



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION MINUTES

Tuesday, October 26, 2021, 2:00 P.M.

Willowbank Office Building
420 Holmes Street, Room 146
Bellefonte, PA 16823

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I. CALL TO ORDER

The public work session of the Centre County Board of Commissioners was convened at 2:28 PM by Chair of the Board Michael Pipe.

In attendance were Commissioner Michael Pipe, Commissioner Mark Higgins, Commissioner Steven Dershem, Administrator Margaret Gray, and Executive Office Supervisor Natalie Smith.

County personnel present included Warden Chris Schell.

Guests present included Ed Zack and Corey Troutman.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments received from the public.

III. 2022 COUNTY BUDGET

A. Correctional Facility

Ed Zack of Susquehanna Accounting stated that the Correctional Facility receives revenue through charges to other counties for inmate housing. Warden Schell reported that Centre County charges a rate of \$65 per day. Clinton County charges \$72 per day and \$75 or \$80 for immigration. The contract does have a clause to provide notice of rate increase. Commissioner Pipe requested that Ed share reports prepared for other counties to inform a conversation about rate adjustments in 2022.

Warden Schell stated that budgeted salaries for 2021 are doing well, however overtime will be over due to staffing shortages. For 2022, there are no requests out of the ordinary. The Facility would like to consider an updated security keybox system, which is approaching end of its useful life.

Utilities for West Penn Power have been reduced from \$25,000 last year to \$18,000 this year due to cost savings from the solar array.

Warden Schell is hopeful that with the recent addition of skilled maintenance staff, the facility will have less expense for kitchen repairs.

Commissioner Pipe inquired about the allocation for Supplies – Commissary. The Warden explained the need for mattress replacements. They have been working to do this in increments. This line also includes allocations for inmate uniforms, socks and boots. Commissioner Pipe asked that this be reduced based on historical projections.

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Margaret asked Ed about the personnel salary and wages line. He clarified this includes both a step increase and 4% increase per the Union contract. This does not include the \$5 per hour incentive.

Commissioner Dershem asked how many inmates the Facility has budgeted for and what the average population was thus far in 2021. The Warden explained that budget is for 230 inmates and the average is around 197. Overtime is exceeding 1,000 hours per pay period due to staffing.

General Fund expenditures for 2021 were at \$6.6 million based on Ed's most recent report. The Proposed Budget that he has provided reflects a 2021 Projected Budget of \$10.4 million. Commissioner Pipe asked Ed for a recalculation of the 2021 Projected.

\$370,000 in ARPA funds will be used to reduce the impact from wages for the remainder of 2021.

Warden Schell asked for clarification regarding the Juneteenth holiday. Commissioner Pipe said it would not be considered under this Union contract, the Board agreed.

B. Information Technology Systems (ITS)

Margaret noted that Chad has worked to better identify services that fall under ITS.

Chad reported that software costs have significantly increased as he continues to identify unrecorded services as they come up for renewal. Adobe Pro is a new line item this year as it was identified by the PA National Guard as approaching end of term. The cost for Egnyte has been lowered. As migration to Office 365 is completed, the County can begin to phase out Egnyte. Commissioner Pipe asked about DUO mobile, which Chad said is a requirement of our insurance carrier.

Commissioner Higgins inquired about an increase for the internal IT charge. Chad said this is something that should be looked at for 2023. Commissioner Higgins asked for more internal IT services within Centre County Government. Currently a lot of decisions are made by department heads. These individuals can review and make recommendations for software.

Commissioner Pipe was excused from the meeting.

Chad shared two proposed job descriptions – one for an IT Operations Manager to oversee day to day operations of the managed service provider. The second is for an IT Business Analyst to interface with departments to make sure the County gets the most out of software, identify software improvements and enhancements.

Commissioner Dershem asked if the County were to pick one position, which would it be. Chad would choose the IT Operations Manager to ensure tickets are resolved in a timely manner, and assess system engagement, to allow Chad to more opportunity to work with Departments on their software and needs. As a fifth class-county, Adams has an IT staff of fifteen. Including the current vendor, RBA Professional Data Systems, Centre County has an IT staff of less than ten.

Commissioner Dershem was excused from the meeting.

C. Cooperative Extension

The 2022 Proposed Budget is \$144,000, not including the addition of a Master Watershed Coordinator Position. Maureen Casey explained that this is a part-time position for approximately fifteen hours per week at a cost of \$14,000.

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Commissioner Higgins suggested reviewing the current position to potentially be funded by Penn State InKind or absorbed by the University.

Michael Ryan added that the Cooperative Extension has a 4-H Educator, Program Assistant and Summer Assistant. With InKind money, the County funds a variety of positions for Cooperative Extension – both the Program Assistant and Summer Assistant; the 4-H Educator is partially funded by the Department of Agriculture. He suggested reviewing salaries and operating expenses to see which would make the most sense to fund through the University or fund through InKind.

Maureen has discussed the addition of the Master Watershed Coordinator position with Conservation District Manager Jim Coslo, who supports the addition of this position. This individual would be valuable for the Conservation District as well.

Michael explained that other counties that have pass through employees, they are not subject to F&A charges. However, you cannot use InKind in that instance. If given the option, Michael said that the individual in the County budgeted position would probably decline Penn State employment.

The other option is to look at the line for unrestricted grants and cover a portion with InKind to reduce the General Fund contribution. This includes \$17,800 for travel and professional development and Michael said the remainder could likely be funded by InKind.

Commissioner Higgins suggested Cooperative Extension look to move toward utilizing as much InKind funds as possible. Corey asked Michael to determine if there are any remaining expenditures in 2021 that the County utilize InKind funds to cover.

IV. BUDGET MEETING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, October 26, 2021

Correctional Facility – 2:00 PM – Willowbank 146

ITS – 3:00 PM – Willowbank 146

Cooperative Extension – 4:00 – Willowbank 146

Thursday, October 28, 2021

Facilities – 2:00 PM – Willowbank 146

Tuesday, November 16, 2021

Tentative Budget Adoption – Board of Commissioners Meeting – 10 AM – Willowbank 146

Tuesday, December 21, 2021

2022 Budget Adoption – Board of Commissioners Meeting – 10 AM – Willowbank 146

V. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Higgins adjourned the meeting at 4:14 PM.

ATTEST:

Margaret N. Gray
Administrator