

Board of County Commissioners of Lincoln County
September 23, 2021

The Board will begin conducting reviews regarding preliminary 2022 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
- 10:00 Jim Covington – County Treasurer’s Budget
- 10:15 Jeremiah Higgins – County Assessor’s Budget
- 10:30 Patrick Leonard – Weed Control Budget
- 11:00 Fred Lundy – Land Use Budget
- 11:15 Robin Halley – Extension Office Budget
- 11:30 Kelly Meier – Public Health Budget
- 1:00 Rick Ashcraft, Chris Monks and Bruce Walters – Road and Bridge Budgets
- 1:45 Ken Stroud – Office of Emergency Management Budget

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
- Health Inspector
- Fairgrounds
- Veterans Office
- Library Fund
- Contingent 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
- Transportation Enhancement Grant
- Rural Economic Development Initiative Grant

The Board of Lincoln County Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. on September 23, 2021, for the 2022 budget hearings. Chairman Steve Burgess, Commissioners Doug Stone and Ed E. Schiffers, County Administrator Jacob Piper, and Clerk to the Board Corinne M. Lengel attended.

Chairman Burgess called the meeting to order and asked Jail Captain Michael Yowell to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Board then met with Sheriff Tom Nestor, Undersheriff Gordon Nall, and Captain Michael Yowell to hear the budget requests for the Sheriff's Operations, Jail, and Victim Assistance departments. In addition to the one-step salary increase authorized by the Board, the sheriff had increased the Operating, Uniforms, Education and Training, Equipment, Postage, and Vehicle Repairs and Maintenance line items. He combined the tires and oil line items into the repairs line item since they don't separate those. As for the Jail budget, increases included salaries, overtime, medical supplies, equipment, education and training, clothing, maintenance contracts, and uniforms. The sheriff said they get less money from the VALE grant every year, so now the money only covers the Victim Advocate's salary. He increased the Operating and Education and Training line items for 2022 but decreased the Volunteer Call-out by a significant amount. The sheriff also provided justification sheets for moving the two corporals to Level 3 because they made less money than the deputies they supervised, which he'd discussed with the commissioners earlier in the year. Sheriff Nestor had also put in the customary vehicle request, a total of \$165,000. They are still waiting for computer chips for the units they ordered last October and hope to have the new vehicles before the end of the year. Undersheriff Nall suggested paying for them out of the 2021 budget even if they didn't take delivery until 2022. They had prepaid the equipment for the cars that way. Sheriff Nestor said he'd thought about getting dashcams but decided to hold off on it for another year, so the only Capital Projects line item would be the vehicles. Lastly, the sheriff let the Board know that they had to move their Command Post from Gottschall's barn because the owner had purchased a new motor home he needed to park there. Mr. Burgess said he could use the old shop building in Genoa again if they needed to.

After the law enforcement officers left, Mr. Burgess said the motivational speaker Bobby Jones wanted \$170,000 for the suicide prevention program at the school. He didn't think the county could afford to do it for even one school, and the other commissioners agreed.

The commissioners reviewed the budget requests for the Office of the Board and the Administrator, and then Mrs. Lengel provided the requests for the Clerk and Recorder and Elections departments. Many line items remained the same as 2021, with a decrease in the Advertising & Notices line item and the removal of the Repairs and Maintenance line item. Although her IT went over budget this year because of the office remodel, Mrs. Lengel didn't increase it for 2022. She had added a Capital Outlay line item at the auditor's request. Mrs. Lengel commented that she would return quite a bit of her 2021 budget at the end of the year, mainly due to not filling an employee's position and not using the digitization funds or much of the Education and Training line item.

Mrs. Lengel also presented the 2022 Elections budget request, reminding the group there would be two elections again instead of one, resulting in an increase to the Operating Supplies line item by about \$3,000. Most of the other line items stayed the same as 2021, although Mrs. Lengel decreased the Education and Training and Dues and Meetings line items. She bumped up the Postage line item by \$300 because the USPS raised postage rates again this year, and the voting equipment has a built-in two percent annual increase for the lease payment. Mrs. Lengel stated she had included a Capital Outlay line in the Elections budget, again at Ronny Farmer's request. The group discussed the possible VSPC relocation, and Mrs. Lengel provided a proposal from Structures Unlimited that she'd received from Bart O'Dwyer that morning. His original guesstimate of \$175,000 had increased to \$210,660; however, Mrs. Lengel said that if the Board planned to redo the parking lot and use some of the ARP funds to do it, almost \$50,000 of Mr. O'Dwyer's quote for drainage-related work should also qualify. She said she planned to apply for a \$20,000 Election Security Grant through the Colorado Secretary of State's office and had contacted the Department of Homeland Security to conduct a physical security assessment. The Board said they would discuss it again when they got to the Capital Projects budget.

The Administrative budget request showed a decrease in Medical Insurance due to the HSA and lowered health pool premiums. Mr. Piper had also reduced the Office Supplies and Repairs & Maintenance line items and increased the Professional Services – Audit, Liability Insurance, Retirement, Accounting/Payroll, and Amend #1 – Hospital Tax Increase line items. He'd also added the Wausau Incentive Agreement made in 2018, which was an estimate of property taxes the county would refund. Mr. Piper included the Capital Outlay line item suggested by the auditor.

At 10:00 a.m., Deputy Treasurer LaRay Patton and Assessor Jeremiah Higgins met to give the budget requests for the Treasurer's and Assessor's offices. Treasurer Jim Covington could not attend the meeting, but Mrs. Patton said he'd increased his deputies' salaries based on the commissioners' allowance of a one-step raise. He also raised the Telephone, Check Scanners, Equipment Lease, and Tyler Computer System line items by a little bit. Mr. Higgins had increased the salary for his deputy but decreased the Full-Time line item due to the recent loss of an employee. He had also removed his Capital Outlay line item and transferred those funds to the Office Supplies line item. Mr. Higgins also increased the Internet Fees and Tyler Computer System line items. They'd considered requesting funding for a new plotter; they've had quite a few issues because of its age, but Mr. Higgins said he hadn't done so since there was talk about getting a GIS system.

Since they'd had the discussion previously, Mr. Piper readdressed the topic of hiring a full-time IT person. The GIS system would be a one-time expense between \$30,000 and \$60,000 with an annual \$2,000 (roughly) maintenance contract fee. All departments would be able to use it, and Mr. Higgins said he couldn't think of a department that wouldn't get some good out of it. He added that if the county hired a full-time person to handle the IT and GIS, there would most likely be enough work for them, which is what several counties do. Mr. Piper suggested having the person work a thirty-five-hour week to keep them on the pay scale. If hired at Level 3, Step

1, with a step raise in six months, the total salary would be \$36,996. Mr. Piper noted that another option would be to contract through Eastern Slope Rural Telephone Association for IT, which is what the school does.

Weed Control Coordinator Patrick Leonard met with the Board to present his 2022 budget request at 10:30 a.m. He increased his salary and the Chemicals, Fuel, and Repairs and Maintenance line items and then stated that he'd contacted Norstar in Washington, and they don't have a program for maintenance on the weed truck. Mr. Leonard told them what he'd done as far as taking care of it, such as rebuilding the valves, and they told him he'd done more than what they would do if he brought it out. Mr. Leonard added it would cost about \$3,000 in hotel rooms, meals, and fuel for him to go, and the Board agreed there was no need. Mr. Leonard also said the commissioners had told him they planned to buy a new weed truck every five years, but no one had mentioned it again, so he left it out of his budget request. Mr. Burgess told him they could probably get another two or three years of it yet.

After Mr. Leonard left, the commissioners discussed the IT position further. They asked Mr. Piper to call James Martin to see if he would be interested in a full-time position with the county. When Mr. Piper returned, he said Mr. Martin was definitely interested but wanted to see about another job offer first.

The Board reviewed the Maintenance of Buildings/Plant budget, which stayed the same except for the Salaries line item. The Surveyor and Health Inspector budgets also didn't change. As for the Fairgrounds budget, Mr. Piper said he'd increased John Palmer's salary by \$500. Mr. Palmer had also asked for increases in the Utilities, Rodeo, and Tent line items. The commissioners noticed the extreme increase in the Rodeo line item, and Mr. Piper told them Mr. Palmer wanted to raise the size of the purse to attract more participation. Mr. Burgess wondered if the Tourism Board would be willing to kick in some funds and felt it best for Mr. Palmer to ask them. Mr. Stone said raising the line item by \$15,000 seemed pretty high and suggested \$10,000 instead. Mr. Schiffers commented that the Tourism Board might not help if the county wouldn't allow the CPAM concert during the fair, but Mr. Stone said there was just too much going on that week to have the concert. The Board agreed to change the request from \$35,000 to \$30,000 on the Rodeo line item.

Mr. Piper increased the Veterans Service Officer's salary by \$200. He also bumped up the Telephone/Internet line item.

At 11:00 a.m., Land Use Administrator Fred Lundy met with the Board to present his 2022 budget request. He'd increased the Salary line item based on the cost-of-living raise but had removed the line item for the printer.

The Library budget went up due to salaries, programming and marketing, and the state library grant. Katie Zipperer had also added a Capital Outlay line item. Mr. Piper commented that he'd left the mills the same as 2021 in all funds but would probably have to adjust them. One mill equaled \$44,500.

The county used no Conservation Trust Funds in 2021, but John Palmer had asked for more in 2022 as he would have to do some restroom upgrades at the fairgrounds. With a fund balance of \$125,000 in 2021, even if they spent it all next year, it would still leave a fund balance of \$82,000.

The group began discussing the Capital Projects budget, cutting the Fairgrounds Improvements from \$60,000 to \$35,000. The Board couldn't justify putting \$300,000 into the Roundhouse Restoration project, which Roxie Devers had requested. The commissioners all felt comfortable with \$100,000, and Mr. Piper said they might be able to use some of the ARP funds, at least for the water and sewer portion of the project. He added that they needed to decide what they wanted to do with that money as soon as possible. There was \$25,000 in the Carpet-County Offices line item, which the Board left for new flooring in the Assessor's office. Mr. Piper had added line items for a Maintenance Shop and the Voter Service and Polling Center Relocation, and Mr. Piper said if the latter came to fruition, John Mohan would need a place to store his small equipment. He would like to put up a building that would also serve as an office. Mr. Schiffers suggested building something big enough to house the sheriff's command post as well, but Mr. Burgess said they'd be looking at \$100,000 to \$150,000 if they did that. Mr. Piper said the county was in good shape overall, but if Proposition 120 passed in November, there might be a reason to worry because of the decreased funding the county would receive.

Extension Agent Robin Halley arrived to present the 2022 budget request for the Extension Office, stating he'd increased the Salaries line item and added a line for Programming. He had no other changes from 2021.

Mr. Halley shared the sale results with the commissioners but said the Sale Committee hadn't wanted them published, although he wasn't sure why. He commented that they needed to figure out how to become better promoters of their programs to gather more participants. However, they did have 160 kids and 60 volunteers for the previous day's Farm Safety.

Public Health Director Kelly Meier arrived for her meeting with the Board while Mr. Halley discussed the COVID-19 mandates. He said CSU needed to figure out which policy they were going to follow, requiring vaccines or weekly screenings or not. His office was supposed to follow the county's guidelines, but they had to follow CSU's when they were on campus. Since Mr. Halley already had the virus, he wanted to know if the weekly screenings still applied to him.

Mr. Burgess said that since the implementation of CDOT's new policy, fifty-two people had to take a COVID-19 test twice a week. Mrs. Meier had agreed to help out until CDOT got a mobile unit to do onsite testing.

Before Mr. Halley left, he asked to address a cleaning issue at the annex. Mrs. Meier agreed, stating that it needed to be cleaner with all the COVID-19 germs in the building. The commissioners said they'd speak with the janitor about it.

Mr. Halley also asked for guidance on who to contact about the sidewalk in front of the annex building. It has deteriorated and was starting to drop off. Mr. Burgess told him to talk to John Mohan.

Public Health Director Kelly Meier then presented her 2022 budget request. While she'd increased the Salaries, Part-time, Office Supplies, Professional Services, and STEPP Grant line items, Mrs. Meier reduced the Regional EPR by quite a bit and removed the COVID-Defense line item. Mr. Piper said they'd probably have to do some supplemental appropriations since Public Health had so much money from COVID funds.

After Mrs. Meier left, the commissioners went back to discussing the Capital Projects budget. Mr. Piper said they could cut the Not Specifically Identified line in half. He also suggested moving two or two-and-a-half mills from the fund into the Road & Bridge fund, approximately \$360,000. Mr. Burgess commented that they could no longer avoid fixing the drainage and courthouse parking lot and must do something with it in 2022.

The group broke for lunch, and at 1:15 p.m., the commissioners met with road foremen Chris Monks, Bruce Walters, and Rick Ashcraft to talk about the Road and Bridge budget. They first discussed the pending CDOT construction at the intersection of Highway 40/287 and County Road 109. Mr. Monks asked the Board to do what they could to talk CDOT out of putting in a median there, which could cause potential problems with snow removal. He said they would have another meeting in February and hoped to start construction next June, right at harvest time.

Mr. Piper then explained that they needed to find a way to get \$1.8 million back into the Road and Bridge budget. Due to an audit adjustment to fix balancing issues as far back as 2016 and the lack of HUTF funds received in 2020, Mr. Piper told the group he had some ideas for getting the fund back on track. They included reducing the Miscellaneous-Bridge Fund, cutting the Special Oil Projects line item, reducing the Equipment line item, using some of the ARP money, and transferring at least two mills from the Capital Projects budget. Another thought would be to remove the mechanic position, saving about \$70,000 when combining the salary and benefits package. Chris Monks disagreed with the suggestion and left the meeting.

After further discussion about various line items, Mr. Piper said the valuations of the municipalities went up, so they would need to keep in mind that every mill moved to Road and Bridge would require \$17,000 in allocation to the towns.

At 2:25 p.m., the Board met with Emergency Manager Ken Stroud to discuss the OEM budget requests for 2022. Mr. Stroud had increased the Salaries, Office Supplies, Repairs & Maintenance, Travel, and Dues & Meetings line items but had reduced the Hazard Mitigation Plan. He'd also added AED Supplies but said that RETAC Subsidy funds would reimburse it.

Mr. Stroud left, and the Board discussed the Landfill budget; the only changes were increased salaries and decreased part-time. The Lodging/Tourism, Council of Governments, Fire Control, Ambulance Service, Emergency Medical Service, E.M.S. Subsidy, Community Development Block Grant, and Transportation Enhancement Grant didn't change, but the Developmentally Disabled budget went down due to a decrease in clients. The District Attorney budget increased slightly, but Mr. Piper said it was what they'd requested and was relatively low compared to other counties in the 18th Judicial District. He also explained he'd added the new Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Grant, which was the Garage Workspace pass-through grant that Gillian Laycock applied for and received.

Mr. Burgess commented that the landfill wanted to buy an alarm for approximately \$200. It would let them know when someone drove onto the scale if they weren't around to see them pull in.

With no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Burgess adjourned the budget meeting at 2:45 p.m. The next meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. on September 29, 2021.

Corinne M. Lengel, Clerk to the Board

Steve Burgess, Chairman