Commissioner Brady inquired about the shift differential proposal. Ms. Mills replied that the proposal included a dollar increase for the evening shift and a two dollar increase for the night shift. The additional estimated cost for West Stewartstown totaled \$187,730; Berlin \$131,840; and the Department of Corrections \$50,165. Both, Commissioner Brady and Commissioner Grenier stated that they could not support the shift differential proposal at this time. Commissioner Grenier did add that he would be willing to revisit the proposal in February.

Commissioner Samson thanked the Chair for the meeting. He noted that he got more of this budget review than in the past. The County is facing hard times. Commissioner Brady stated that the County has done well over the years. The citizens of his district voice their concerns over the some of the salaries that are paid.

The Board opted to review the County Administration, Finance and Department of Correction budgets.

- County Administration +13,515: The increases in this department were related to salaries, health insurance and an added charge for a website conversion. Commissioner Brady asked that the Commissioners' Travel and Expense line item be reduced by \$1,000 and the Board agreed.
- County Treasurer +3,000: A travel and expense line item was added to the budget.
- County Finance +29,215: The increases in this department included the payroll clerk position added to this department health insurance and salary related items. Ms. Klebe noted that she was recently informed by Smart links that fees would be increasing. Ms. Klebe also updated the Board in regards to software updates for the payroll and finance departments. BMSI, the

current vendor, will be able to provide what is needed. Commissioner Grenier asked for a list that includes the pricing for each program prior to the final budget.

- Department of Corrections +8,520: Superintendent Champagne noted that most of the increases in the budget were related to salaries and health insurance. There were also increases in medical costs, travel and new equipment.

Superintendent Champagne also noted that he had budget \$20,000 under Corrections Specials for video surveillance. He was awaiting for a quote for a definite figure.

Ms. Fish stated that the former superintendent typically would appropriate funds for anticipated retirements. She suggested that funds be set aside in this budget.

- Recycling Center: Superintendent Champagne reported that even though specialty repairs were done to the truck recently it was towed back to the garage in Manchester last week. There is a factory default on the engine block and repairs are not covered by warranty. He reviewed four options with the Board:
  - A new engine \$20,000;
  - Short block repair \$10,000;
  - Long block repair \$17,000; or
  - Trade the truck.

He noted that the Recycling Center budget meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 27. The above options will be discussed with the member towns of the recycling center.

The Board decided to reschedule the Nursing Home budget session from Tuesday, October 24 to Wednesday, November 1. Other budgets to be reviewed on November 1 will be the Registry of Deeds, County Attorney, Victim/Witness, Sheriff's Department and Cooperative Extension. The Board anticipates approving the proposed budget at the November 8 meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to adjourn the meeting at 10:11 a.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Samson, Clerk