

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Finance, Tax & Budgets
CHAIRPERSON: John Creighton
DATE/TIME: Wednesday, March 19, 2003. 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Berlage (7:25 p.m.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hasken	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Schultz
<input type="checkbox"/> Carroll	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potter	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Creighton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Schubert	

Other Board members: Margie Montelius, Bill Cooper, Jack Zillig, Sally Toepfer, Dane Jackson

Others: Duane Olivier-County Administrator; Diane Williams-COA Secretary; Leon Heires-Lindgren, Callahan & VanOsdol; Dave Dornbusch-Blackhawk Hills RC&D; Steve Haring-Blackhawk Hills EDD; Paul Hartman-Jo/Carroll Solid Waste Agency

MINUTES

Meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chairperson Creighton.

1. Minutes

Marv Schultz made a motion to approve the minutes of February 19 and February 27, 2003. Domer Schubert seconded and the motion passed.

2. Treasurer's reports were placed on file.

3. Cost Study Update

Leon Heires distributed a draft of the cost study results and reviewed why the cost study is being conducted. Their work has been based on the 2002 financial statements, interviews and meetings with the departments involved in the study. They defined the labor, non-labor and overhead costs of each service item. Discussed the need to meet with all the Department Heads involved before making any changes. Duane is preparing a comparison of other counties and what their fee structures are. The committee questioned how often this type of review should be done. A regular review policy is needed, possibly to review every 5 years.

4. Department/Program review

a. State's Attorney. Rescheduled to 3/27/03.

b. County Coroner. No report

c. Blackhawk Hills RC&D and EDD. Dave Dornbusch stated that the RC&D was created in 1986 as an 18-member council under the authorization of the USDA. They leverage the membership money from participating counties for grant funding. An office is staffed in Rock Falls. They conduct many workshops and networking opportunities. For example, the County Board chairpersons get together on a regular basis and the RC&D also holds a legislative roundtable in September. Steve Haring reported that the Economic Development District was a spin-off organization created in the late 1980s. They received a Federal Planning Grant in either 1991 or 1992. They have recently assisted Jo Daviess County with reorganizing the Comprehensive Economic Development

Strategy (CEDS) committee. Because of the association with EDD and CEDS, many of the grants received are at 60% funding instead of 50%. The LRA saved \$160,000 because of this higher level of funding. They have a website at www.blackhawkhills.com that is used extensively by DCCA and site selection people. Recently Steve attended the Illinois Rural Partners Conference with Janet Anderson. He has also been to Fennimore, Wisconsin creating regional partnerships. The EDD is supporting the Highway 20 project through Helen Schamberger. They also hold meetings with the zoning administrators in the area and share information from periodicals and generate discussion among the group that is helpful for all.

- d. **Jo/Carroll Solid Waste Agency.** Paul Hartman stated that each of the two counties contribute a relatively small amount of money to the agency. The rest of the funds come from fees charged to waste haulers. Paul noted that Jo Daviess County should consider adopting a tipping fee. Carroll County has one and generates \$6000-\$7000 each year from this fee. In 1995, a joint needs assessment was conducted and the two separate county agencies were combined to form this agency. Paul has been working to cut costs, especially in insurance, bonding and audit fees. Board members hold 3-year terms. There are three recycling services in the area (Montgomery, Savanna and Lanark) that are sufficient for the size and population of the region. Recycling costs more than garbage handling.
- e. **Special Service Areas.** Duane reported that the excerpts explain why the County is involved in Special Service Areas. They can be created for any number of reasons. Jo Daviess County has four SSAs; three that are active and one that is not because the statute doesn't provide a mechanism to get rid of it. The three SSAs serve two ambulance services. #1 covers the Warren area and has been in effect since the 1980s. #2 and #4 are the Elizabeth Ambulance Service, and #4 also has a bond issue attached to it that has never been exercised. The tax levy rate is limited to a maximum of \$0.10, but both services request specific dollar amounts from the County. Because of the difference in assessed values in the different areas, the SSA#1 rate computes to about \$0.07, SSA#2 to \$0.05 and SS#4 to \$0.06. The committee discussed the difficulties in obtaining volunteers to serve the ambulance services and the requirements of the state regarding scheduling. Also, Medicare and insurance companies determine how much they will pay and it often doesn't cover the costs.

5. Other

- a. **Quarterly Revenue & Expense summary.** Duane noted that revenues are down so far this year. He has sent a memo to the department heads requesting that they spend as little as possible on non-salary items at this time. He is working on a cash flow analysis for the General Fund.
- b. **Assessed Values Summary.** The comparison is just FYI. Expect the gross amount on this summary to go down about 5-7% once the Board of Review has completed their work.

- c. **Legislature.** Duane reported on three bills that we are currently watching. SB0344 regarding the mobile home assessments as real property is currently on the floor. HB2206 is a rental housing support bill. This would create a \$10 fee collected by the County Recorder. One dollar of the fee would stay in the County and the other nine dollars would go to the state to support this program. HB0537 is a levy for employee health insurance that would be exempt from PTELL.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.