

PRESENT:	Pat Davis, Committee Chair
	Ken Polehn, Committee Member
	Scott Hege, County Commissioner/Committee Member
	Rod Runyon, County Commissioner/Committee Member
	Steve Kramer, County Commissioner/Committee Member
STAFF:	Tyler Stone, Administrative Officer
	Monica Morris, Finance Director/Budget Officer
	Kathy White, Executive Assistant
ABSENT:	John Carter, Committee Member

At 9:00 a.m. Chair Davis opened the Annual Meeting of the Wasco County Budget Committee.

Election of Officers

{{{Commissioner Runyon nominated Pat Davis to continue as Chair of the Wasco County Budget Committee. Commissioner Hege seconded the motion which passed unanimously.}}}

Minutes

Commissioner Runyon noted that the page 5 passage regarding Youth Services staff leaving is ambiguous and asked that the staff be specifically identified; on page 9 the direction to go forward with the Road District was actually direction to go forward with research for a Road District. Commissioner Hege asked Ms. White listen to the recording for the second to last sentence in the 1st paragraph on page 4 to clarify language attributed

to him.

Commissioner Runyon suggested that the minutes for the Budget Committee meeting go out to members upon completion rather than waiting until just prior to the next meeting so that their memories are still fresh.

{{{Commissioner Runyon moved to approve the minutes with corrections. Commissioner Kramer seconded the motion which passed unanimously.}}}

Year in Review – Administrative Officer Tyler Stone

Mr. Stone thanked Ms. Morris for all her hard work in putting together the budget and the Directors/Managers for setting the bar so high and working together to bring in a balanced budget each year. He observed that the hard work they put in in the past several years is starting to show dividends.

Commissioner Kramer announced that Misty Hill was in an accident and is fighting for her life. He asked that everyone keep good thoughts for her.

Mr. Stone asked everyone to hold their questions throughout his presentation as those questions would likely be answered during Ms. Morris' budget message.

MAJOR INITIATIVES

Political

- Early Learning System Transformation still in process
- SRS Payment Received
- Outdoor Mass Gatherings continue
- Public Health transition to a separate entity continues to be a significant challenge entered into a process of review and hope to get good information from that.
- NOCOR Sheriff is managing the population at 50 bed cap so the budget has gone down. There is movement to change the formula for contributions.
- Significant internal changes in response to poor audit findings we are working through it.

Facilities

- Environmental assessments
- Basement flood recovery
- Courthouse electrical
- Sewer break at Annex C
- Courthouse windows repainted
- Maintenance painting on small houses
- Camera replacements
- Lock replacements

Information Technology

- EIS upgrade for Sheriff's Department
- Criminal Justice information audit
- Karpel information system installed
- Regular equipment rotations
- Interface for Assessor and Treasurer systems

Projects

- AFSCME transition to non-represented employees
- AFSCME transition team
- Parole and Probation Union negotiations
- Health benefits transition team

Mr. Stone said while there are upcoming key retirements, turnover is down by 1% - currently it is 5%. He stated that the plan is to use some temporary help to complete some project related work.

Mr. Stone reported that timber dollars have been extended for another year. He said that the Department Heads have been great at saving and finding additional revenue and the beginning fund balance came in \$2 million higher than budgeted. Mr. Stone explained that the budget philosophy is to budget materials and services for what is needed to operate use temporary or mid-term staffing if needed to supplement project workloads. In addition, County Department Directors look for outside revenue opportunities and operations efficiencies. Whenever possible, reserves are funded.

He said that some of the challenges faced by the County include:

- Timber funding is still in flux
- Public Health's request for funding is increasing the County wants to look at ways to slow that down as they did with NORCOR
- Compensation project may have some additional personnel costs
- Increased staffing in some departments short term or long term?

Mr. Stone reported that the budget balanced easily and department budgets remain tight. He said that Compensation Project money is included in the budget and reserves were funded. Public Works will continue to face challenges to maintain the County road system.

Mr. Stone reviewed some of the key figures from the budget:

- The budget is \$40 million up from \$34.8 million last year
- \$25.8 million are in restricted funds
- \$16.8 million is for general fund purposes
- Tax revenue is projected at \$8.2 million up from \$7.8 million.
- Beginning fund balance is \$5.4 million up from a projected \$3.2 million and it may go higher which will provide come flexibility.
- Personnel includes the compensation program implementation and the removal of Public Health employees from the budget
- PERS decreased but increases are predicted
- NORCOR is down by about \$235,000 a direct result of population management

Budget Message - Budget Officer Monica Morris

Ms. Morris stated that there would be a change to the agenda so that Public Health could

present information at 10:30 a.m.; there will still be an opportunity for public input at 1:00 p.m. Ms. Morris reviewed her Budget Message (attached). At the beginning of her message she encouraged the Committee Members to stop her at any time for questions.

Ms. Morris noted that Administration has asked the departments to operate so tightly for so many years that the overwhelming request this year was to loosen the reins a bit; this budget addresses that request by increasing F1Es in various departments. The increases do not outstrip the County's resources.

Ms. Morris pointed out that there is a new fund it the budget – Community Development – to support a partnership between the Community Development Block Grant program and Mid-Columbia Center for Living. Mr. Stone explained that MCCFL is working toward writing a grant to build a new facility at 10th and Webber. He said that two or three years ago they purchased the property with the intent of building a new facility. Ms. Morris added that MCCFL is fairly confident of obtaining the necessary funding. Commissioner Hege, who sits on the MCCFL Board, stated that it is a block grant project that has been planned for six or seven years; initially it was to be in conjunction with One Community Health but they have already built their new facility. He said that MCCFL is budgeting for the new building although it may or may not happen.

Ms. Morris went on to say there are 27 funds and it is a balanced budget. She said that Federal funding is low and State funding has been flat or in some areas grew a little. She said that a decrease was expected in State funding but was not realized. The funds remain the same with the exception of the addition of the Community Development fund.

Chair Davis said that the weed portion is always a concern for the Soil and Water District and he is glad to see an increase there. Ms. Morris asked Public Works Director Arthur Smith to talk about his plans. She noted that the staff for the Weed Department is limited to just Merle Keys.

Mr. Smith said that the Weed & Pest Department is one FTE but has hung on to key State and Federal contracts. He said he is committed to servicing those contracts. As part of a succession plan, when time permits the road department will assist Mr. Keys so that someone will be trained and ready to be certified when Mr. Keys retires.

Commissioner Hege asked for an explanation of the \$75,000 increase in Weed and Pest.

Ms. Morris replied that the contracts are coming in stronger than expected. Ms. Morris said that Household Hazardous Waste is not a new fund but a reactivated fund. She said that Household Hazardous Waste had gone to North Central Public Health but is returning to the County in the new fiscal year. She announced that they will move into the Planning Department and be managed by the Planning Director.

Commissioner Hege asked Ms. Morris to explain the 54% reduction in the Special Economic Development Fund. Ms. Morris said that in the current budget that fund had seen a one-time payment from the second Google Enterprise Zone; that payment is not anticipated this year. She said that annual payments from that Enterprise Zone are expected in the 2016-2017 fiscal year. She noted that the Special Economic Development Fund also receives monies from the state lottery – those funds are restricted to Economic Development and are transferred to cover the Planning Department. She said that Lottery, tobacco and alcohol taxes are steady.

Commissioner Kramer said that he wants to clarify that Wasco County will be the Household Hazardous Waste lead agency for the three counties and six cities that participate in that program; these are dedicated funds.

Ms. Morris stated that the Reserve Funds are \$2.5 million which is healthy and significant. She said for all other departments the increase is coming from general funds; SRS funding increased the Public Works budget but the public should not be misled that those funds will be consistent.

Chair Davis asked if we know how our fees compare with those of other counties around the State. Planning Director Angie Brewer replied that we are very comparable. Ms. Morris added that most of the other departments' fees are regulated. Ms. Brewer said that just before she came on board the Planning Department went through a process to bring it in line with standard rates. Chair Davis said that for the past several years he has thought we were low and was glad to see that the work had been done to bring us up to date for planning fees. Ms. Morris said that the Department Directors do a wonderful job of recognizing revenue and bringing it in.

Ms. Morris began to review the graphs included in the budget message. Chair Hege noted that the public needs to understand that the \$4 mm for MCCFL is an anomaly for grant funding, not a regular revenue source. Ms. Morris said that the graphs of revenues and expenses will demonstrate that.

Mr. Stone noted that a lot of the dollars used to be built into the department budgets but over the past four years the County has worked to move those funds. Now that the true costs are recognized, the County will work to level out the bars between revenues and expenses. Ms. Morris observed that the turn-back of funds used to be between 10% and 30% which is significant. The Department Directors worked hard to recognize their real costs; the turn back is now very tight 1% to 2%. She said it is really a little too tight and she has asked them to budget not quite so tightly this year.

Commissioner Hege said that he does not see it as a problem; if they go over, then an adjustment can be made. Ms. Morris said that she would rather recognize potential use rather than over-expend a category. Commissioner Hege stated that he just does not want to see it swing back the other way. Ms. Morris agreed and said she just does not want it as tight as a 1-2% turn-back.

Mr. Stone said that the new Department Directors may not understand that it is when there are large turn backs, there begins to be funding battles. He said that the Department Directors have done a great job which is what makes administration more comfortable adding things back. He said that he agrees with Ms. Morris, although the County does not want to see things swing back the other way, there should be a bit of a cushion.

Ms. Morris said that the County does not want to see weaknesses and that is why there is an increase in personnel. She pointed out that over half of the workforce will be eligible for retirement in the next 10 years with 10 people who can retire in the next 5 years. She said being prepared for that is smoother for remaining staff and for the public. She said a fair amount of preparation for that is in the staffing changes being made.

Public Comment - NCPHD

Mike Smith, Chair of the North Central Public Health District Board of Health and Sherman County Commissioner, said that he is scheduled to provide a quarterly report to the Wasco County Board of Commissioners this Wednesday but wants to present to the Budget Committee regarding Board of Health requests.

Mr. Smith said that they are looking at this year in general and looked for direction from the participating counties – Sherman, Gilliam and Wasco. He said that last year they budgeted \$376,000 from Wasco County and the County held back \$32,000 anticipating

more revenue would come in. He reported that there were unexpected expenses and the additional revenue was not realized. He said that they had used the \$376,000 budget number but planned for \$344,000.

Mr. Smith said that there have been changes to PERS and health care that have impacted their budget. He reported that both Gillam and Sherman Counties have approved a 5% increase. He said that he knew Wasco was talking about \$314,000 and the BOH has talked about how they would absorb that as an agency; since two counties are increasing and one is cutting their Public Health budget, the County cutting should experience those reductions in service.

He said that Public Health is asking for \$394,800 from Wasco County which includes the 5% increase. He said that \$314,000 will be a remarkable cut. He pointed out that right now Wasco County is studying what Public Health means to them; a cut will muddy those waters.

Mr. Smith said that they had some facilitated agreements they were considering for IT, space, facilities, etc. He stated that the original idea was that Public Health would stay in the Wasco County computer and vehicle rotation but it has not which is a cost to Public Health. He said that they had to hire a budget person for \$10,000. He said that the other two counties overpay for Public Health services - \$200,000 collectively and feel that their contribution is more than equal and they cannot subsidize Wasco County's contribution.

Ms. Morris stated that Public Health funding did go to the management team meeting as an increase to the current budget. She said that overwhelmingly the group decided that they did not have enough information to weigh in on the subject and that decision belonged to the Budget Committee. Mr. Smith asked if other partner funding comes to the management team. Ms. Morris replied that it does – NORCOR, MCCFL, etc.

Commissioner Hege asked what Wasco County budgeted last year. Ms. Morris responded that this year it was \$314,000 with the option to bring that up to \$344,000 based on meeting certain goals. She said that this year the budget is \$314,000.

Chair Davis said that last year the budget was \$314,000 and that is what is suggested for the upcoming year. Ms. Morris said that the budget this year is \$314,000 with an additional \$32,000 held back until certain goals are met. Mr. Smith said another \$32,000

was set aside hoping for other revenue to come in.

Commissioner Hege said that from where Wasco County was to what is being asked is a 25% increase which is significant – more significant than anything else being considered. Kathi Hall, NCPHD Business Manager, said that Wasco County's contribution has actually gone down – in 2008 it was \$334,000.

Mr. Stone stated that during that same period, all other Wasco County departments have cut costs and the County would ask the same of Public Health. Mr. Smith responded that they have cut FTE but had to ad \$29,000 to their budget for HR, computers, etc. which they absorbed into their budget. He noted that Wasco County's contribution to Public Health in the 2008/2009 fiscal year was \$334,000 and went up to \$344,000 this year.

Mr. Stone said that an FTE decrease of two represents HHW which is moving back to Wasco County. Mr. Smith replied that they were at 28 FTE and went to 25, HHW moving back to Wasco County will bring them down to 23 FTE.

Commissioner Hege asked about the change in Environmental Health. Mr. Smith said that when Glenn Pierce retired they chose to keep that in-house without replacing that position.

Chair Davis asked what changes Public Health would anticipate with a budget of \$314,000 from Wasco County. Mr. Smith replied that they would cut service in Wasco County but that the other participating counties would experience that as well. He said they may need to cut clinic hours. He said they have already cut back Environmental Health but inspections might slow down. He said that these are all things that would be considered. He said that if Public Health is doing its job, no one notices; but if they are not, it is obvious. He said that Public Health is doing a good job and would have to figure out a way to lose the least amount of services.

Chair Davis said that realistically Public Health would be shrinking about \$70,000 which is about 1.5 FTE. Mr. Smith said that it would be about \$80,000. Ms. Hall stated that it would depend on the position. Mr. Smith stated that there is a lot of job sharing so it makes it difficult to determine. Chair Davis said that they would probably experience some layoff. Mr. Smith said they would but there is a lot of job sharing.

Commissioner Hege asked if Environmental Health is self-sufficient – he pointed out that there are not a lot of programs at Public Health that generate revenue but that one does. Mr. Smith said that there are mandated services but it is the unmandated services that generate revenue. Commissioner Hege asked if Public Health has looked at increasing those revenue generating services.

Mr. Smith said that they can charge a certain fee but because they are Public Health they have to offer a sliding scale for fees. Commissioner Hege noted that is not the case for Environmental Health. Mr. Smith replied that is correct and they did have an increase in those fees.

Mr. Davis asked Ms. Morris if Public Health funding would be discussed later this afternoon. Ms. Morris replied that it would be.

Mr. Smith said that he appreciates the Committee's time and said that Ms. Hall would stay to answer questions and he would be available by phone.

Chair Davis called for a break at 10:36 a.m.

The meeting reconvened at 10:49 a.m.

Mr. Stone said that he would like to touch on staffing and some of the new things in the proposed budget. He said that going in there were a couple of major challenges that could not be ignored – some short-term, some long-term. He said that some staffing increases are temporary and some mid-term for project initiatives.

Mr. Stone said that in Taxation and Assessment there is an increase of three appraisers and an office specialist. He said that there has been a software transition going on for a couple of years that requires records conversion – some of those records are paper. He reported that there are 17,000 property records that need to be converted. It is his opinion that it is critical to address this so that the system is fully functioning. He said that it will take one FTE one or two years to complete that task; once it is done, the County can reevaluate staffing. He went on to say that it has been more than 20 years since the majority of properties have been appraised on site; with this transition that work needs to be done. He said that that number of appraisers may not be needed forever, but some appraisers will retire in the next five years and it is hoped that the project will be completed by then. Mr. Stone went on to say that the Finance Department is taking on additional duties from the 'I'reasurer's Office and also adding staff for Human Resources – those additions will be permanent.

Mr. Stone said that for years the County has been trying to determine how they can afford the time to update their codes to be current. Ms. Brewer interjected that the last complete update was in 1983; there have been some piecemeal updates since then.

Mr. Stone said that with the increase in applications, Planning will need two associate planners and an assistant planner. He said that they hope to dedicate time to the LUDO update and have that completed over the next couple of budget cycles.

He said that currently there are 110 FTE, 14 part-time and 4 scasonal employees. The proposed budget increases FTE to 117 for a 2% increase in costs and the largest increase in staffing in 17 years. He said administration is adding things back in; the trimming the departments have done has provided a better picture of what there is and where more is needed. He said that these increases address both short-term and mid-term projects. Administration wants to maintain agility in where projects are addressed.

Commissioner Runyon noted that the reason the Senior Planner position is not listed as an addition is because it was already part of the budget and has been vacant since August. Ms. Brewer added that part of the additional Planning personnel is succession planning. She said that there are two upcoming retirements; she does not expect to replace one of the retiring positions unless there is a dramatic increase in the work load. She noted that the economy is up and planning applications have increased beyond historic highs.

Commissioner Hege asked if the new people will free more experienced staff to do the LUDO work. Ms. Brewer replied that she hopes to hire an experienced person who can serve as a project manager to oversee that work. She said that the new assistant planner will relieve some of the counter time from the associate planners who can then do some of the project work. She said that right now, with the demands of the counter, the associates have only about one day a week in which to do their work.

Commissioner Hege asked if she is looking to contract out the LUDO work. Ms. Brewer replied that some data analysis might have to be contracted. She reported that the State is

doing some model code updates that will be helpful but the State grants budget has been hit hard by planning for tsunami and other coastal emergency events.

Commissioner Hege asked if plan updates are in this year's budget. Ms. Brewer said that the plan is to look at what they currently have. She said that the Board of Commissioners will hear more from the Planning Commission this Wednesday. She said that the LUDO cannot be done until the Comp Plan is updated and that is where the focus will be. She said that once they have reached a certain point in the Comp Plan update, they will be able to begin work on the LUDO update. She predicted the work will take a couple of years; right now the rules are outdated and tie the hands of the Planning Department and the Planning Commission as they try to serve the public.

County Assessor Jill Amery said that the software conversion in Taxation and Assessment began in 2011; the tax portion began in 2013. She said that not all of the information was converted; a significant amount has to be hand-entered. She said that there was not a lot of information on the project as the previous Assessor had so much of it in his head, but she did find one document that predicted it would take many years to complete the conversion. She said that she would like to see it happen faster – the data is too old and needs to be caught up. She noted that although a 6-year cycle of appraisal updates is no longer mandated by the state, most counties have continued that standard. She said part of the increasing in staffing is a succession plan. She said she hopes to get an experienced person but the industry is not seeing a lot of new people and she anticipates she may have to do a lot of training; they need to get that staff in now so that the training can occur before retirements.

Mr. Davis said that in tight budget times it is hard to make the argument that the County can make more money doing appraisals and the previous used to say that it is hard to say what the return on that investment would be. Mr. Davis said that he believes that as the work is done, they will find that there are a lot of properties that are not being properly assessed and he is very happy that the County will be going on-site to update those assessments. He said that he thinks it will be useful for future budget discussions to have the ROI data for the new appraisers. Ms. Amery replied that she believes she will be able to provide that information. She said that Oregon tax laws are some of the most complex in the nation – even though an evaluation may go up, it may not result in an increase in taxes. She said that some properties currently in farm use are not meeting those requirements and will need to be removed from that program. She said she cannot

estimate county-wide but hopes to have the information for the Committee in the future. She said it will take about six years to get through all the properties in the County – then to make that data useful will take additional work.

Ms. Morris stated that the personnel increases bring personnel to 45% of operating costs with materials and services at 55%. The Sheriff's Department is the largest portion of personnel costs in the County as they also include Community Corrections, 911, etc.

Commissioner Hege asked about personnel in Public Works. Ms. Morris stated that the new Public Works Director elected to not have his old position as Project Manager refilled which is a reduction of 1 FTE.

Commissioner Hege asked about the Fort Dalles Museum. Ms. Morris reported that the Museum has made some changes in their structure with the goal of having a mostly volunteer staff with a few appointees to manage that staff. She said that they have someone managing at \$12 per hour which is very reasonable – they want to move him to .6 or .8 FTE to give him benefits; he does the work because he likes it. They also want to have a Volunteer Coordinator in a non-benefitted position. Commissioner Runyon noted that the Museum has an active Board with a vision. Ms. Morris went on to say that the County contributes \$15,000 and the Museum Commission has asked for an increase to \$17,500 from both the City of The Dalles and the County; they are also doing fund-raising drives and membership drives. Commissioner Hege asked if most of their funding comes from sources other than the County. Ms. Morris replied that it does.

Ms. Morris stated that the County Clerk is retiring at the end of June and the County is actively looking for someone to fill that position.

Ms. Morris stated that she expects PERS to be \$851,000 which is 9% of the budget. She said that there is a court ruling that will have an impact but we do not know what that will be. She observed that Tier I and Tier II employees are the most expensive and compose about 40% of the workforce; that cost will diminish as they retire. The remaining staff is OPSERP which is less costly, although law enforcement is a little more than general service staff.

Ms. Morris went on to say that the County will have a new health program beginning January 1, 2016. She said that an employee committee reviewed health plans and took

proposals from different providers and determined that staying with CIS and a co-pay plan was the best option. She noted that it is a fairly flat cost to the County compared to the current health program. She said that it means the employee will pay more at the moment of use. She said this plays a role in the beginning balance and helps keeps personnel costs down. She said that costs have more than doubled since 2004 but have remained fairly flat in recent years.

Commissioner Hege asked about the transition from represented to non-represented staff. Mr. Stone stated that the County had done a salary survey and compared that to their internal structure to set a salary matrix and then moved reps and non-reps into the program; AFSCME had not been part of that original merge. AFSCME has since left the County and a committee was formed to explore how the formerly AFSCME represented group would be brought into the compensation program. The group spent several months working on that; part of the challenge was that through the AFSCME contracts, the County had been paying the employees' 6% portion of the PERS contributions. The final determination was that before converting them from the old scale to the new, 6% would be added to their rate to determine where they would fall in the new scale and once converted, they would pay their own PERS contributions. That process has been completed and they are now on the same pay scale as the other non-represented employees.

Commissioner Hege asked if everyone is on the new scale. Mr. Stone replied that everyone but employees represented by FOPPO are on the new scale. Ms. Morris noted that that has three represented employees. In addition, elected officials are not on that scale as they fall under a different category. Commissioner Hege said that it is significant that the former AFSCME employees are now on the new scale. Commissioner Runyon noted that the effects will be seen over time. Ms. Morris agreed, saying that it will be interesting to see how the market rate changes; there will be regular studies to determine rates and the County will follow the market. Mr. Stone observed that it is a completely different approach than the traditional government approach. Commissioner Hege said it is market-based which is necessary if you want to attract and maintain good people.

Ms. Morris said that transfers of funds are important; there is a public perception that government just moves money around but the County does not do that. She explained that each fund must have a balanced budget; if a fund wants to support actions in another fund, there has to be an avenue through which that money is spent. She said that transfers

may look like we are just moving money, but the grid included in her message shows the transfers and the reasoning behind them. She said that the transfer will show as a requirement from one fund and a resource to another fund. She reviewed the fund transfers on the grid.

Ms. Morris said that the Capital Outlay grid is courtesy of Facilities Manager Fred Davis; it is how he communicates what projects need to be done. Mr. Davis said that one major project is a grant request from Circuit Court to bring the electricity distribution up to date; he said that the original budget of \$10,000 will not be enough. He said that they have now given the State what he believes to be a more accurate estimate of the anticipated costs for the project. He said if the full \$50,000 does not come in, they will have to budget the full amount in the next budget cycle. Ms. Morris noted that they had to show the expense in this budget so that if the funding comes in, it can be spent.

Ms. Morris said that other than that project, they are trying to fit more personnel into an office that is already full. Ms. Amery said that she and Mr. Davis had looked at trading office space but it doesn't appear that that will work. She said that they called in Office Max to evaluate and Office Max came back with two plans; however, she and Mr. Davis did not find either to be workable and are working on a plan that will work even when her office draws down through attrition. Mr. Davis noted that the Office Max plans did not allow enough moving space for people to get in and out of their areas; the room is only so big and there are doors in the way. He said it is challenging to make sure it is both safe and ergonomic.

Ms. Morris reviewed the remaining items in the Capital Improvement budget. Public Works Director Arthur Smith said that over the past several years there has not been a lot spent in equipment; the Public Works fleet is sound but old and that is not sustainable. He said his department will be more proactive and will be looking at what can be cycled out for equipment that is not really used and invest in equipment that is used.

Ms. Morris said that the Museum's capital is \$139,000 which came from a previous donation made by the Martin family; they will be using some of that this year – there are safety issues to be addressed. She said that the Museum Commission is being cautious about expenditures.

Ms. Morris stated that the Clerk has \$25,000 in capital without a target. County Clerk

Linda Brown said that it may be for microfilm. She explained that currently they can only allow internal staff access as there is confidential information contained in the archived records and they cannot go back to the microfilm to redact. She said that there are also 126 books, many of which need restoration at \$2,000 per book. She said they are back to 1952 on indexing but would like to be back to 1854 – she is not optimistic that it will be possible. She said she does not like the books handled as that contributes to deterioration.

Ms. Morris said that Public Works has no budget for machinery which is not reasonable or sustainable; she is glad to see that Mr. Smith has a plan in place to keep the County from having to be reactionary to this issue.

Ms. Morris said that while all reserve funds are accessed through the Commission, some are restricted and some are unrestricted depending on the source of the funding. For example, Road Reserve and 911 are restricted funds and can only be used for certain expenditures. She said all have increased under this Commission and she is anxious to have a work session with the Board to have targeted goals for these funds. She said she believes it is a good process for the County to experience.

Commissioner Hege asked if the SRS monies are in the Road Reserve Fund. Ms. Morris replied that there is a plan to put the payment that will come in this year into the budget with a transfer from his Operational Fund to the Reserve Fund; the funds come into the Operational Fund. Mr. Smith stated that the AOC predicts \$488,000 this year which does not include the \$102,000 already received in SRS funding.

Ms. Morris stated that Contingency has been increased. The County used contingency this year and she feels sure more will be used before the fiscal year ends. She said the process of having it available, knowing the costs and having the transparency of coming to the Commission for Contingency to cover unexpected costs is a sound practice.

Chair Davis called for a lunch break at 12:02 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 12:57 p.m.

Public Comment

Ms. Hall said that Public Health is thankful for the \$12,500 increased funding they received last year which showed concern for the public. She said they have already

experienced significant cuts; any further cuts will reduce services and impact public health safety.

Sheriff Rick Eiesland announced that former Sheriff Darryl Hill was involved in the accidental shooting of his wife who is currently in a medically induced coma. He said they have already completed surgery to repair her colon and will be having further surgery to repair her kidney and liver; it is touch and go. He reported that Mr. Hill is at his home and was able to relate what happened. Sheriff Eiesland said he had spoken to Mr. Hill's daughter who reported that her father is in and out of it; he does not always understand what is happening or what has happened.

Ms. Morris said that the changes and challenges portion of her message gives an opportunity to Department Directors to talk to the Committee.

Chief Deputy Lane Magill announced that the Search and Rescue team us up to 28 members and there are 60 members in the Posse; between the two they have committed about 40,000 volunteer dollars to the County. He said it is important to be aware of that contribution. He said that the Reserves contribute another 20,000 in volunteer dollars through their work; that will increase in the coming year as they have plans to add another two or three reserve officers.

He went on to say that as a group they have talked to Frontier about a possible 911 Center consolidation. He said he has reviewed the numbers for feasibility and has put it on hold until some questions can be answered. He said 911 takes over 40,000 calls for service and another 45,000 administrative calls – the majority come out of the City of The Dalles. He reported that there are 11 dispatchers. He stated that they have requested additional funding for MDT upgrades and replacements.

Chief Deputy Magill went on to say that they are requesting four cars for the rotation as opposed the three they usually request. He explained that they have changed to Interceptors to replace the Expeditions. He said the Expeditions proved a poor choice for patrol due to their high fuel and maintenance costs. He said they have realized a 7% savings with the Interceptors. He reported that the Expeditions needed brake changes every 12,000 miles compared to every 40,000 miles for the Interceptors. He said he thinks they will be able to expand in the future based on these savings.

Sheriff Eiesland said that they have a marine deputy on patrol with a new boat. Chief Deputy Magill said that the County still owns the boathouse but the Port of The Dalles is taking it over as an office and maintenance house for the Port – they will insure it and pay the utilities. He said the County no longer needs it and the Port has a use for it. He added that the Sheriff has just completed its first year of a contract to patrol over 95 miles of the river; it has been a productive contract and they have seen good results. It is a five-year contract.

Mr. Smith said that over the last two years Public Works has had eight employees retire with a total of 210 years of combined service. He said that the positions have been filled and the crew has finished a second full year of accident-free service. He noted that it illustrates that the younger employees are being safety conscious and providing excellent service. He reported that they will receive SRS payments for the current and upcoming fiscal years and so have added some chip sealing and put some in equipment. He stated that while he is the face of the department Don Uhalde and Jeff McCall are integral to its operation – they deserve a good deal of credit. Mr. Smith pointed out that although he has been officially the Public Works Director for just a few weeks, he has been with the department for 23 years. He said that there are challenges but it is an exciting time, adding that his department will not spend time worrying and whining, they will take what they have and see what they can do.

Ms. Amery said that they are seeing an increase; real estate prices are rising and the market is recovering. She said that real market value increases do not always equate to assessed value. She said they have been flat for a while but may go up. She said the southern portion of the County tends to remain a little more flat. She said that while she inherited some challenges, her department has had good support from administration. She said her office will get the data converted and appraisals caught up, but there will be some training challenges. She said that her staff is stepping up. She reported that they will probably have three retirements in the next three years and it will be hard to replace that much experience. She said that she hopes some of the temporary staff will be able to step into those roles; there is already one who has expressed an interest.

Chair Davis said that often the Tax office is not citizens' favorite place but he appreciates the friendly culture in that office. Ms. Amery said that they are working to raise that bar higher; they want to open the data to the public so they can get their information on line.

Ms. Brewer said that the Planning Department has a broad array of goals and services she feels fortunate to have come on board during such an exciting time. She said that in November the former Director left; because both she and Mr. Smith were new to their positions it was easy to work together to find a way to improve the culture and efficiency in their building. She said one thing that came out of that is the realization that the Planning Department had been pared down to such an extent that it was no longer able to fulfill its mission. The work they did evaluating the departments helped her to identify what is missing.

She went on to say that work at the Planning Commission found that the Comprehensive Plan is so out of date that it presents a liability for the County. She said that she has been filling both the position of Senior Planner and Planning Director since November which has allowed her to understand both positions. She said that two members of her staff will be leaving in the next three to five years leaving a staff that is currently about two years old.

Ms. Brewer reported that they are doing succession planning and long range planning to produce a more functional department that provides better service. She stated that applications are up 20% over last year and that was true for the previous year as well. The economy is recovering and the Planning Department needs to support that; to do that, she will need additional staff. She said her staff hears almost daily about how out-of-date the current plan is and how out-of-step it is with other counties – she said the public deserves to have that explored. She said this is an opportunity to build a new foundation and build on past work to support the public. She said some of the positions are true additions to staff and some are part of the succession plan. She said staffing will be revisited once the long term planning is complete.

Commissioner Hege commented that part of the work she and Mr. Smith did was to look at integrating the two departments and sharing administrative staff. He asked what the result was. Ms. Brewer replied that while it did not make sense to combine the departments, Mr. Smith has begun a process to look at reconfiguring the building to be less siloed. She said one of the ideas is to share administrative functions; in the meantime, they are cross-training staff to support absences due to illness, vacation, etc. She said they also may be able to share facility equipment to make it more efficient for both – right now they are picking away at the low-hanging fruit while they determine best next steps. Mr. Smith added that they are planning a work session with the Board to look at the bigger

picture. Ms. Brewer said that it will be a multi-year project.

Some discussion occurred regarding resources to support this project. Mr. Stone said that during the Management Team meeting they had agreed upon \$25,000. Mr. Smith and Ms. Brewer agreed saying that is what they remembered as well.

DA Nisely asked if Planning is experiencing delays. Ms. Brewer replied that because the plan is outdated it is difficult even for staff who has been present for the changes to navigate the plan. She said that the LUDO is also very difficult and slows the process; it should not be that hard – Planning is supposed to simplify the process. She said they try to look at how it was implemented previously so that it is not applied inconsistently as it can be very difficult in an appeal – it is an unnecessary risk. She stated that their most long-term employee, Dawn Baird, reports that this is the busiest Planning has ever been – traditionally she has 20 applications to process each year; this year she has 60 and is also trying to guide new staff. Ms. Brewer said she would also like to use Ms. Baird to help create training manuals.

Commissioner Kramer said that his notes say that they were moving forward with an additional \$25,000 for Facilities. Ms. Morris said she thinks that was just for the Assessor.

Mr. Stone noted that a lot of planned retirements have been discussed; he wants to recognize the upcoming retirement of the Clerk who has been with the County for 36 years.

Sub-committee Report – Compensation Committee

John Hutchison, member of the Wasco County Compensation Committee, said that the Compensation Committee is appointed by the Board of Commissioners and meets each year to consider the salaries of elected officials. He reported that the Committee met last Thursday, May 14th. He stated that they looked at the Clerk's salary and recommended a decrease since many of that position's duties have been shifted to other offices and the staff has shrunk from seven to three.

Mr. Hutchison went on to say that they had reviewed supporting materials from two independent audits exposing weaknesses in the Treasurer's Office. The audits demonstrated that departments were not getting accurate information and finance could not provide information to the Board due to the inaccuracies. As a result, key functions

are being moved from the Treasurer to the Finance Office significantly reducing the workload for the Treasurer. The Compensation Committee recommends reducing the Treasurer from \$45,000 to 240 hours per year, a maximum of 20 hours each month to accomplish statutory review.

The District Attorney asked how an elected official can be paid by the hour. Mr. Stone said that it is a stipend figured on the current salary translated to an hourly rate. Mr. Hutchison observed that the Treasurer placed the County in a precarious situation.

He went on to say that the Sheriff requested an increase of 2.5% for elected officials who have not seen an increase since 2012. He said that after reviewing salaries paid in all the other counties in the state, the committee determined it to be a reasonable request with an overall impact of \$10,000 annually.

Commissioner Hege said that the reduction for the Clerk is not new. Ms. Brown said that she cannot defend the responsibility that her office has in comparison to what other elected officials do. She pointed out that the County will not be able to find a replacement with over 30 years of experience – there will be a huge learning curve. She pointed out that she has a young staff and there are some changes coming that will stress the office. She said she is willing to help with the transition. She observed that in 2016 there will be a presidential election and she is willing to come back to help with that. She said this is a mid-term retirement and noted that the requirements for the clerk's position are minimal – 18 years of age and a resident. She said that we have seen what happens when someone comes into an elected office without the necessary skill set; she does not want to see that happen in the Clerk's office.

Some discussion ensued about the history of shifting duties in the Clerk's office. DA Nisely noted that the Clerk's position is especially critical for elections. He reported that he has defended the County for election challenges and those suits can be nasty – someone capable needs to be found to fill that position.

The Committee thanked Mr. Hutchison and the rest of the Compensation Committee for their service.

Deliberations

Ms. Morris said she wants to walk the Committee through the process of balancing the

budget. She said that she is the avenue for getting the budget compiled and approved. She explained that each Department Director submits their budget at the current level along with requests. She shares the requests along with the supporting reasons and the impact of the requests; from that the budget team discusses each request and decides whether or not to add it to the budget. Those decisions are then brought to the Management Team where they are discussed and they come to a consensus as to whether to follow the Budget Teams' recommendation or not. She said that the Budget Committee can make changes but they must balance the budget.

Ms. Morris reviewed the chart outlining the requests and the decisions that were made at both the Budget Team and Management Team levels.

Commissioner Kramer asked where they could take the additional \$25,000 to support the work to improve efficiencies at Public Works and Planning. Ms. Morris replied that there is no set policy around the Reserve Fund; what is put in is not set by policy. She said the Committee can take it from anywhere as long as they balance the budget but they have to stay within policy for Contingency and Unappropriated Funds.

Commissioner Kramer asked if the Committee wants to give the \$25,000.

The Budget Committee was in consensus to set aside the \$25,000 for Public Works and Planning. Commissioner Kramer suggested it could come out of Capital Acquisition.

Commissioner Hege noted that the \$25,000 is a number; any contract would have to come through the board. Chair Davis agreed saying that the \$25,000 is just a placeholder. Mr. Smith said right now the funds are just for cost modeling. Facilities Manager Fred Davis said that they came close to that amount for the courthouse electrical plan – he said it will be important to have something with some detail on which to base decisions.

Ms. Morris said that the money can come from Capital reserve and can be budgeted there or moved out of that fund. She noted that it may be identified as a project that will go on for years and will be more costly. Commissioner Runyon suggested that it can be left there and be identified as a project.

Mr. Stone said that it is for both Planning and Public Works and suggested it be taken out

of Facilities Capital and charged out to both departments. Facilities Manager Davis said that for the Assessor's project, it was in his budget. Mr. Stone said that \$12,500 could come from Facilities Capital Public Works. Commissioner Kramer said this is for both Planning and Public works and he wants to take it from General Fund and leave Public Works whole. Ms. Morris said it could be taken from Facility Capital Reserves to Facility Capital Building to reorganize and make that space work better.

Chair Davis asked the Committee to address the Public Health request; the budget is currently at \$314,000. Commissioner Runyon said he is not in favor of \$394,000. He said that he could live with \$344,000 but hasn't seen why they need that.

Ms. Hall said that if you look at the County Contribution spread sheet, in 2008/2009 it was \$330,000; if you compare that to \$394,000 that is a reflection of Public Health not asking for an increase over the years. She said they have spent down their beginning fund balance and employees have not had a COLA increase in three of the last five years and are currently being paid below market value.

Chair Davis said that all he really knows is what he has read and tends to agree with Commissioner Runyon but it is hard to know what the County would lose. Ms. Hall said that they have not come up with definite decreases; they have talked about a reduction in FTEs but they are so integrated, it would be difficult.

Commissioner Kramer said that there has been no discussion of the in-kind provided by Wasco County which plays a big part. Ms. Morris said that she does not have that number readily available but will be able to report it once her additional staff is onboard.

Commissioner Hege asked that if Ms. Morris were to think a few years back could she remember that number. Ms. Morris said it was right around \$400,000 but it is probably less now. She said there is less of her time and less from IT but facilities is probably about the same. IT Director Paul Ferguson said that his staff time is about the same but equipment has changed; Public Health represents between 22% and 24% of his staff time. Ms. Morris said that for Finance/HR there was a fair amount of unknown for Public Health. Some of the in-kind that is not happening through her office is because it put the County at risk to do some of that work for another business; NCPHD then realized that they did not have that capacity and hired an outside entity. She said that Public Health was also removed from the County computer and vehicle programs. She said there is still in-

kind contributions happening, but at a lower level than it was.

Chair Davis said that in-kind needs to be considered when viewing this. Mr. Polehn said it is also important to remember that Wasco County provides the facility and maintenance. Facilities Manager Fred Davis said that Wasco County takes care of the main structure and provides labor to help move offices, etc. Mr. Stone said that there is \$15,000 of capital in the budget for improvements in that building.

Commissioner Runyon said that for over four years he has heard the desperation of other departments that have continued to operate frugally to build toward where we are now. He said that looking at what the County gave last year, if we elect to give Public Health the \$80,000 the Committee would have to find the money in the budget – would the Committee want to reduce other department budgets to make up the difference?

Mr. Stone responded that the Department Directors have all reacted to changes in their business environments and he would like to see the same from Public Health. He said that their environment is changing as a result of the Affordable Care Act but the ask continues to increase; the County has a difficult time trying to manage that on their side of the budget. He noted that as revenue decreases, services should decrease – it is important to be agile and reactive.

DA Nisley asked how to scale back on vaccines. Mr. Stone said he is not suggesting that we do. Facilities Manager Davis said that he sees some variables for which there is not a quantity – for instance, septic tank installations have dropped over the last few years which is a reduction in accountable services. There is no documentation and those projections are significant. Ms. Hall said they will go into that on Wednesday.

Some discussion ensued as to the various numbers from this year's budget. Ms. Morris said that Public Health is budgeted at \$344,000 for the current year although some of that funding is contingent on Public Health meeting goals. Commissioner Hege said that Public Health is asking for a 14% increase from Wasco County and a 5% increase from the other two counties.

Ms. Morris said that last year's Public Health request was contingent on a few items; it is expected that Wednesday they will demonstrate that they have met those goals. She said that a separate discussion occurred about what would happen in the case of an emergency and it was determined that they could come to the Commission with a request for a

demonstrated need. She said they are coming to the Board to ask them to increase it to \$376,000 but it could be any number.

Commissioner Hege asked if \$376,000 was considered. Ms. Morris said that it was considered but the final decision was \$314,000 was approved with an addition \$30,000 contingent on goals.

Mr. Stone noted that \$314,000 was the base number for Wasco County although \$376,000 was what was adopted by Public Health in their budget. He said that Public Health wanted to build a contingency in their budget. The County had said that if there were to be an emergency they could come for an increase. Ms. Morris observed that an emergency is subjective; what Public Health sees as an emergency might not be considered so by the Board of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Hege said that his point is that they are basing the percentage of increase on their budgeted number rather than the County's budgeted funding. Ms. Morris agreed saying that if it was figured off of the \$344,000 then the request should be \$361,000. Chair Davis asked what number the Committee wants to put into this budget. Commissioner Runyon said his question is still, "Where would the increase come from?" He said that he is sold on the plans from the three directors and does not want to back up on that. Ms. Morris said that where it would come from would be up to the committee.

Commissioner Runyon said that one choice is to make no changes as the budget is currently balanced. If the Committee changes that, his feeling is not to take it from where funds have just been allocated. Ms. Morris said it can be taken from Contingency or Unappropriated. She added that there is also another \$25,000 that needs to be balanced. Commissioner Hege noted that currently there is \$45,000 for the Treasurer which will now be \$5,800. Mr. Stone reminded him that that change is actually going to go to Finance for the additional staff they will need to take on the duties from the Treasurer's office.

Chair Davis said that the Committee should first decide on the number and then talk about how to balance the budget.

Commissioner Kramer said that he feels they should have the currently budgeted figure of \$314,000 and come back to the Board if they have a demonstrated need. He said that right

now, the County does not really know what they are getting for their money. He said he has had individual meetings and still does not know. He said he could live with staying with what is already budgeted.

Commissioner Hege asked if the County has paid the \$314,000. Ms. Morris said that she stopped paying Public Health at \$314,000; presumably they will demonstrate that they have meet the requirements for the additional \$30,000. She said she will then ask at a later meeting for permission to send the money. She said that she hears that they feel they are in an emergency and will ask for more, however, just because it is in their budget does not commit the County to that amount – that is true of any agency to which the County contributes.

Commissioner Hege asked if Public Health invoices the County at \$344,000. Ms. Hall replied that they do but that Ms. Morris stopped paying at \$314,014.

Chair Davis said he heard Commissioner Kramer make what could be a motion. He said that the Committee needs to get to a motion.

Ms. Hall asked that the Committee be clear in their motion so that there are not different numbers floating around.

{{{Commissioner Kramer moved to continue with \$314,000 for North Central Public Health District as presented in the budget and if Public Health has a demonstrated need, they can ask for additional funds. Committee Member Polehn seconded the motion which passed unanimously.}}}

Chair Davis asked the Committee to consider the Compensation Committee report.

{{{Committee Member Polehn moved to adopt the recommendations of the Wasco County Compensation Committee:

• To recommend that the County Treasurer's total compensation be an hourly stipend of \$24.56 per hour; and that the hourly stipend amount is the only benefit given to the County Treasurer; and that the total amount of hours allowed for the County Treasurer is limited to a maximum of 240 hours per fiscal year, with a maximum of 20 hours in any on-month period. He further moved that the Treasurer's wages be increased by 2.5%

commensurate with the other elected officials' salaries. He further moved that this recommendation be effective July 1st, 2015 and continue until such time as the County Commission re-evaluates the duties of the Treasurer.

- To recommend that the County Clerk be paid a monthly salary of \$4,053 as identified in the compensation survey to be effective July 1, 2015.
- To recommend that the County Assessor pay be increased by 2.5% effective July 1, 2015.
- To recommend that the County Sheriff compensation be increased by 2.5% effective July 1, 2015.
- To recommend that the County Commissioner pay be increased by 2.5% effective July 1, 2015.

Commissioner Hege seconded the motion which passed unanimously.}}}

Commissioner Hege said that the idea of a panic button at the front counter of the Planning Department troubles him; it seems like the County is doing something that is not useful. He said he believes it is ineffective. Mr. Stone said he thinks that ineffective is the wrong word; in the courthouse a deputy can just go upstairs. Sheriff Eiesland said that there has not been a school shooting in Wasco County but that does not mean his department does not prepare for it. He said that with the panic button, law enforcement can be on their way while staff continues to try to keep anyone from being hurt. He said when law enforcement arrives, the focus will shift to them.

Commissioner Hege said that he does not disagree but someone would have to be really out of control; people already get upset when they are at the Planning Department. DA Nisley asked if someone is standing in front of you with a knife, would you rather pick up a phone or push a button. Facilities Manager Davis added that the button will notify 911 who will send the nearest law enforcement officer. He noted that the button will also reduce the County's liability; if we reject this and someone is hurt, the County will be liable.

Ms. Brown added that there are not many males in the Planning Department and she has noticed in her office that people are more reluctant to become aggressive when there is a male present. She said they pushed their button more frequently before they had a male on staff.

DA Nisely said that is presentation for the increase of the legal secretary from .8 to 1.0

FTE for the 2015/2016 fiscal year was that it be permanent, not tied to the implementation of the Karpel software. He said that with all the intake in his office, when one is gone the other can do that work. He said that will not end with the conclusion of the implementation. Commissioner Hege responded that when the position was increased last year the Committee assumed it would be for the duration of the implementation. DA Nisley said that there is an ongoing need for the increase. Ms. Morris said that it had been her understanding that it was to be an implementation increase.

Mr. Stone said this is the difference between project-based increases and permanent increases. DA Nisley said that he is asserting that it is not project based and should be permanent. He said that people in his office stay at work even when they are sick because they know it will be more work for others.

Commissioner Runyon said that the Committee had agreed to the increase as projectbased and that it should be reviewed as it goes along. The question of permanency is another question; for now, the project is ongoing.

Sheriff Eiesland noted that Parole and Probation has three officers and a manager who also carries a case load. He said that one officer quit last November and the FOPPO Union negotiations had gone into costly arbitration. He said that the vacant position was not replaced in order to fund the legal costs. He explained that at the start of the new fiscal year, Parole and Probation Officers will go to 5 days a week at 7.5 hours a day rather than 4 days a week at 9 hours a day.

Commissioner Hege asked if the compensation changes will be rolled into the budget. Ms. Morris replied that they would.

Commissioner Hege asked about rent from the Walnut Street house. Facilities Manager Davis said that the house is no longer rentable; there would have to be some investments made to bring it up to standard. He noted that they left \$10,000 in the budget for painting the exterior, but the Board may elect to demolish it. Commissioner Hege noted that the \$10,000 is a placeholder. Facilities Manager Davis replied that it is.

Commissioner Hege pointed out that the RV park and building were funded to increase revenue but it appears that revenue has declined. Mr. Stone responded that there have been changes as to how that revenue is allocated. During Fair the RV rentals are in the

Fair Fund. He said that he believes that total revenue had been at \$17,000 and is now at \$48,000.

Commissioner Hege said that the General Fund put money in to pay the match for the RV park and he cannot see where it was paid back. Ms. Morris said that she does not remember the amount of the match but believes it was paid back. She said she could have that information for him before the next public meeting.

{{{Commissioner Kramer moved to continue with \$314,000 for North Central Public Health District as presented in the budget and if Public Health has a demonstrated need, they can ask for additional funds. Committee Member Polehn seconded the motion which passed unanimously.}}}

{{{Committee Member Polehn moved to adopt the recommendations of the Wasco County Compensation Committee:

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- To recommend that the County Commissioner pay be increased by 2.5% effective July 1, 2015.

Commissioner Hege seconded the motion which passed unanimously.}}}

{{Commissioner Runyon moved that the Budget Committee of Wasco County has reviewed and hereby approves the budget for the 2015/16 fiscal year in the total

amount of \$42,639,174. Commissioner Hege seconded the motion which passed unanimously.}}}

{{{Commissioner Kramer moved that the Wasco County Budget Committee approve taxes for the 2015/16 fiscal year at the rate of \$4.2523 per \$1,000 of assessed value for operating purposes in the General Fund. Commissioner Runyon seconded the motion which passed unanimously.}}}

{{{Commissioner Hege moved to adjourn the meeting. Committee Member Polehn seconded the motion which passed unanimously.}}}

{{{Commissioner Hege moved to adjourn. Commissioner Runyon seconded the motion which passed unanimously.}}}

Chair Davis adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

WASCO COUNTY BUDGET COMMITTEE

Pat Davis, Committee Chair

Ken Polehn, Committee Member

ABSENT John Carter, Continittee Member

Scott C. Hege, County Commissioner

Rod Runyon, County Commissioner

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Steve Kramer, County Commissioner