

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Finance, Tax & Budgets
CHAIRPERSON: Yerda Potter, Chair
DATE/TIME: Monday, July 10, 2006. 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Berlage
 Carroll

Kent
 Mapes

Potter
 Schultz

Other Board members:
Others: Dan Reimer, Diane Williams

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Chairperson Yerda Potter

1. Old Business

- a) Preliminary revenue estimates. There was no further information and no questions about the revenue estimates presented at the last committee meeting.
- b) Review expense guidelines. The committee had no changes to the guidelines established at the last committee meeting.

2. New Business

- a) Review of target funding amounts. County Administrator Dan Reimer reviewed with the committee that the preliminary revenue estimates show an increase in General Fund revenues of approximately \$22,000. Using the guidelines established at the last meeting, the County Administrator's Office has adjusted the targets for the budgets that are under the General Fund, resulting in an increase in expenses of approximately \$148,000. Diane Williams reviewed with the committee how the target figures were derived, starting with the current FY06 salaries for each employee and estimating a 2% increase in salary and the related increases in benefits. Because there have been some changes in staff in the Sheriff's Office in the past year, she still needs to review some information with the Sheriff before the targets are set for the Sheriff, Public Safety Building, Communications, Court Security and Emergency Services budgets. The committee reviewed the target figures closely. The committee discussed whether the County Administrator's budget should be increased because of possible upcoming expenses, but the consensus was to wait until further information becomes available. Reimer spoke with the auditor and it is possible that the expense in question will be assigned to FY2005. The committee also discussed the target figure for the Merit Commission and decided that no changes are needed.

The committee discussed how to budget for the cost of vehicles in the Sheriff's budget. Reimer stated that the correct procedure would be to budget an interfund transfer from the Sheriff budget to the Capital Equipment Fund in order to truly reflect the costs of that department. In the last two years, a transfer has been made from the General Fund budget to the Capital Equipment Fund because the

amount has been determined through the process of awarding unfunded requests. The committee discussed the amount that would be added to the target and how many cars should be purchased each year. The committee also discussed the number of squad cars in the fleet and the possibility of using personal cars when an officer is called out. The committee discussed the take-home squad policy as an employee benefit and questioned what the cost of that benefit is. The committee would like to see some research on the actual costs of maintaining the size of fleet that the County currently has versus a smaller number of cars. The committee also discussed leasing cars and would like to find out what the savings could be. Berlage asked if the County was receiving any money from the plan that the Governor recently signed that would allow some portion of the fines to be used by the entity that assessed the fine for replacement of squad vehicles.

- b) Review of preliminary expense estimate packets. Reimer reviewed a draft cover memo that will be sent to the General Fund departments, along with the necessary documents to complete their expense budgets and a schedule of the budget process. Merri Berlage stated that she will take to lunch the first five department heads that turn in their completed budgets and supporting notes to the County Administrator's Office. The committee discussed the need to have all necessary expenses included in the budgets. The consensus of the committee was that if a necessary expense cannot be accommodated under the department's target number, a detailed letter explaining the need should be submitted with their budget. The committee will review any letters and possible adjustment the target amount. The unfunded requests form will still be used to list all requests by departments that are not considered necessary for the current level of services to be offered. The committee also chose August 21, 22, 30 and 31 at 6:30 p.m. for the budget review sessions. The departments should be made aware of the schedule for review as soon as possible so that they can attend. All County Board members will be encouraged to attend all sessions as well.

The committee also reviewed the draft cover memo that will accompany the expense packets for all the special fund budgets. The process requirements are the same, but the revenue estimates are individual to each fund and there is no target number given. The draft letter to the agencies was also reviewed and approved to be sent out. The County Administrator's Office expects to send all the packets out on Wednesday, July 12 with a return deadline of August 4.

The committee spoke briefly about the Soil & Water Conservation District's request to levy for their insurance costs. Reimer has spoken with the County Clerk about the issue and would like to also discuss it with the State's Attorney. The committee questioned if a referendum is needed and discussed the costs of approximately \$10,000 to place the item on the ballot.

3. Other

- a) Board member concerns
Ron Mapes questioned why the audit is so late in being completed this year. The committee discussed putting out a Request for Proposal (RFP) for audit services

for a 3-year period and including a stipulation that the audit must be completed by the end of May. The committee would like the County Administrator to bring a draft RFP to the next meeting so that proposals can be received by the August committee meeting and a recommendation can go to the County Board at the September meeting.

4. Citizens' Comments – none

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m. following a motion by Berlage and seconded by Mapes.