

MALHEUR COUNTY BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
April 23-24, 2024

The Malheur County Budget Committee convened on April 23, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. in the County Court Office of the Malheur County Courthouse to consider the 2024/2025 budget with Judge Dan Joyce, Commissioner Ron Jacobs, and Commissioner Jim Mendiola; Budget Committee Members Bob Skinner, Janice Belnap, and Lee Newman; and Budget Officer Lorinda DuBois present. Those persons discussing the budget with the Budget Committee were present electronically or in-person as were various staff members. Notice of the meeting was published in the Argus Observer and on the County website and emailed to the Argus Observer, Malheur Enterprise, and those persons who have requested notice. The meeting was audio recorded. The agenda is recorded as instrument # [2024-1279](#)

BUDGET MESSAGE & APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Judge Joyce welcomed everyone and expressed appreciation for the volunteers' service and thanked Ms. DuBois for her work on the budget. Commissioner Jacobs was asked to Chair the meeting.

INFORMATION SERVICES (IS) DEPARTMENT

IS Director Joshua Kreger discussed and answered questions concerning Page 3 - Information Services; and Page 82 - IS Tech Fund. A request for a fourth staff position was made (Sys Admin I); the request was not included in the Proposed budget as the current office space does not allow for another workstation. The lack of office space and possible options were discussed. Consensus was to add the position back into the budget and continue to work on the office space issue.

WEED CONTROL

Weed Inspector Amanda Zander discussed and answered questions concerning Page 36 - Weed Control. The Taylor Grazing Advisory Board is not able to contribute funding to the Weed Control budget as it has done in the past. Ms. DuBois explained that Taylor Grazing receives approximately \$50,000 annually and has been transferring \$25,000 of that to the Weed Control department. The Taylor Grazing funds are dwindling and the advisory board has expressed concerns.

MALHEUR COUNCIL ON AGING & COMMUNITY SERVICES (MCOA&CS)

MCOA&CS Transportation Project Manager Brittany White discussed the funding request to help support public transportation services and answered questions from the committee. \$15,000 was requested to utilize as match funds for the 5311 transportation grant; this request is in the Special Transportation Fund budget. Funds for the 5311 Match are transferred from the Economic Development budget.

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SWCD)

SWCD District Managers Linda Rowe and Jodi Johnson discussed activities of SWCD, shared project photos, and answered questions; financial support was requested to support the efforts of SWCD. Funds for SWCD are appropriated from the Technical Assistance line in the Economic Development budget. SWCD is working to secure funding to construct a new USDA Service

Center to house NRCS (National Resources Conservation Service), FSA (Farm Service Agency) and SWCD. See instrument # [2024-1280](#) for the written correspondence.

FAIRGROUNDS

Fairgrounds Manager Amy Wood and Board member Jennifer Hall discussed and answered questions concerning Pages 55-57 - County Fair Fund. Admission to the Fair will not be collected this year; there will be an admission charge to attend the rodeo. The Board is hoping to utilize the facility more and bring in additional events, such as a camping show, gun show, and team roping events. A new agreement for alcohol sales will be in place for the 2024 Fair and the Fairgrounds will receive 30% of the profits. Vendor space rates have been raised and there will be more vendors to shop from. Food vendors will pay for their space and 15% of their sales will go to the Fairgrounds. The Barn I project is nearly complete. Fencing is being replaced around the facility; there is also a power project taking place. The Commercial Building kitchen will be updated later in the year (it will be a certified commercial kitchen). The lease with TVCC (Treasure Valley Community College) is going well; discussions for the next fiscal year's lease are taking place. A grant application to update the rodeo grounds was submitted.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Planning Department Director Tatiana Burgess discussed and answered questions concerning Page 17 - Planning/Zoning. Revenue and expense lines have been added for Senate Bill 70. Small Equipment was increased to purchase meeting recording equipment. The budget included a request to move the Planning Director from 37.5 hours to 40 hours per week; that request is not in the Proposed budget. Ms. Burgess is leaving employment with the County and a new director will be hired.

JUVENILE DEPARTMENT

Juvenile Department Director Ted Martinez discussed and answered questions concerning Page 15 - Juvenile Department; Page 59 - Juvenile Crime Prevention; and Page 71 - MS 11 Detention Fund. Vacancies in the department have been mostly filled in the past year. The program Leap is concluding this year. Detention is used for the most extreme cases and as a last resort. Juvenile Crime Prevention funds are State grant funds to be used for specific purposes. The juvenile holding facility was discussed; Mr. Martinez was agreeable to converting the space to office space.

COURT SECURITY; DRUG COURT; MEDIATION

Trial Court Administrator Marilee Aldred discussed Page 62 - Court Facilities Security; Page 63 - State Drug Court Fund; and Page 64 - State Mediation Fund. These are special fund budgets and can only be used for specific purposes designated for the fund. The Court Security Officer position has been vacant as the Jail has been extremely short-staffed.

DOG CONTROL/ANI-CARE ANIMAL SHELTER

Amanda Grosdidier with Ani-Care Animal Shelter discussed the "Dog Control" line-item on Page 20 - Non Program. Ani-Care is requesting a 10% increase to its contract. The contract is for abandoned or stray canines located in Malheur county - not city limits. There are extra funds in this line-item in case needed for situations such as quarantine holds.

PREDATORY ANIMAL CONTROL

USDA APHIS/Wildlife Services Specialist Scott Phillips and District Supervisor Shane Koyle gave an update on predatory animal control activities and answered questions; funding requested for the Wildlife Services program is \$101,500. Page 20 - Non Program, line-item 5-20-8020 Predatory Animal Control also includes funding for the County's landowner cost share fly program. See instrument # [2024-1281](#) for the written correspondence.

The meeting recessed for lunch.

The County budget meeting was closed and the Malheur County Agricultural Educational Extension Service District budget meeting was opened.

EXTENSION TAX SERVICE DISTRICT

Notice of the Malheur County Agricultural Educational Extension Service District budget meeting was published in the Argus Observer. OSU (Oregon State University) Eastern Region Regional Director Natalie Kinion and Malheur Experiment Station Director Stuart Reitz reviewed the budget for the tax service district. Also present were Extension District Advisory Board Members Jeff Burkhardt and Paul Skeen; and Extension Office Manager Bobbi Howell. Tax district funds are split between the Extension Office and the Experiment Station. The Experiment Station uses the funds primarily for personnel. The Extension Service uses the funds for personnel and operating expenses. There is a large amount of funds in Contingency, partly due to a shortage of staff; the Advisory Board/OSU has an eight-year plan to spend down the Contingency. The Office Manager position has historically been a County employee in the County general fund; the Proposed budget proposes to remove this position at the end of 2024 as the current Office Manager is retiring.

The Extension Service District budget meeting was closed and the County budget session was reopened.

EXTENSION SERVICE

Page 35 - Extension Service was discussed. The Office Manager position has historically been a County employee; the County general fund budget proposes to remove this position at the end of 2024 as the current Office Manager is retiring. Ms. Kinion requested the County reinstate funding for the Office Manager position and fill that vacancy when Ms. Howell retires. Commissioner Jacobs expressed support for the County providing the Office Manager and having a presence in the Extension Office; Mr. Newman concurred. Mr. Skeen and Mr. Burkhardt expressed support for the County continuing to provide funding to the Extension Service. Traditionally the County has supported OSU Extension with County general fund dollars and the request was made to continue this practice even though there is now a taxing district contributing to OSU Extension and Experiment Station. The Office Manager position was taken under advisement.

Judge Joyce stepped away from the meeting for a short period of time.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Environmental Health Clerk Kelly Friend discussed and answered questions concerning Page 18 - Solid Waste; and Page 30 - Environmental Health. The Solid Waste fund is for Lytle Boulevard Landfill. The Maintenance line-item was slightly increased from last year. The natural gas supplier is currently being changed from AmeriGas to Farmer's Supply Co-op. Revenue for Sewage fees is predicated to increase due to Senate Bill 70; as is the State DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality) expense line. Travel was slightly increased.

Judge Joyce rejoined the meeting.

ONTARIO COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Ontario Community Library Director Darlyne Johnson discussed Page 33 - Ontario Community Library. The library is requesting funding for Bookmobile services outside the District's boundaries; the District requested \$10,000. The funds are transferred from the Economic Development budget to the Library budget.

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Assessor Dave Ingram discussed and answered questions concerning Page 6 - Assessor; and Page 68 - GIS Maintenance Fund. Mr. Ingram presented the County Assessment Function Funding Assessment (CAFFA) grant application through Department of Revenue to the County Court in March; this grant partially funds the office and certifies budget appropriations for the department; Department of Revenue has approved the grant. Senate Bill 70 actions require remapping and Department of Revenue rates increased.

PERSONAL SERVICES

The 2024/2025 Personal Services includes a 7% market adjustment and a 3% cost-of-living adjustment for covered positions, non-representative, and management.

CLERK'S OFFICE

Clerk Gayle Trotter discussed and answered questions concerning Page 5 - County Clerk; and Page 69 - Clerk Records Fund. General election is November 2024; and Special District election is May 2025. Election costs are increasing. Small Equipment is to upgrade a scanner and label printer. Probate Transfer Fees is a new line-item to allow for fees to be transferred when a probate file is transferred to Circuit Court. Clerk Records Fund shows a decrease in revenue as recording fees are down.

COURTHOUSE

Maintenance Supervisor Don Dalton discussed and answered questions concerning Page 16 - Courthouse. There are nine projects in the Requested budget; six projects are in the Proposed budget - Jail ice machine; Jail paint; Courthouse parking lot light and reader board; repair boiler chimney; remodel front office area to make a large classroom at the Ironhead building; and epoxy the floors at the Ironhead building. Projects removed from the Requested budget - armory and shop heaters for the Ironhead building; and A/C for the Jail classroom as a unit is available from the old server room.

Sheriff Johnson noted the tenant with the powder coating business at the Ironhead facility will possibly be terminating his lease in July or August (so this may increase the need for the shop heaters). Sheriff Johnson also noted the growing need for the armory.

SURVEYOR

Surveyor Derrick McKrola discussed Page 37 - County Surveyor; and Page 46 - Surveyor Corner Preservation Fund. There is not a lot of corner preservation work coming in from the local surveyors. Corner preservation is an important responsibility of the County Surveyor; Mr. McKrola is exploring possible ways to strengthen the corner preservation program.

COUNTY COURT

Page 2 - County Court was reviewed. Small Equipment is to replace the recording equipment. Judge Joyce noted he wants funding for the National Center for Public Lands Counties (NCPLC).

COUNTY COUNSEL

Page 4 - County Counsel was reviewed.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Page 7 - Administrative Office was reviewed. A Time Tracking line was added in the hopes of finding an electronic time sheet program that fits the needs of the County.

WATERMASTER

Page 34 - Watermaster was reviewed. The State Watermaster office is in the Courthouse; the budget is \$1,000.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Health Department Director Sarah Poe discussed Pages 27-28 - Health Department; and Page 29 - Medical Investigation. The Health Department has worked to be sustainable and not dependent on County general funds. It is anticipated that several grant programs will rollover into Fiscal Year 2024/2025. Approximately two-thirds of the budget is for personnel costs. The department has 13 programs; and 24 FTE's (Full Time Equivalent). An Assistant Director was in the Requested budget; the new position is not in the Proposed budget.

Dr. Brauer is the Medical Examiner; when he determines that an autopsy needs to be performed that expense is in this budget. Unattended deaths are investigated by deputy medical investigators and they receive \$35 per unattended death. See instrument # [2024-1282](#) for the written document.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff Travis Johnson, Undersheriff Dave Kesey, Lieutenant Rachel Reyna, and Lieutenant Jim St. Michell discussed and answered questions concerning Pages 21-22 - Sheriff; Pages 23-24 - Jail; Page 25 - MCSO Communication Center; Page 26 - Emergency Management; Pages 47-48 - Community Corrections; Page 50 - Boat License Fund; Page 51 - Corrections Assessment; Page 54 - Task Force Fund; Page 60 - 911 Fund; Page 61 - Traffic Safety Fund; Page 67 - Search and

Rescue Fund; Page 70 - Federal Forfeitures Fund; and Page 79 - Work Release Construction Fund.

Pages 21 -22 - Sheriff: The BVP Grant pays 50% of the cost of bullet proof vests; the BLM Backcountry Grant funds one position; and there are also contracts in place with the City of Vale and Vale School District. Small Equipment is for the Taser contract and a printer/scanner for the front office - it was determined that \$515 needed to be added to the Proposed budget for the printer/scanner as it was left out of the Requested budget. Two vehicles and shelving for the evidence room are proposed in the Capital Outlay line.

Pages 23-24 - Jail: Working to get courthouse security staffed again; staffing shortages are still a challenge in the jail; food costs continue to rise; with the passage of HB 4002 (2024) may see an increase in the jail population; Capital Outlay is for a medical filing system, medical cart, property room floor and rack system, and a server for the security cameras and additional cameras.

Page 25 - MCSO Communication Center: The 911 tax monies are pooled from the Cities and County to support the dispatch center. The CAD Maintenance is a new line item - it is the maintenance for the new dispatch software system.

Page 26 - Emergency Management: The Oregon Emergency Management Performance Grant is getting more and more difficult to obtain. The Homeland Security Grant is to upgrade the communications system.

Pages 47-48 - Community Corrections: A sixth P&P Deputy is proposed. The number of people on supervision continues to increase. Community Corrections receives State funding to provide its services.

Page 50 - Boat License Fund: This fund pays for 1 full time marine deputy and 5 months of a second deputy. The State Marine Board bought the program a new boat; the North River boat will be sold.

Page 51 - Corrections Assessment: This fund helps pay for the Program Coordinator.

Page 54 - Task Force Fund: Small amount of funds in this budget; one deputy is assigned to the local Task Force.

Page 60 - 911 Fund: Funds are transferred to the MCSO Communication Center budget.

Page 61 - Traffic Safety Fund: Small amount of funds in this budget.

Page 67 - Search and Rescue Fund: Currently paying for a mapping software program for Search and Rescue.

Page 70 - Federal Forfeitures Fund: Reporting is getting caught up.

Page 79 - Work Release Construction Fund: The roof on the facility will be replaced using this fund.

Sheriff Johnson and the committee discussed the large amount of citations that are written on Hwy 95 in the Jordan Valley area; it would be beneficial to upgrade the citation system from the current paper system to an E-ticket system.

The meeting recessed for the day.