Budget Hearing – Sheriff’s Office

The Commissioners met at 10:00 a.m. to discuss the Sheriff’s Office 2014 Budget Request. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Mike Kiger and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Staci Knisley, Sheriff Dave Phalen, Chief Jerry Perrigo, and Jeff Barron.

Mr. Davis opened the hearing and stated he had a chance to review the request and had a few questions. He asked if the projected salary increases for union employees were included in the request.

Sheriff Phalen stated the projected increases were included.

Mr. Davis also asked if the 2% increase for civilian employees was included.

Sheriff Phalen replied the 2% increase was included for all employees except those who are exempt.

Ms. Brown asked if the step increase was included.

Sheriff Phalen stated he assumed it was included.

Chief Perrigo stated that there was roughly a 4% increase in their request which covered all pay raises, health insurance, and PERS. They are not asking for an increase to equipment or anything else.

Mr. Davis stated that was fine and that he just wanted to make sure the projected increases were included.

Ms. Knisley confirmed with Ms. Dowdy by telephone that all projections were included in the calculations.

Mr. Davis stated he met with Ms. Brown and Ms. Knisley earlier in the morning regarding the continued discussion of establishing two funds, one for debt service for a new jail facility (the Commissioners want to start to fund this) and the other for transitional costs associated with the move. They do not have solid costs on the move yet, but they do expect it to be higher than they’d like. Mr. Davis gave two examples of these costs (if they do leave the maximum security jail on Main Street they will most likely have to demolish it and replace it with a parking lot and there is also the possibility of the new jail not being completed before the lease it up at the annex thus requiring the inmates to be housed out of county). The Commissioners are trying to get a rough outline of their expenses prior to the October 17th decision. Mr. Davis added that the
Sheriff’s Office probably had a better understanding of some of the costs and aspects of the transition.

Mr. Levacy asked about the $106,000 increase for health insurance in the Sheriff’s budget proposal.

Ms. Brown stated they had asked all offices and departments to project an 8% increase for the annual period, which results in about a 10% increase for the plan year, thinking that this estimate was reasonable with what is known at this time.

Ms. Knisley stated it may be even higher than 8% in reality.

Mr. Levacy stated that he met with FACFC earlier in the day and was told that inmates may soon be included as Medicaid eligible.

Chief Perrigo said that’d be helpful.

Mr. Kiger asked about the number of vehicles they replace each year.

Chief Perrigo stated it was six a year.

Mr. Kiger suggested they use vehicles that were seized.

Sheriff Phalen stated that they have done that when they can (i.e. Community Watch) and will continue to do so.

Mr. Davis expressed his appreciation towards the Sheriff’s Office helping clean up old purchase orders.

Sheriff Phalen stated they would make it work, but were worried about losing money from their budget.

Mr. Davis stated he understood, but reminded them they are just a phone call away from a solution whenever they have a problem.

Ms. Brown added that shoring up the process with purchase orders helps to better plan for the budget.

Ms. Brown thanked the Sheriff’s Office for their cooperation with the small groups formed to answer pre-design questions for the jail.

Sheriff Phalen stated that years ago there was an idea of having a day reporting center for prisoners. He thought this may be an option for the Main Street Jail building. He wasn’t sure what had happened to that plan.
Mr. Kiger stated that a company from Pennsylvania had come in and presented information, but it was designed for Pennsylvania laws, not Ohio.

Mr. Davis stated that may be an attractive transition option.

Mr. Davis stated he didn’t see a need for a second hearing with the Sheriff’s Office and asked if everyone was ok with that.

The Sheriff’s Office and Commissioners agreed that one hearing sufficed.

The hearing ended at 10:20 a.m.

**Budget Hearing – Economic Development**

The Commissioners met at 10:27 a.m. to discuss Economic Development’s 2014 Budget Request. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Mike Kiger and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Staci Knisley, Bob Clark, and Linda Kauffman, and Jeff Barron.

Mr. Clark presented his information via PowerPoint (see attached).

Mr. Davis asked if the Work Force Training Grant was all set up.

Mr. Clark stated that it was and that he had worked with the Auditor’s office to create a form for the grant. The Commissioners will be the ultimate decision maker. The grant is meant to reimburse expenses.

Mr. Davis asked if the process was caught up.

Mr. Clark stated it was.

Ms. Brown stated that the $100,000 for the grant will show up in the Economic Development 2014 budget as a distinct expenditure line.

Ms. Knisley added that it would not affect the bottom line totals.

Ms. Brown asked Mr. Clark if the Fairfield 33 Alliance was still expecting $30,000 from the Commissioners.

Mr. Clark stated that they were.

Mr. Brown asked if the special revenue fund would be able to accommodate a 2% payroll increase, if such an increase were to be approved.
Ms. Kauffman thought it would be ok.

Mr. Kiger asked if the marketing mailer and website overhaul came out of the Economic Development budget.

Mr. Clark stated that expenditure was for the Fairfield 33 Alliance.

Ms. Kauffman added that Economic Development pays an annual flat fee for their website no matter what work needs done.

Mr. Levacy stated that the go forward approach for the Fairfield 33 Alliance looked very good.

Mr. Clark stated it was being restructured to consolidate boards and rename committees.

Ms. Brown stated the changes in the bylaws were terrific.

Mr. Davis asked if there was anything else to discuss.

Ms. Kauffman asked Mr. Davis to sign the CDBG semi-annual report with the approval and signature being ratified on Tuesday. The report is needed before the Commissioners will meet again. She added this was reconciled in MUNIS. Commissioner Davis signed the report.

Mr. Davis stated he did not feel there was a need for another hearing with Economic Development.

The hearing closed at 10:40 p.m.

**Budget Hearing – Utilities**

The Commissioners met at 10:27 a.m. to discuss the Utilities Department’s budget review. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Mike Kiger and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Staci Knisley, and Tony Vogel.

Mr. Vogel presented his review via a PowerPoint (see attached). The following questions were asked.

**Regarding Sewer Revenues:**

Mr. Davis asked if there was an overall greater carryover, other than the $140,000 sewer carryover that would be anticipated in 2014.
Mr. Vogel stated his current carry over is $2,800,000 for each of the enterprise funds, sewer and water. He expects the revenue could be higher this year, and his estimate is a conservative one.

Mr. Kiger asked if there was a drop off location in Lancaster for the building department.

Mr. Vogel stated drawings could be dropped off at the court house or at the Utilities building.

Mr. Kiger asked how quickly they turnaround the drawings.

Mr. Vogel stated it depended on the complexity of the project, but that it was typically a week.

Mr. Levacy asked how many payments are dropped off at the court house.

Mr. Vogel said it was rare, with just one or two on occasion.

Mr. Levacy suggested they may see more drop offs in town if they are able to open the drive thru on Chestnut Street.

Regarding Water Revenues

Mr. Vogel projects a $450,000 carry over.

Mr. Davis asked if all employees where non-union.

Mr. Vogel stated that was correct.

Mr. Davis asked if they included a salary adjustment for next year.

Mr. Vogel stated that included a 3% increase based on merit and an approved plan from 2010.

Ms. Brown added that the 3% helps to attract and maintain talent in a field where there has been turnover and talent moving to neighboring districts.

Mr. Vogel stated he was on the low side of pay for utilities offices.

Mr. Levacy stated that he needs to be competitive with the market.

Mr. Vogel stated he appreciated that and will look at the salary adjustment in more detail next year.

Mr. Davis asked what the total estimate was for the access road to the utilities office.
Mr. Vogel stated he and Mr. Upp estimated $2,000,000.

Mr. Davis asked if they would use debt for that.

Mr. Vogel stated that was an option and that they would try to finance it over four years if they can get ODOT to agree to a temporary right in, right out access on 33.

Mr. Levacy asked if they had any help from ODOT for the construction.

Mr. Vogel stated that they did not and he didn’t expect any.

Mr. Levacy suggested they ask ODOT to fund a portion of the project.

**Regarding Billing Process:***

Mr. Vogel presented possible scenarios for changing in billing based on a call he received from an individual wanting to be billed for usage rather than a flat rate. Commercial properties are already billed based on their water consumption.

Mr. Davis asked if the sewer rate would change as well.

Mr. Vogel stated it would stay at $45.

Mr. Davis stated that those who use more water would see an increase in their bill while those who use less water would see a decrease.

Mr. Vogel stated that was correct and that he wanted to model this idea for a year to see how individuals would fare with the idea.

Mr. Davis agreed that was a good go forward plan and said it seems fair to do the billing based on usage. He asked if all Commissioners were in agreement with the modeling for a year.

Mr. Levacy and Mr. Kiger stated they were.

Mr. Levacy asked which billing system they use.

Mr. Vogel stated it was through MUNIS; it is one sheet of paper mailed in an envelope. They have an ability to do a mailer with the bills.

Mr. Kiger asked if Greenfield Township was still interested in the county taking over their services.

Mr. Vogel stated that Greenfield Township was interested in starting those conversations again. The county currently handles their billing, but Greenfield Township
would like to send their pumps to the county’s Walnut facility. The county also operates Greenfield’s facility, but the board makes all of the operating determinations.

Mr. Levacy asked if Greenfield had modern facilities.

Mr. Vogel stated that they did except for the trailer park which is a concern as it has just one meter. He also mentioned that at Lancaster’s current rates, which Greenfield’s customers are being charged, it would take Mr. Vogel 13 years to raise the rates to catch up to their rates as they pay considerably more than what the county charges.

Ms. Brown suggested that she call a meeting to determine the interest in the Tussing Road facility for county services.

Mr. Vogel stated he thought the Sheriff may be interested.

Ms. Brown stated that the Treasurer, courts, and Job and Family Services may be interested too.

Mr. Kiger added that at one point United Way was interested in a satellite office.

The Commissioners agreed that there was no need for an additional hearing as Mr. Vogel did a great job with his presentation.

The hearing concluded at 11:20 a.m.

Commissioner Davis stated at 11:23 a.m. that the Commission would be in recess until the 1:00 p.m. Budget Hearing with the Juvenile/Probate Court.

**Budget Hearing – Juvenile/Probate Court**

The Commissioners met at 1:01 p.m. to discuss the Juvenile/Probate Court’s 2014 Budget Request. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Mike Kiger and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Staci Knisley, and Judge Terre Vandervoort.

Mr. Davis welcomed Judge Vandervoort and expressed his appreciation for her willingness to meet. He added that the budget hearing process was an opportunity to share what’s going on and what the needs of the office are.

Judge Vandervoort stated she understood the goal of bringing a flat budget. She thanked Ms. Brown for her debriefing and help, along with the court administer, in bringing her up to speed regarding the county budget process. There is one unusual expense for 2014 due to a retirement. Judge Vandervoort’s goal going forward is to not pay out for comp time and control that accrual; however she will honor comp time.
already accrued. She added this expense was mostly represented in the probate budget.

Mr. Davis mentioned that the salaries did not appear to include an increase for 2014.

Judge Vandervoort stated that was correct.

Mr. Davis stated the Commissioners had not made a decision yet, however it is looking like the unions will have a 2% raise and this will likely be carried over to all employees. He asked if Judge Vandervoort would like to do this as well if the Commissioners decide to do so.

Judge Vandervoort stated that she would and did not include it this time as she was told not to do so yet.

Judge Vandervoort added that she is working on making the county and court personnel manuals match up as she would like the policies to be consistent. This is a project for 2014.

Mr. Davis stated he appreciated the intent to have the policies be consistent.

Mr. Levacy added that he appreciated the coordination with the county as well.

Judge Vandervoort stated she will try to coordinate as much as possible. She is also working on increasing her-understanding of the grant funds as there is a lot of potential in that area.

Mr. Davis stated that the Commissioners try to operate on a targeted carryover basis. They will be making a decision on the jail and location on October 17th and are currently looking at collateral costs. He added that they have asked Mr. Keller to look at the cost of demolishing the Main Street jail and creating a parking lot in its place. He welcomed any input Judge Vandervoort had to offer.

Judge Vandervoort stated she is also trying to push technology use to allow for video hearings for adults by the end of the year (i.e. for cases including adults who are not paying child support, not getting children to school, etc.). She would also like to use technology with the detention center which Ms. Moore fully supports. This would be an improvement in efficiency and safety for the juveniles.

Mr. Davis mentioned the conversation earlier in the day with the Sheriff regarding a day reporting center. He said they would look at that again and that there could be a time when it may make sense to transport inmates out of country or use a concept like that.

Mr. Levacy added that the juvenile detention center is very excited to work with Judge Vandervoort.
Judge Vandervoort stated she has also met with Steve Wigton and looks forward to working with him as well.

Ms. Davis stated that Ms. Knisley and Ms. Brown can help with any changes to the salary line item and related variables and that he felt there was no need for an additional hearing.

Mr. Levacy and Mr. Kiger agreed.

Mr. Kiger stated he would like to help with the MCJDC in any way possible.

Judge Vandervoort stated that MCJDC will be providing a request to look at the video capabilities.

The hearing concluded at 1:26 p.m.

**Budget Hearing – Common Pleas Court**

The Commissioners met at 2:00 p.m. to discuss the Common Pleas Court’s 2014 Budget Request. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Mike Kiger and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Staci Knisley, and Judge Chris Martin, Judge Richard Berens, and Magistrate Susan Eyerman.

Mr. Davis thanked the Judges and Magistrate for their willingness to come in.

Judge Martin handed out a list of their 2014 line items. There were four items highlighted where they were asking for an increase. The rest of the items remain the same or netted to an amount close the same as the prior year. They tried to take a realistic look at how much is used and spent in each line item. Three of the four increases are direct results of increased criminal litigation. They are seeing the same number of cases, but an increase in people contesting their cases. These areas include comp time – some employees have accrued comp time over a number of years. They were asked by the auditor to pay out that comp time so they did. They haven’t had a line item in the past so this year they transferred from other line items they felt they were not going to use fully. Due to the increase in litigation some employees have had to work comp time. Judge Martin said it would be up to the Commissioners to decide to fund that account at the amount of the current or the estimate. The other two line items which increased due to litigation were expenditures of transcriptions and juror fees. They have seen many juror trials this year and transcription costs are up due to an increase in hearings, trials, appeals, etc. They will have just enough for transcriptions this year but will be short in juror fees due to the increased litigation. One option is to increase these line items at the beginning of the year, which they are proposing, or
setting where they have been and the court coming back in June/July and asking for more money if their projections are correct.

Mr. Davis stated the Commissioners appreciate a true and accurate estimation of their needs.

Judge Martin stated this was the best estimation based on what has been spent. They also looked and trials and hearings coming up through the end of the year. They increased travel by $600. This is mostly for mileage reimbursement. They do not travel much other than attending conferences in Columbus.

Mr. Davis noticed the salaries where left flat and indicated the Commissioner’s had not made a decision on what they will do. There is a 2% increase in the air. Mr. Davis asked if the Commissioners went with the increase, would the Judges like to see this adjustment made?

Judge Martin stated they would appreciate that.

Ms. Brown noticed the probation salary in the handout differed from the MUNIS based spreadsheets that Ms. Kinsley had prepared.

Ms. Kinsley said she would work with Magistrate Eyerman to determine which figure is correct.

Mr. Davis mentioned that last year Common Pleas recommended hiring a few more employees and phasing in those hires, but then lost an employee. He asked where they were in that process.

Judge Martin stated the replacement was hired and the first of the two new employees was hired at the end of August.

Judge Berens added that they are having problems finding qualified people who have a willingness to work at the county pay level.

Mr. Levacy asked if the salary scale should be revisited.

Judge Martin was sure the employees would appreciate that.

Mr. Levacy stated he understood that you get what you pay for.

Judge Martin added it was especially hard for those with a family.

Ms. Kinsley asked if there was comp time pay out for next time or if they wanted to create an overtime account.
Ms. Brown suggested they could budget some in each line to see how it goes for the year. Ms. Knisley said she and Magistrate Eyerman could talk about that as well.

Mr. Davis shared information regarding the decision on a jail facility being made on October 17th. The Commissioners are currently working on ancillary issues and costs of building a new facility. They have no intention of tearing down the detective bureau. He welcomed any input, guidance, and assistance the Judges and Magistrate could provide.

Judge Berens wondered if they should keep a portion of the maximum security jail to house inmates during the day.

Mr. Davis stated that had been discussed in general. If they do build a new facility there will not be an urgent need to tear the maximum security facility down, but they do want to be cognizant of the costs. The holding cell concept comes in to play, and there could be significant costs associated with that.

Judge Berens stated they appreciate a decision on the facility no matter what that decision is.

Mr. Kiger guaranteed that by noon on October 17th they will know whether or not they are going to build a facility and if so, where it will be.

Mr. Davis asked Ms. Knisley to work with Magistrate Eyerman on the few remaining questions and said he saw no need for an additional hearing.

Commissioners Levacy and Kiger agreed.

Judge Martin appreciated the opportunity to present their budget.

Mr. Davis thanked them for coming over.

The hearing was concluded at 2:42 p.m.

**Review**

The Commissioners met at 2:42 p.m. to continue review legal issues and pending or future action items and correspondence. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steven Davis, Mike Kiger, and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Staci Knisley, and Rachel Elsea.

Mr. Kiger suggested the Commissioners may want to have a salary study done.

Mr. Davis suggested they need to focus on the current tasks at hand and that could be a topic for the future.
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Mr. Levacy agreed and suggested they discuss it after the current projects were wrapped up.

**Adjournment**

With no further business, on the motion of Mike Kiger and a second of Dave Levacy the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn 2:51 p.m.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Mike Kiger, Dave Levacy, and Steve Davis

The next regular meeting for the Board of Commissioners is scheduled for Tuesday, October 1, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. with review session at 9:00 a.m. on the same day.

Motion by:  Seconded by:
that the September 26, 2013, minutes were approved by the following vote:

YEAS: NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

*Approved on October 1, 2013

Steven A. Davis  
Commissioner

Dave Levacy  
Commissioner

Mike Kiger  
Commissioner

Rachél Elsea, Clerk