

Columbia County Finance Committee

MINUTES

June 15, 2006

PRESENT: John H. Tramburg, Debra L. H. Wopat, Susan Martin, Robert L. Hamele, and Robert Westby

ALSO PRESENT: Harlan Baumgartner, Lois Schepp, Joseph Ruf III, Chief Deputy Michael Babcock, Lieutenant James Stilson, Gerald and Joyce Mael, Atty. Amy Tutwiler, Cory Wiegel, Wendy Metcalf, Jim Murphy, Susan Lorenz, Jeanne Miller, Kurt Dey, and Paul Ferguson (Daily Register)

The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m., and was legally noticed and published. The meeting agenda was reviewed. On motion by Westby, second by Hamele, the agenda was approved as printed.

Minutes

MOTION: On motion by Hamele, second by Martin, the minutes of the May 3rd Finance meeting were approved.

Vouchers

MOTION: Previously Paid Vouchers for June Audit were approved on motion by Wopat, second by Westby, for a total of \$3,992,433.52.

MOTION: On motion by Westby, second by Martin, County Board Payroll for May meetings paid in June was approved for a total of \$4,765.91.

Delinquent Property Tax Settlement, Parcel #s 2525 & 2525.4, City of Portage (Mael Property)

Corporation Counsel Joseph Ruf III recapped a request from Gerald and Joyce Mael. In settlement of litigation between the Maels and the City of Portage, property originally owned by the Maels was split, and a portion of it was transferred to the City. The request to the County is the transfer of \$76,580.64 in delinquent property taxes on the original property to the portion of the property (Lot 1) still owned by the Maels.

At a previous meeting, the Finance Committee asked that certain information be provided before the transfer was considered, including a current appraisal and most recent contamination report on the property. Information provided to date was inadequate, and the Committee asked that the following be provided regarding Lot 1 before any action is taken on the request:

- Appraisal from Certified Appraiser
- Contamination Report on Lot 1
- How back tax issues would be addressed

Update on Huber Center

Chief Deputy Babcock and Lieutenant Stilson reviewed options developed by the Sheriff's Department to deal with staffing and county inmate population issues, and revenue shortages resulting from housing fewer than expected out of county prisoners at the jail.

Pros and cons of each option were considered. Schepp noted that increasing the number of prisoners and jailers would make it necessary to add another jail accountant. The Committee recommended that this issue be addressed during the 2007 budget process. At that time the department should have a better idea of what is needed and still have enough time to start recruiting staff if necessary.

The Committee asked that additional information be provided at a future meeting regarding the possible installation of mirrored glass and improving sight lines at the old jail.

Homeless Shelter Proposal/Update

The Committee reviewed plans for renovation and operation of the proposed River Haven Homeless Shelter with Cory Wiegel, Wendy Metcalf, and Jim Murphy present to answer questions and address the Committee's concerns.

Metcalf explained shelter services and how the process will work. The goal of the shelter is to provide the homeless with a safe place to stay and a central point of service location to refer families/individuals to the appropriate agencies for assistance. This process would also help eliminate duplication of services between agencies, and better serve the clients.

The cost of preparing the building for this shelter is estimated to be \$50,000 to \$65,000. These costs would be the shelter's responsibility – not the County's, and they are seeking volunteers to do the work wherever possible. Other questions were considered, including:

- available beds – 14 individual beds would be available at the shelter, with 3 bedrooms that could be used for families.
- shelter parking – Wiegel reported that on street parking by the shelter, or the parking lot at Market Square would be available to shelter residents. The County's parking lot adjacent to the shelter would be available to residents after work hours.
- staffing – staff will be hired by the Community Action Council, with the shelter steering committee participating in the interview process.
- lease – Corporation Counsel Joe Ruf III will prepare the lease, which will be authorized by the County Board Chair. The Property and Insurance Committee will approve the terms and conditions of the lease. Full County Board approval is not necessary in this instance.

MOTION: On motion by Martin, second by Hamele, the River Haven proposal was approved. The proposal was accepted with the stipulation that there would be no County dollars involved. The Friends of River Haven Shelter will give a presentation at the June 21st County Board meeting.

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Update on Utilities

Wiegel reported that the HVAC Performance Review contract with Arnold and O'Sheridan had been signed. The group will evaluate the current HVAC system at the Huber Center, and provide recommendations on how to reduce energy costs at the facility, including the potential heat recovery system costs and if the County will be able to make up those costs in energy savings.

Outlay Request – Building & Grounds

MOTION: On motion by Martin, second by Wopat, budgeted outlay funds were released for the following projects:

- Tuck Point Annex - \$16,981
- Replace 3 Window Banks at Administration Building - \$6,424
- Remodel @ LEC for Economic Development Office – an amount not to exceed \$11,794.16 from funds set aside for this project in the Capital Improvements Fund.

Wiegel informed the Committee that the 2007 Rent Rates were set by the Property and Insurance Committee and had increased to \$11.74 per square foot. Schepp said she'd notify Nancy Elsing at Economic Development of the increase so she can budget for the correct amount.

Limited Agent Contract

Public Health Nurse Susan Lorenz requested that her department be allowed to continue the State funded Limited Agent Contract program from July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007.

The program provides for regular sanitary inspections at low risk food vending establishments, such as hotels, motels, and pre-packaged food vendors, etc. If sanitary problems are detected, the State is responsible to enforce remedies to the given situation. No County dollars are, or will be involved. The Committee reviewed the request.

MOTION: On motion by Westby, second by Hamele, the Committee approved the continuation of the Limited Agent Contract from July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007.

Pay Adjustments for Deputy Coroners

The Committee reviewed a resolution to adjust compensation for Deputy Coroners due to the amount of time spent on cremations versus death investigations for accidents, etc. The proposed new rates are \$45 for the first 4 hours, \$12 per hour thereafter for Death Investigations, and \$25 per call plus \$25 statutory payment for Cremations.

MOTION: On motion by Westby, second by Martin, the resolution to change compensation for deputy coroners was approved. The resolution will be presented to the full County Board on Wednesday, June 21st.

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Update on CTH E

Highway Commissioner Kurt Dey reviewed progress on the CTH E project, reporting that no problems are foreseen at this time. Dey hopes to have the DNR check the area sometime in August. Other items were discussed, including:

- necessity of a planned profile
- preliminary and storm water plans
- project start and completion timeframe
- traffic congestion during construction

Amend Omni Closure Contract on Old Bulk Plant

Dey recommended the County amend its contract with Omni to include the closure report, etc. needed for the Old Bulk Plant contamination site. The original contract was for \$4,500 to complete the site investigation, and it will cost an additional \$8,300 to do the closure report and DNR fees.

MOTION: On motion by Martin, second by Hamele, the Omni contract amendment was approved for an additional \$8,300. Contract total: \$12,800.

Outlay Request - HCC

Two HCC line item transfers/outlay requests were reviewed as follows:

Request #1: The hard drive for the HCC voice mail system crashed. The HCC requested that \$7,000 be transferred from the Dietary outlay account to the Building Improvement account.

Request #2: An electronic charting system had been budgeted, but after reviewing the bids, a more expensive model was chosen. The selected model will meet the department's needs now and in the future in a much more efficient manner. The request is to transfer \$9,400 from the Building Improvement account to the Nursing outlay account.

MOTION: On motion by Martin, second by Westby, the Committee approved both requests.

Request for Project Employee – State Wide Voter Registration

The Committee reviewed a request for a project employee in the County Clerk's Office. Due to the amount of detailed work and deadlines associated with the new voter registration program, the Clerk requested that she be allowed to use \$4,000 from remaining outlay dollars to hire this employee.

MOTION: On motion by Martin, second by Westby, the \$4,000 project employee request was approved. The Clerk is to return to the Committee if additional hours are needed for this position.

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JDE/PeopleSoft Update

Due to staff shortages in the Accounting Office, keeping up with issues at the Highway Department has been a challenge. Ongoing problems with hand-held scanners have been referred to the MIS Department and the scanner vendor for remedy.

Approve Printer Purchase – Accounting Office

The color inkjet printer in the Accounting Office no longer works. MIS recommended replacing it, as parts are no longer available to fix it.

MOTION: On motion by Hamele, second by Westby, the request for a new printer was approved for an amount not to exceed \$900. RLF funds are available for this purchase.

Determine 2007 Budget Guidelines

IRS vs. County mileage rates were reviewed. Increases in operating costs, the State budget, and personnel issues were considered.

MOTION: On motion by Hamele, second by Westby, the Committee approved a 0% increase in the mileage rate.

MOTION: On motion by Wopat, second by Westby, the Committee set the 2007 budget guidelines as follows: up to a 3% increase in operational expenses only will be considered at budget time. Each line item request must include supporting documentation.

On motion by Westby, second by Martin, the meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Robert Westby, Secretary

Cindy Devine, Recording Secretary

Cc: Finance Committee
Chair Baumgartner
Lois Schepp
Joseph Ruf III
Jeanne Miller
Internet