



**SHERMAN COUNTY
BUDGET COMMITTEE
2023 – 2024 MINUTES**

May 10, 2023

Present: Judge Joe Dabulskis, Commissioner Justin Miller, Commissioner Joan Bird; Forest Peters, Jeffery Judah, Stacy Eakin – Budget Committee Members; Debbie Hayden, Budget Officer; Tammi Gaskey, County Court Administrative Assistant.

**May 10, 2023:
Open – 9:00 a.m.**

Budget Message:

Welcome to the budget work sessions for 2023. As always, we appreciate the time and attention you give to this important process. The Court has provided the Budget Officer with some direction in the form of assumptions to build the proposed budget.

Itemized below are some of the notable features of the proposed budget:

- A 4% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)
- Recommended Merit Increases by Department Heads
- Continued Allocation of SIP Funds to Sherman County School District, Local Cities, Resident Incentive Program, Sherman County Museum, Scholarship Committees
- Fiber Project - Phase III (Rufus to Biggs)
- Internet Access Expansion
- Adjustments for Elected Officials (to be Considered by Citizen Members Only)

Additional notes, consensus of County Court to complete compensation study every 7 years. The County will complete a compensation study in 2023 and implement results in 2023/24.

The County is concentrating on completing current projects before we start any new projects. Currently, we have the Biggs Water project, the fairground project, Rufus to Biggs Fiber project, solar trailer project, Cottonwood tower project just to name a few. The fairground project and the Biggs Water project – both multi-million dollar projects should be completed this summer.

SIP payments: \$1.9 million this year (2023/24), \$1.4 million next year (2024/25) and then it will drop down to \$800,000 a year.

Again we wish to express our appreciation to the Budget Officer for her work in preparing this budget document and to the Budget Committee members for your time and attention to this important process.

Sincerely,

Judge Joe Dabulskis

Election of Officers

Motion by Forest Peters, second by Commissioner Bird, to appoint Stacy Eakin as Budget Committee Chair.

Vote: 4-0

Yes: Bird, Miller, Dabulskis, Peters

No: 0

Abstain: 1

Motion by Stacy Eakin, second by Commissioner Miller, to appoint Forest Peters as Budget Committee Secretary.

Vote: 4-0

Yes: Bird, Miller, Dabulskis, Eakin

No: 0

Abstain: 1

Pages 1-2: County General Non-Departmental

The total of the Proposed Budget presented was \$78,871,843.

The Beginning Fund Balance for the County General Fund is estimated to be \$6 million - \$1 million more than last year. The Current Year Taxes are also expected to increase and is proposed at \$4.3 million. Other line items remain relatively consistent with the exception of the payment to North Central Public Health, which added 3% to last year's amount making it \$147,395, and the Sherman County Public Library Grant. Arla Melzer representing the Public Library Board was present to discuss the changes affecting this facility. Even though public library employees were always paid by the Sherman County School District, a new agreement signed during this last fiscal year clarifies that and officially makes them school district employees. Services provided by the library are not expected to change. The initial budget request was for \$107,915. Taking the potential carryover funds into consideration, the proposed amount of \$100,000 was approved.

It was brought to the committee's attention that the area around McDonald's Ferry will become BLM land making it tax exempt. The county will receive 'Payments in Lieu of Taxes - PILT', but not sure when that will start.

Page 3: County General, Assessor

The Assessor's budget showed increases in their travel and training. Debbie Hayden noted that several department budgets have an increase in their training line items for the new employees hired in place of those retiring.

Page 4: County General, County Clerk

Election Board Workers – This line item fluctuates with the election cycle. Every other year it increases to cover the larger costs of the Primary and General Elections.

Page 5: County General, Computer Related Expenses

Forest Peters asked what Caselle was. Debbie stated that Caselle is the company that provides the Financial Software used by the county. The Assessment & Taxation software and the Recording software used by the Clerk's Office are all provided by Helion.

Page 6: County General, County Court

No comments or changes

Page 7: County General, Courthouse

There was a question about the equipment maintenance line item and why the amount doubled. Debbie explained that the county engaged a new contractor that was better qualified to maintain the courthouse's new HVAC system.

Page 8: County General, Justice Court – Shandie Johnson

Shandie explained that her staff includes the JP, Office Manager and a .40FTE Docket Clerk. The Docket Clerk position is down .60FTE from where they were last year. Shandie would like to hire a part-time person for the summer when traffic tickets are expected to increase. This will help her office out immensely with moving cases in a timely manner. Shandie explained that there will also be increases in the line items for travel and education

expenses because the Justice Court staff is going to start attending training, which they have not done much of in the past.

Page 9: County General, Parks

The DeMoss Park Bandstand building has been torn down for safety reasons. Bruce Olsen, who is now handling grounds maintenance under the Weed District is planning to build a gazebo or something else in the fall to replace it. In the meantime, dirt will be brought in and the area smoothed and leveled.

Page 10: County General, Planning

No comments or changes

Page 11: County General, Solid Waste/Recycling

No comments or changes

Break at 10:15 a.m.

Reconvene at 10:20 a.m.

Page 12: County General, Sheriff – Sheriff Lohrey

Deputy Cody Callahan is the newest deputy hired. Deputy Callahan just completed the Marine Deputy certification and graduated last week. He will start the police academy in two weeks. Deputy Callahan will be trained and ready to be on the river come next summer. This summer Sherman County will have limited resources on the river.

Patrol cars are taking more than 12 months to receive once they are ordered. One car will arrive later this year and come out of next years' budget. The two cars on order will be the last gas cars that Sherman County will receive. Any new cars ordered will be EV cars. Sherman County needs to have a discussion on EV charging stations and whether they will invest in charging stations for each officer's house and how that will work.

There was a discussion about Narcan. Sheriff Lohrey stated that each deputy carries Narcan with them in their patrol cars. Sheriff Lohrey also mentioned that NORCOR hands out Narcan and lock boxes, when necessary, to clients as they leave NORCOR. The lock boxes are to store a firearm so that kids don't have easy access to firearms. Narcan is so that if they or a friend overdoses, they will have the means necessary to save their life.

Animal Control – Sheriff Lohrey stated that they used to have an agreement with Home At Last so that they can bring stray dogs and they would pay Home At Last \$200 for each dog that they brought in. Home At Last has been in a transition the last couple of years and unable to help with dogs as much. Sheriff Lohrey has talked with a new board member who seemed interested. Sheriff Lohrey is going to continue down this path and see if a similar agreement can be reached again.

RV removal – Tow companies won't tow away broken down and abandoned RV's that belong to houseless people any longer. The tow companies were not getting paid for the tow and it costs them about \$2,000 to dispose of an RV because the materials have to be disposed at a hazardous waste site. A new line item RV Removal Expense with \$4,000 has been added to this budget, so this service can be utilized if needed

Page 13: County General, Treasurer

No comments or changes

Page 14: County General, Sheriff – Marine Patrol

The State Marine Board now requires a two-year budget. This budget reflects that, proposing revenues and expenditures for the next biennium. Could potentially receive additional funding but don't have the man power to run the program this year, so services on the river will be limited.

Page 15: County General, Financial Services

No comments or changes

Page 16: County General, Juvenile

No comments or changes

Page 17: County General, County Vehicle

The Capital Outlay in this budget was increased to \$50,000. Plans include a purchase to replace one of the current county vehicles for something better riding with less road noise and for a service vehicle that the custodian can use to transport tools, etc to the different building sites.

Page 18: County General, NORCOR

Sheriff Lohrey was available to discuss the budget for NORCOR that reflects an increase of 7%.

On any given day, NORCOR has 60 chronically mental ill clients (meaning that they take meds to keep them stable).

Page 19: County General, Weed Control/Grounds Maintenance – Rod Asher

Rod Asher stated that a new employee, Bruce Olsen, has moved from the Road Department to the Weed District. Bruce is essentially filling the position left by Tom Macnab, so this isn't an additional position within the department. Bruce is working out well.

Commissioner Bird asked why the CWMA grant is \$4,000 less but there is more ground to cover. Rod explained that the Substation Fire in 2018 grant is winding down. There were three fires in 2018 that they are trying to work on with the CWMA grant.

Rod stated that the CWMA Coordinator position is mostly grant funded. Rod also mentioned that part-time seasonal help is hard to find these days, so he has been contracting with "The Heart of Oregon" agency. They provide a leader and 4-5 individuals that are 18-21 years old for about 4 weeks during the summer which costs about \$10,000 a week.

Rod explained that it takes the Ground Maintenance employee and one other Weed District employee to spray the county ground. The question that came up was does the cost of the other Weed District employees get covered 100% by the other contracts? If not, Rod needs to look at the prices that he is charging. Rod increased the chemicals line item this year since the stockpile that was transferred from the Road Department last year has now been depleted.

Travel and trainings were bumped up as well as fuel, oil and supplies.

Rod stated that the price on the Avangrid contract may go up. There is a lot of ground to cover on this project. He can easily increase the revenue under this line item to \$40,000 and the PGE contract up to \$15,000. Rod is also in conversations with Pacific Railroad and he might get that contract again which will add revenue.

Rod is asking for a transfer of \$20,000 to the Weed Sinking Fund to purchase one dump trailer and two heavy-duty side-by-side trailers. If approved, Rod would surplus two older trailers and the money from the sales would go back into the Sinking Fund.

After much discussion, a motion was made and passed

Motion by Stacy Eakin, second by Forest Peters, to authorize a total of \$12,000 to purchase one dump/maintenance trailer or two heavy duty trailers, at Rod’s discretion, but if two trailers are purchased, then two trailers will need to be surplusd.

Vote: 5-0

Yes: Bird, Miller, Dabulskis, Peters, Eakin

No: 0

Abstain: 0

The consensus of the Budget Committee is to have Debbie Hayden make the following changes to the budget:
Increase Avangrid Contract line item from \$35,000 to \$40,000.
Increase PGE Contract line item from \$12,000 to \$15,000.

Page 20: County General, Burnet Building

No comments or changes

Page 21: County General, District Attorney

No comments or changes

Page 22: County General, Extension – Nicole Strong, OSU Extension Regional Director

Original request for funding Extension Services was \$135,623. Because there is an expected carryover of \$5,406, this amount was deducted when preparing the Proposed Budget. Budget Committee approved the \$130,217.

The question was asked to see the breakdown of Jacob Powell’s time and budgeted items in Sherman County verses Wasco County and OSU.

| | | | |
|--------|---------|-------|-----|
| Phone | 50% | 50% | |
| Travel | 50% | 50% | |
| Time | 75% | 25% | |
| Salary | 18% | 7% | 75% |
| | Sherman | Wasco | OSU |

For Communication Allowance - \$50 per month for Cindy and Jacob and \$25 per month for Christian.

Page 23: County General, Transfer to Other Funds

To accommodate changes made in the Community Development Fund (212) and the Weed Sinking Fund (502), the line items in this budget were changed as follows:

The consensus of the Budget Committee is to have Debbie Hayden reduce the transfer to Weed Sinking Fund from \$10,000 to \$4,000.

The consensus of the Budget Committee is to have Debbie Hayden increase the transfer to Community Development Fund from \$85,000 to \$88,000.

Page 24: County General, Operating Contingency

To balance General Fund Budget after making changes to the Weed District Department Fund (118) and the Transfer Department Fund (130), Operating Contingency was changed as follows:

The consensus of the Budget Committee is to have Debbie Hayden increase the Operating Contingency line item from \$804,928 to \$815,928

Page 25: Unappropriated Ending Balance

Money in this fund is set aside to start the new fiscal year.

Pages 26-27: Community Transit

This budget has increased significantly to handle the pay increase for Bus Drivers and to manage the construction costs of the new Transit Building. The pay for drivers needed to increase in order to compete in today's employment market. One new driver has been hired increasing their roster to six.

Kelsi Phillips is doing a great job in her new role as the Community Transit Manager.

Page 28: Ambulance

No comments or changes

Page 30: MCCOG Respite

This fund is no longer active.

Page 31: American Rescue Plan Fund

These dollars have to be spent by 2026. To date \$100,000 has been distributed to Biggs Service District as a loan for an expensive part, \$6,500 to NORCOR for HVAC upgrade and \$100,000 to the Road Department to help offset cost of bridge replacement in the City of Wasco.

Page 32: CR&I Reserve Fund

No comments or changes

*Lunch Break at 11:56 a.m.
Reconvened at 12:25 p.m.*

Page 33: Prevention Program

Deanna Christiansen does an amazing job.

Page 34: County School per Capita

Pass through for state funds to local school district.

Page 35: Building Codes

This is a new fund set up to manage those funds transferred to us when the Building Codes Department run by MCCOG dissolved. No definite plans yet to utilize these dollars.

Page 36: Surveyor

No comments or changes

Page 37: CAMI

No comments or changes

Page 38: Community Development

Not many changes to this budget. K'Lynn Lane representing the Oregon Frontier Chamber of Commerce offered a presentation detailing their new Ambassador Program and the success this is having in the participating communities. The question was asked: How many businesses and organizations of Sherman County are a part of the Chamber? K'Lynn will follow up with that information. Currently the county gives them \$4,000, but they are now asking for \$15,000. After much discussion the budget committee agreed to increase their contribution to \$8,000.

The consensus of the Budget Committee is to authorize Debbie Hayden to offset this increase in expenditures and transfer from County General which will increase the total by \$3,000 making it \$88,000.

Motion by Forest Peters, second by Stacy Eakin, to authorize increasing the Tourism line item from \$6,000 to \$9,000 allowing \$8,000 to go to Oregon Frontier Chamber of Commerce and \$1,000 to go to the Sherman County Museum.

Vote: 2-0

Yes: Eakin, Peters

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Page 39: Court Security

No comments or changes

Pages 40: Emergency Services

To balance this budget, a transfer of \$40,000 will be necessary to maintain services. The transfer to the Emergency Services Reserve Fund has been reduced to \$5,000. Dana Pursley-Haner has just received news of a grant awarded to update the EMS Five-Year Plan. Will need to add a revenue line item NHMP Grant (Natural Mitigation Hazard Plan) for \$21,000 and increase the Contractual Services expenditure line by that same amount.

The consensus of the Budget Committee is to authorize Debbie Hayden to add NHMP Grant revenue line item for \$21,000.

The consensus of the Budget Committee is to authorize Debbie Hayden to increase Contractual Services line item from \$3,500 to \$24,500.

Page 41: Victims Assistance

No comments or changes

Page 42: Wasco, Moro, Grass Valley and Rufus Road District

No comments or changes

Pages 43-45: General Road & Road Improvement – Mark Coles

Mark reported that right after the budget was adopted last year, he received word of an error in the distribution amounts of the State Motor Vehicle Revenue that had previously been announced. Instead of the \$1.5 million, Sherman County would only be receiving \$1 million. Luckily, the road department was able to absorb this reduction in revenue since the chip seal projects were postponed last year.

The County made a decision this year to stop selling rock to individuals and businesses. The County had started selling rock locally at a time when there was no other business providing this resource. Since there are three local businesses now, the County felt it was time to stop selling rock. The Road Department will still provide rock for county jobs.

Chipseal is on schedule to do what was supposed to be done last year.

It has proven difficult to find a company who is willing to upgrade the fuel system. The money in the Computer Expense line item will roll over to the new fiscal year in hopes of getting this done.

Equipment line item has increased to purchase a new wire feed welder and on demand air compressor. Mark would also like to buy two defibrillators: one for the shop and one at the crusher.

Road Improvement – 2023 asphalt prices are going up.

SIP fees will be going down so there is concern about the chipseal program.

GoldenHills project wear and tear has not been addressed. Mark has not met with the Golden Hills representatives to discuss road damage.

Pages 46-47: County Fair Board – Bryce Coelsch

The increase in this budget is a result of the \$1 million grant from the state for Fair Infrastructure. Some of these funds have already been used to purchase panels, gates, etc. to outfit the arena. The Fair Board is looking at writing a job description for a building manager for the fairgrounds. They are not ready to hire at this point, but do see the need in the near future.

Pages 48-49: Community Corrections

No comments or changes

Page 50: Wellness Center

No comments or changes