

Board of County Commissioners of Lincoln County  
September 23, 2024

The Board will begin conducting reviews regarding preliminary 2025 budget requests. The following departments are scheduled to discuss their requests as follows:

- 9:00 Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance
- 9:00 Tom Nestor – Sheriff’s Operations, Jail and Victim Assistance Budgets
- 9:45 Ty Stogsdill – Land Use Budget
- 10:00 Jim Covington – County Treasurer’s Budget
- 10:15 Jeremiah Higgins – County Assessor’s Budget
- 10:30 Ken Stroud – Office of Emergency Management Budget and E911 Budget
- 11:00 Patrick Leonard–Weed Control Budget
- 11:30 Kelly Meier – Public Health Budget
- 1:00 Chris Monks, Bruce Walters, and Judd Kravig – Road and Bridge Budgets

Other budget requests that will be reviewed during the day as time allows include the following:

- Commissioners
- Administrator
- County Clerk and Recorder and Elections
- Administrative
- Maintenance of Buildings/Plant
- Land Surveyor
- Fairgrounds
- Health Inspector
- Veterans Office
- Library Fund
- Conservation Trust Fund
- Capital Projects
- Landfill Fund
- Lodging Tax/Tourism Fund
- East Central Council of Local Governments
- Fire Control
- District Attorney
- Ambulance Service
- Emergency Medical Service
- E.M.S. Subsidy
- Developmentally Disabled
- Community Development Block Grant
- Rural Economic Development Initiative Grant
- Lincoln Community Hospital

The Board of Lincoln County Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. on September 23, 2024, to hear the 2025 preliminary budget requests. Chairman Steve Burgess, Commissioners Wayne Ewing and Doug Stone, County Administrator Jacob Piper, Clerk of the Board Corinne M. Lengel, and commissioner candidates Wendy Pottorff and Terry Jaques attended.

Sheriff Tom Nestor and Captain Michael Yowell were present when Mr. Burgess called the meeting to order. He asked the captain to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Burgess then asked for a moment of silence to honor former county commissioner Ed Schiffrens.

The sheriff and captain presented the budget requests for the Sheriff's Operations, Jail, and Victim Assistance budgets, stating that the biggest increases were due to the commissioners' directive to add two-step cost of living raises. Sheriff Nestor said they'd also done some cleanup within the Salaries line item to reflect better accuracy, such as moving Captain Yowell's salary from the Jail budget to the Sheriff – Operations budget. Since one of the corporals now heads the courthouse security, they removed that salary from the Jail budget; the court security grant will cover it in 2025. The 911 Authority Board also agreed to cover a salary next year, so they reduced the Jail budget by one deputy's salary. The Jail budget went down around \$11,000 from 2024, while the Sheriff – Operations budget increased more than \$32,000.

Land Use Administrator Ty Stogsdill arrived for his appointment at 9:25 a.m.

Captain Yowell presented the justifications for two corporal promotions to sergeants and Capital Projects requests for three new vehicles, jail plumbing maintenance, and equipment upgrades.

The sheriff said that although it was unpopular with his supervisors if the commissioners felt the need to cut his budget, he would prefer they took vehicles rather than cut staff salaries or benefits.

There were minimal increases to the Victims Assistance budget.

After the sheriff and captain left, Mr. Stogsdill presented the Land Use budget requests, stating that he'd left most line items the same as 2024, except the Salary and Ads and Notices. Mr. Stogsdill said he might need a new printer but had the money in the current budget to pay for it.

At 10:00 a.m., Treasurer Jim Covington and Deputy Ashley Erwin met with the Board to present the 2025 budget request for the Treasurer's office. Mr. Covington noted that it was only slightly higher than the 2024 budget because they would do away with the deputy position when he retired. The large amount in the Postage line item covered the postage machine. All departments used the machine and used to have to transfer funds to cover it, which sometimes led to shortages or hard feelings among department heads. They moved the line item to the Administrative budget in 2024, but Mr. Covington said they wanted to return it to the Treasurer's budget since the machine was in his office and they maintained it. Lastly, Mr. Covington said he had included money for a new desk for Mrs. Erwin.

County Assessor Jeremiah Higgins met with the Board at 10:15 a.m. Mr. Higgins anticipated a promotion for his newest hire, who would obtain his license in February or March and become an Ad-Valorem Apprentice. It would then give him three licensed employees. Subsequently, Mr. Higgins said he'd done away with the Part time line item as he no longer needed it. Nicholas Knutson were getting the GIS system up and running, and Mr. Higgins commended him for his growing knowledge and enthusiasm.

Emergency Manager Ken Stroud met with the Board at 10:30 a.m. to present the OEM budget requests. He noted that it went up approximately four percent overall, the most notable increase being the Hazard Mitigation line item. Required every five years for the eleven-county consortium, Mr. Stroud said they could offset some of the cost through in-kind contributions.

As for the E911 budget, Mr. Stroud reiterated what Captain Yowell said regarding the Authority Board agreeing to pay for one of the jail deputy's salaries and benefits. Mr. Stroud stated they would have to update all Viper 5 equipment, which the company would no longer service after 2025. However, the new equipment would fall under an annual maintenance contract that includes all updates and remote hosting.

When asked if the 911 surcharge would go up, Mr. Stroud said the PUC sets it, so if so, it would do so on October 1. The surcharge would go from \$1.93 per line to \$2.12. Mr. Stroud noted that any personal device with 911 accessibility would be assessed the surcharge.

The commissioners met with Weed Control Coordinator Patrick Leonard at 10:45 a.m. Other than the cost of living raise, Mr. Leonard said he'd increased the Repairs and Maintenance, Operating Supplies, and Fuel line items. The latter two were minimal increases, but since he was already over budget on repairs and maintenance, he had given it a significant bump. Mr. Leonard needed to buy four new tires for the truck and said he'd priced them at NAPA for \$1,403. He also noted that the 2,4-D was half-price this year, so he'd saved quite a bit on chemicals.

After Mr. Leonard left, the commissioners reviewed the 2025 preliminary Office of the Board budget. The most significant increase was the salaries of the two new commissioners. Mr. Piper said he'd decreased the Phone line item but raised Letters and Notices since it was already over budget this year. He also increased the CCI Dues but dropped Economic Development based on Troy McCue's figures. Mr. Stone asked if Ports-to-Plains was still worth contributing toward. Mr. Burgess felt the organization had to continue applying pressure to push Colorado to get on board with the project.

Aside from the salary increases, Mr. Piper said the Administrator's budget didn't change much.

Mrs. Lengel presented the Clerk and Recorder and Elections budgets. While the first showed minimal increases, the latter dropped considerably; there would be one election in 2025 instead of three. While that meant that the Operating Supplies, Election Judges, and Professional Services line items went down, Mrs. Lengel increased her Education and Training line item. She

wanted her two newest employees to start the Election Center classes, stating that having national election certification was invaluable. She and three of her staff had already attained that goal. Mrs. Lengel also believed that investing in staff through training sometimes made more sense than an untimely promotion. While both staff members were well deserving of advancement, keeping within the pay scale seemed more appropriate at this time.

Mr. Piper presented the Administrative budget, pointing out increases in the Medical Insurance, Workers' Compensation, and Liability Insurance line items. He also raised the Professional Services – Audit line item slightly but decreased the Ads & Notices and Amend #1 – hospital tax increase line items. Mr. Piper removed the line item for Postage since it was reverting back to the Treasurer's office.

Mr. Burgess said that while things looked bleak with the county losing some of its tax base, he was adamant that the county had to take care of its employees.

Public Health Director Kelly Meier met with the Board at 11:35 a.m. While most of Mrs. Meier's expenditure requests were the same as 2024, she had either added or deleted certain line items based on state programs. She had increased the Immunization/Disease Prevention and COVID Immunization 3/4 line items since Public Health is the only entity in the county that carries the latter. Mrs. Meier said the significant increase in the STEPP line item was because they would receive an additional \$30,000 per year for the next five years, reflected on her revenue sheet. Mrs. Meier had included a level promotion justification sheet for the Program Specialist, stating she would have to take over several administrative duties while Mrs. Meier was on maternity leave.

The Board reviewed the Maintenance of Building and Plant budget and was about to take a lunch break when Ken Stroud returned with an \$87,650 bid and Scope of Work from Stone Electric in Golden to install the new 275KW generator for the courthouse complex. The commissioners felt the bid was high and that they should obtain another.

When the meeting reconvened at 1:00 p.m., the commissioners met with road supervisors Chris Monks, Bruce Walters, and Judd Kravig to review the 2025 Road & Bridge Fund budget requests. Mr. Piper explained that the \$3.8 million in the Off System Bridge Project line item was for the entire project, including the match. He had included \$765,000 in the Capital Projects Fund budget as a transfer into the Road & Bridge Fund budget so the county wouldn't have to do a supplemental appropriation in 2025. They had reduced the Gravel, Sand, and Salt line item by \$10,000 because the districts never came close to spending it.

In discussing the maintenance of oiled roads, Mr. Burgess said the county would never be able to add pavement projects when they cost \$200,000 a mile, which was last year's price. They estimated they would overspend the line item by at least \$50,000 by the end of the year. Mr. Stone said they might have to cut back on equipment purchases and spend that money on road maintenance instead.

In the Administration side of the Road & Bridge Fund budget, Mr. Piper noted that the Professional Services line item included CDL testing, which doubled in cost. He also mentioned the Liability Insurance increase.

In Equipment Services expenditures, they cut the Gas and Fuel line item by \$40,000 since recently locking the contract price on nine loads. The group felt they should increase the Outside Repairs line item by that amount since it would likely be over budget at the end of the year.

All three districts agreed to continue the tractor leasing program. As for other equipment, Mr. Monks said District 1 would probably need a new loader. Mr. Burgess said District 2 planned to order a mower next spring and a road grader in October or November.

The road supervisors left at 1:40 p.m., and the Board continued reviewing the remaining budgets listed on the agenda.

Mr. Burgess asked if the county surveyor could survey the Ewing bridge; the others felt it was worth asking.

The commissioners reviewed the Fairgrounds budget, and Mr. Piper said he'd given John Palmer the same raise as 2024. Mr. Palmer wanted to increase the Part-time line item to include the person who cleans the building but left the Support Staff line item the same. All other line items were consistent with 2024. Former Extension Agent Emily Baylie had asked to move the Superintendents/Judges to the Extension budget when she presented it. Mr. Piper said it was better left in the Fairgrounds budget since CSU reimbursed much of it. Mr. Palmer had also requested a floor scrubber for the Ellis Allen building; Mr. Burgess told Mr. Piper to add \$6,500 to the Capital Projects budget.

The Health Inspector budget request didn't change from 2024, and the Veterans Office budget only showed a slight increase in the Salary and Telephone/Internet line items. Mr. Piper noted that Washington County would reimburse Lincoln County for half the costs, including a portion of the salary and mileage.

Mr. Piper said the Board increased the Library Fund budget mill levy by a quarter of a mill for the 2024 budget to replenish the fund balance, but the commissioners could drop it back again if necessary. There were no significant increases except in the Repairs and Maintenance line item.

There were no expenditures in the Conservation Trust budget yet in 2024, leaving a significant fund balance for 2025. Mr. Burgess asked if they could purchase the floor scrubber, but Mr. Piper said it wouldn't be a qualified expense.

The group reviewed the Capital Projects budget, and Mr. Piper suggested moving 1.75 mills to the County General Fund. He stated that doing so would leave over \$1 million in the fund, even

if the county completed all the projects listed in the expenditures column. Mr. Burgess said they could transfer one mill but didn't want to move more. He said they *had* to buy a different truck for the landfill next year, which Mr. Piper would need to add to the Capital Projects budget. He felt it would possibly cost around \$15,000.

The only adjustment the Board made to the Landfill Fund budget was to increase the Repairs & Maintenance line item by \$5,000.

Mr. Piper said the Lodging Tax Tourism Fund revenue seemed to be tracking better than it had, and the county's share in the Council of Governments budget went up \$1,500.

The Fire Control, Ambulance Service, Emergency Medical Services, EMS Subsidy, and Community Development Block Grant budgets didn't change; however, the Developmentally Disabled budget decreased by almost \$5,000.

In an email from the Douglas County budget director to Mr. Piper, she noted that the 23<sup>rd</sup> Judicial District Attorney's office identified additional needs since the initial budget discussion. Due to 2024 legislation, Douglas County would receive another judge, requiring four additional staff members, thus increasing Lincoln County's share by \$9,408. Mr. Burgess noted for Mr. Jaques and Mrs. Pottorff that Lincoln County still paid less than the other two counties in the district.

The commissioners reviewed the preliminary Lincoln Health budget request, and then Mr. Piper provided a Memorandum of Understanding between the Lincoln County Fair Board and the Lincoln County Extension Office. Mr. Stone moved to sign the MOU, and Mr. Ewing seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Burgess adjourned the meeting at 2:50 p.m. The next meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. on September 30, 2024.

---

Corinne M. Lengel, Clerk of the Board

---

Steve Burgess, Chairman