

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Finance, Tax & Budgets
CHAIRPERSON: John Creighton
DATE/TIME: March 27, 2003. 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Berlage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hasken	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Schultz
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carroll	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potter	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Creighton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Schubert	

Other Board members: Bill Cooper, Terry Stoffregen, Jack Zillig, Margie Montelius, Sally Toepfer

Others: Diane Williams-COA Secretary; Glen Weber-State's Attorney; Rich Machala-Jo Daviess Transit; Peg Murphy-Health Department; Lester Johnson-SWCD; Mark Maidak-Extension Education

MINUTES

1. Program Review

- a) **State's Attorney.** Glen was asked about any changes or goals expected for his department. He stated that he is catching up with the criminal cases left over from previous administration and all cases now are within 1-1½ years old. His goals for the future are to crack down on deadbeat dads, clean up some of the junkyards in the county and spend more of his own time on investigations to help solidify his cases. The State cannot mandate his actions or tell him where to focus his efforts. His expenses are down right now because there are less felonies occurring, which means fewer grand juries are convened. Costs will go up if a major crime occurs. There is one tax case that takes a lot of his time. The department is operating at a bare minimum now, no seminars for the staff this year will be approved and very little travel expense. At times he needs to hire expert witnesses because the State Police limits the number of samples they take to 5 and he sometimes feels that it is important to a case to have more done, and then they are processed at a private lab. He has no current cases that will require expert witnesses. The state will only help support the costs of a case if it is a capital one. Glen's salary is paid 80% by the state and 20% by the County. All his work is performed on behalf of the County. All the other employees are County employees. Half of the Victim/Witness Coordinator's salary comes from a grant.

- b) **Health Department.** Peg Murphy reminded the committee that the Health Department was set up by referendum in 1949. At that time there was a TB Board and a Board of Health. They were combined in 1978. From last year's budget they cut \$100,000, partly by reducing from a 40-hour work week to a 37½-hour work week. They receive many grants from the state. The Health Department is mandated to cover 4 basic programs: Food, Water, Sewage and Communicable Diseases. Discussed food service inspections and frequency. Sanitation was a big issue in the 1920s when Health Departments were established. The goal is to prevent

disease from occurring in the first place. Their goal is not to provide medical care but to prevent disease. They have recently completed a fee study by reviewing service costs. All employee time is coded by which program they worked on. They have determined that the current fee schedule does not meet costs. Discussed staff time spent on planning commission issues. Discussed the number of Family Planning clients as reported in the Annual Report. Discussed the proposed Stephenson/Carroll Health Department and the effect on our county if Jo Daviess were involved. Jo Daviess County has a relatively low number of public aid clients; Carroll County's will be higher. Peg noted that the Health Department had a huge carryover for years that has been expended in the last few years. Over the next few years, if less money is available they may have to cut back to the 4 basic programs that they are mandated to perform. With continued involvement in the planning commission, additional staff may need to be hired.

- c) **Home Health.** The County Board does not fund Home Health, but it is administered by the Board of Health. Home Health receives reimbursement primarily from Medicare, and also some from private insurance. A doctor must designate a client's homebound status. Following assessment, Medicare pays ahead for 60 days of service. The number of clients in the program varies by the week and the month. Currently there are about 40 clients. There are other for-profit agencies offering this service (Mercy Hospital, Finley Hospital and Freeport Health Center), but none cover the whole county. Home Health has its own nurses and personnel; one clerical staff is shared with the Health Department.
- d) **Jo Daviess Transit.** Rich Machala reported that the addition of other services over the years have helped to keep the core service running. They receive Federal matching funds. The department is not mandated, it was created by a County Task Ordinance. The passenger base is growing due to the aging population. In the beginning about 90% of passengers transported were disabled. Currently, that percentage has dropped to 60% and the other 40% are elderly. The Federal 2004 Transportation budget has been approved at the same level as 2003 and could be increased if they find some extra funds. Rich feels that locally things will remain stable. Discussed including Rich's fuel purchases in the Highway Department's bidding process.
- e) **Soil and Water Conservation District.** Lester Johnson reported that the SWCD works with the Health Department on soil borings. It also brings economic development to the area, for which they are not recognized. The Jo Daviess County Board gives the lowest amount to the SWCD of all the counties in the area. They have a mapping system and would like to work more closely with the County. They stress that there needs to be collaboration and coordination. They want to work with the Information

and Communications Technology Committee on an agreement for data sharing. The SWCD receives a lot of support by belonging to state associations. It is organized like a township board. They provide expertise to zoning. Discussed the process of collecting fees that, under the ordinance, are supposed to be collected by the Health Department for soil borings. There has been no change to the fee since 1995 and income is declining. Upon questioning, Lester noted that they do make some donations, primarily to the Boy Scouts, and they sponsor some educational programs.

- f) **Extension Education.** Mark Maidek distributed some further material regarding Extension Education. (Attached). They have an office in Elizabeth and one in Mt. Carroll. They have many area educators available for various programs. They reach people through educational programs, newsletters and grant programs. For instance, the 4-H newsletter reaches 450 homes in Jo Daviess County, Agriculture reaches 420 homes, and Family reaches 1200 homes. Youth are very active in 4-H, 150 in Jo Daviess County and 250 in Carroll County. In Extension Education there are over 200 volunteers giving their time. Recently, they have participated in the Comprehensive Plan Education Program. The Youth Program teaches life skills such as decision-making, communication, healthy living, and respect and stresses service to the community. A very successful program is Intergenerational Internet which pairs youths with older people and tutors them in using the Internet. Upon questioning by the committee, Mark stated that the two offices are in long-term leases (Jo Daviess ends in 2006 and Carroll in 2004) and are paying the lowest lease rates per square foot of any extension office in the state. A single county extension service could be possible for Jo Daviess County. Mark reported that if there is no office in the county, the residents of that county feel under-served by the extension service. If a single site was chosen for a bi-county extension service, that site would mostly like be in Savanna as a geographic and population center.

2. Other Business

- a) John reported that cash reserves are down \$500,000 in the last six months. Briefly discussed the fee study and if fees should be raised. Comment was made that non-mandated programs and services, like GIS, should be self-sufficient.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.