
Minutes of the Board of County Commissioners Special Meeting held on December 14, 2020 at 6:30 PM in the Conejos County Board Room, 6683 County Rd 13, Conejos, CO. 81129

Chrmn. Jarvies called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Roll Call: Mitchell Jarvies-Chrmn.-Present
Steve McCarroll-Vice Chair-Present
Carlos Garcia-Vice Chair- Present
Tressesa Martinez- County Admn. -Present

Also present were Connie Ricci-HR, AnnaBelle Gomez, Deputy Clerk and Recorder.

Also present was Robert Taylor.

Pledge of Allegiance: Chrmn. Jarvies led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Prayer: Chrmn. Jarvies gave the opening prayer.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda as presented: Comm. McCarroll/Second: Comm. Garcia, all in favor.

3-0 Motion carried

Chrmn. Jarvies opened up the Public Hearing at 6:30 PM. He stated that they are looking at a lot of different things; unfortunately the last couple of times that they have tried for a sales tax it has been voted down which makes their job pretty tough but that's what the citizens have asked for so they will the do the best they can. This year they will have some pretty tough decisions and move forward.

Tressesa, County Admn. read the notice of the proposed budget; it is as follows:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a proposed budget has been submitted to the Board of County Commissioners for the year 2021 year, a copy of the 2021 proposed budget has been filed in the office of the county budget officer in the Conejos County Courthouse which is open for public inspection. The proposed budget may change for final approval

of the same. Any elector within Conejos County may inspect the proposed budget, file or register any objections any time prior to the final approval.

NOTICE is also given that the Conejos County Board of County Commissioners will hold a public hearing to discuss the adoption of the final Conejos County budget. The meeting will be held in the Conejos County Commissioner's Board Room on Monday December 14, 2020 at 6:30 PM. It was published in the Valley Courier on the 17th, 18th, and 20th of November; nobody has called other than two persons to confirm the public hearing. Robert Taylor and Myron from the weed control called to confirm the meeting; Mr. Taylor is here.

Tressesa stated that they will start will Nick Barela from DSS.

Nick stated that every fiscal year they get allocations from the different programs that they operate such as Colorado Works and Child Care they pay what they call a maintenance of effort which is just a set amount for some of the different programs, they have a county portion that we would be responsible for, they are doing an 80-20 split for child support it is a 66-34. Some of them are 100%. He is getting that pool of money and giving it for administration costs for the programs that they operate and also their program costs that they operate.

Nick stated that he also makes sure that he takes into consideration any contracts that they are going to be operating throughout the year. On any given year some allocations are going to go up and some are going to go down. He tried to balance that out. He did propose a 5% increase of salaries for the DSS staff this year just to try to capitalize on their allocations. When they are underspent on their allocations generally what happens is that money gets reverted back to our other county partners and mitigated across the counties that are over spent. He is trying to capitalize on what he can; not only in salaries but in contracts that we offer throughout the Department of Social Services.

Nick presented the 6 allocations that they are broken up into, the primary one which is the budget request for summary of appropriations which has some additional budgeted items that he included like the Medicaid incentives that they get through the state and the summary of state revenue which is broken up into basically the amount that the state gives us and the county revenues which is basically the county portion and any other revenue from property taxes that we get.

Admn. costs: All eligibility staff, himself, accountant, front desk receptionist, a lot of administration costs are food stamps and Medicaid, LEAP Admn. and outreach. There is a big increase from last year because of the 26,000 grant that they wrote for the LEAP administration total cost of 30,474. The A&D 12 was the navigator money; that is money that the state is no longer offering; that was a contracted position that they were doing. Colorado Works is where they start seeing the administration costs and program costs. He is projecting 185,875 in administrative costs and 200,604 in program costs. The MOE is split up between both of those just for budgeting purposes. He has also folded in some of their overhead costs, building costs, and contract costs. In 2021 they will be funding 3 or 4 different contracts which will be through their TANF Program, Family Foundation, Southwest Conservation, and starting another contract with Rocky Mountain Counseling. They have one Child Care Worker and one supervisor which is 107,779 and 134,414 in their program costs.

Child Welfare Costs-428,348 in administration costs and 304,385 this can jump up or down depending on how many kids they have to place at any given time.

Child Welfare FTE Fund- is 100% money. They have 2 and 1/2 staff which is 74,272.

LEAP Program- that is just anticipated costs; same aid to needy disabled and with CORE Services.

Federal Programs are: Old Age Pension, Food Assistance, projected of what they give off any given year.

General Assistance- What they can offer in situations outside of the scope of the services that we offer are available to us; 2000 APS is client specific services that we can offer. He budget request is 6,603,941.

Nick stated that some of the extra funding they have the potential of earning throughout the year they have been pretty good at the Department of Social Services about earning some of that extra funding on Medicaid, Federal Incentive, County tax base Relief is all money that he budgets into but is not necessarily included into that total budget request; that is 100% unrestricted funds. He has been using that for a true incentive for the Dept. of Social Services on any given year and also a backup contingency plan should he need it in case something happens in the future. Different levels for the different programs but total request is 423,782 in 2019 it was a

request of 503,258. With the reduction of the mill levy from the prior years the projected fund balance of the end of the year for 2021 is 1,190,018.

Nick stated that he did budget for a Dept. of Social Services vehicle; and there is vehicle maintenance charge. He also projected for some legal fees for this coming year. He stated that this is pretty much finalized.

Tressesa-County Admn. presented the following:

She has transferred to the General Fund from the PILT Fund; they have transferred 1,200,000 in November and combined both of them. This year at the end of the year it was 2,808,262; next year she only budgeted into the General Fund 1,200,000 that is what they got from the PILT Fund. They are estimating at the end of year 6,158,311 in the General fund, 700,000 is from the Care Acts Fund which hopefully it will be spent by the end of the year.

Commissioners Budget- The only increase was commissioner's salaries and other admin. expenditures which are SLV Project and computer services.

County Admn.- The Admin budget is the budget they control in their office. They did go down on salaries a little bit; they had one employee that they didn't replace. The 700,000 Cares Act dollars are shown as an expenditure. Tressesa mentioned those are federal dollars so they will have a single audit. She stated that has to be spent and then ask for a reimbursement so they have to be really careful, small businesses would file for revenues lost, they are trying to help people with utilities; in their office they have a total of 6 applications.

Robert Taylor asked if it has to be spent by the end of the year.

Nick Barela mentioned that we have to be careful on how we spend that money.

County Attorney- That has decreased they have gone to a part time. On other legal services they are paying another attorney to help with the railroad and the opioid settlement dollars that they are trying to get.

Land Use- No changes.

Clerk and Recorder- No increases in his budget- The Election Budget did go down because there won't be an election next year except for the for probably a Special District but they get that back.

County Treasurer- The only increase was the elected official increase; under computer services it went from 17,000 to 40,000 because he is being forced to change software.

Assessor- Her budget is the same. She is staying with the same computer service. Only change was the elected official increase as well.

Maintenance Budget- That has gone down; the reason is it went down on salaries because DSS and the County are going to share the maintenance person.

DA's Office- That went up from 149 to 172 because they were under funding them for years; by statute the county has to give them a reasonable budget to operate.

Auditor- There is no change.

Sheriff- They made changes that could change the bottom line. That went from 779 to 1,000,000. The salaries are not comparable to other counties. If we want to keep the Sheriff's Office going we have to do those increases. Tressesa mentioned that like Chrnm. Jarvies mentioned we tried to pass the sales tax. People are saying that with the Sheriff's Dept. they see all these new vehicles but before the new vehicles they were stranded on the way to calls. The vehicles were just breaking. They did purchase new vehicles; they are on a lease purchase. They will be paying 48,776 on 7 vehicles.

Robert Taylor asked if the Sheriff's Department are union.

Tressesa stated that they are not unionized because she is sure the county could not keep up with what the union would want.

Jail- The people at the jail were earning 12.00 an hour and they couldn't keep any jailers there so they increased them to 15.00 an hour. They are not anticipating any salary increases for the jail or the General Fund; they have not had any increases for the last 3 or 4 years. Last year they did a couple of adjustments to those employees that were so under paid.

Connie-HR stated that she would like to add that minimum wage is going up from 12.00 an hour to 12.32.

Tressesa, County Admn. stated that this would probably only affect the PCP's.

Tressesa stated that our Sheriff has applied for Black and Gray grants from Marijuana dollars. He received about 53,000 which he used for various things that helped his office.

Tressesa mentioned that the Clerk has gotten grants, he is going to try to get a copier machine that is used to copy the mylar maps. It is 12,000 which she included in the budget but he is going to try to get that through a grant.

Coroner- That is pretty basic. Talked about the autopsy's that have to be done by the coroner.

Public Trustee- Mack - that is money in and money out.

Arena- most of that is through lottery dollars except for items such as toilet paper and things like that. They pay for those from the General Fund.

Veteran's Office- That has increased, we have a Veteran's Officer who is very active in the community. They increased his hours to 30 hours a week. They do get 17,000 from the Veterans Service from the state; the difference comes out of the General Fund.

Ambulance- That budget was over spent. They have talked about cutting that a little. They are trying to see what will work so that the public will listen and help us we need a sales tax otherwise they will have to cut hours, employees, and salaries in the General Fund. There have not been any salary increases in 4 years.

Emergency Manager- His budget is 67,000 and they get reimbursed half of that from the state.

Tressesa showed the fund balance of the budget. This year they combined the PILT and General Fund. 1,362,927 will show the beginning balance for 2021; the ending balance will only be 248,047 at the end of next year.

Connie HR stated that they have had a lot of discussion and input from the Department heads and elected officials. They have talked about cutting hours.

Tressessa stated that those discussions can't wait they should start in January and February because those cuts could even start in July because they need to build that fund balance.

PILT Fund- Is no longer going to exist.

Contingency Fund- This is set up by statute. That is for emergency county use. It has .25 of a mill that brings 18,484 into that fund every year. They take out Treasurer's fees; that ending balance is 282,000. If the county was in dire emergency that is all they could use.

Conservation Trust Fund- That is lottery dollars which are used to pay an employee at the arena, parks and recreation, they pay SLV TV which is considered recreation. She has put 30,000 as matching fund. She is going to try to get a GOCO Fund for improvements for Veterans' Boulevard for landscaping. Fund balance anticipated at the end of the year is 10,847. They also spend money for the shooting range.

Road and Bridge- Road and Bridge dollars are specific for Road and Bridge; they can't use them in the General Fund. They get their Highway Users Tax out of the gas tax but that went down because of COVID. They have only received 905,730. They don't know what they will get in December. She anticipated 1,800,000 for next year. This is still a healthy fund. They have a young lady that they pay from Road and Bridge. COVID could impact us if it hits really hard and everybody is quarantined but the employees have to continue getting paid. They have had the discussion because there have been several employees that have been quarantined three times and the work is not being done if they are unable to work from home.

Chrmn. Jarvies stated that they have been sending these COVID relief dollars from Federal and State coffers; the state has to operate under a balanced budget, they might have to cut and where are they going to cut. This might affect some of the money that comes into the county.

Tressessa stated that the General Fund will not be impacted by that. It might impact Dept. of Social Services with matching and programs; it might also impact Road and Bridge.

Road and Bridge- They are trying not to categorize Dist, 1, 2, and 3. They are rotating them around. They are going to increase asphalt budgets, they are putting asphalt to where it will last longer, they have purchased more equipment. The 820,000 for salaries is not exact to the penny. Fuel and oil- there is a big cut in that. The asphalt budget increased immensely; she budgeted 500,000 for next year. Equipment replacement- she put in 250,000 for possibly buying graders and she included 200,000 for lease purchases; in the past they were borrowing from PILT and then pay to Road and Bridge, they don't have that anymore.

They are budgeting 2,683,000 on their Highway User's Tax and the fund balance is 2,402,602 for last year the fund should be 1,200,215 at the end of the year, they have to keep an eye on that one.

Public Works- They do receive very little tax .25. This is for buildings such as the jail, the 96,250 they have spent on the jail due to the sewer, that will have a fund balance of about 76,000.

Nursing Service- Denise has brought in a lot of grants; her contracts have gone up; she brought in 154,000 for a grant. She has to meet with her concerning the 523,000.

PCP Funds- They budgeted 350,00 because the program has been cut a lot. At one time they had about 76 providers and now they are down to 28 PCP's.

Connie stated it dropped because of COVID, a lot of clients didn't want the providers going in. Some PCP's do want to come back.

OLTC- They lost that program in June. There are still some expenditures for next year such as Workman's Comp.

Chrmn. Jarvies stated that just for clarification the state made them choose between OLTC and PCP's they would not let them run both programs out of the same office. They made them divest one or the other; upon Denise's recommendation they let go of OLTC.

Nursing Program- The salaries are made up of many programs just like DSS, they are paid from different grants, she did get a lot of COVID dollars; Denise is trying to spend them down.

Robert Taylor asked if there are any grants for alcohol.

Tressesa stated that they get tobacco dollars.

Commodities- That is another grant that they get; They are still working on fund balance.

Lodging Tax- They get dollars for lodging, that is a small budget; she will re-look at that.

General Contingency- Years ago the PCP made a lot of money so they put it in a Contingency Fund for the Nursing Service because it was their money; now they have been dipping into them. They also have a reserve for TABOR that is the responsibility of the county; that should not be coming out of this fund the fund balance will be 103,765; if they move it somewhere else it will be 438,000.00.

Chrmn. Jarvies opened it up for public comment.

Robert Taylor stated that there are rumors out in the streets that they will be cutting the sheriff and the ambulance. There are a lot of people moving here and we need the ambulance.

Chrmn. Jarvies stated that we have tried to get an ambulance district and sales taxes and the citizens have made the choice for us. We can get grants, our ambulance has done it that is how we got two new ambulances. We are looking and trying to do the best we can with what we have to deal with.

Tressesa stated that they get grants but they don't help for operating budgets she used Denise as an example. They have to earmark; they tell you how to spend them. They have tried DOLA; most of those grants require a 50% match.

Nick Barela stated that it is not long revenue.

Chrmn. Jarvies stated that we will continue to look, it's not that we haven't seen it coming; mentioned that Mr. Taylor worked hard on that sales tax question. He mentioned that Alamosa wants better streets they put it on the ballot and it passes. They tried to get funding for the DA and courthouse dollars; they are out trying. With the COVID there will probably be fewer and fewer grants because no money is free, appreciates Robert coming to the budget hearing.

Comm. Garcia stated that they will have to go after an ambulance district. The property owners will pay for that. They will have to go after a sales tax also but doing both in the same year which is 2021;

doing both in the same year would probably not pass but it's not like we haven't tried.

Tressesa, County Admn. stated that they probably wanted a new school so the sales tax did not pass.

Comm. Garcia asked Mr. Taylor if he could help as an ambassador again.


Chrmn. Jarvies asked if there was any other public comment, there being none he closed the public comment portion of the hearing.

Motion to continue on the decision until they can get a final budget together: Comm. McCarroll/Second: Comm. Garcia, all in favor.

3-0 Motion carried.

Chrmn. Jarvies adjourned the Special Meeting at 8:05 PM.

ATTEST:


NATHAN RUYBAL
CLERK OF THE BOARD


MITCHELL JARVIES
CHRMN. BD OF COUNTY COMM.