

**OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF BLAINE COUNTY  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE JUNE 2015 SESSION**

**Fifth Day**

**Thursday, June 18, 2015**

Pursuant to Statutory Provisions, the Board of Blaine County Commissioners (BCC) met this day at 9:00 a.m. Present were Chairman Jacob Greenberg, Vice-Chairman Angenie McCleary, Commissioner Lawrence Schoen; County Administrator Derek Voss; County Clerk JoLynn Drage; County Operations Director Char Nelson and County Operations Administrative Assistant Andrea Walton; Henry Brown; and Recording Secretary Sunny Grant.

Chairman Greenberg called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT - NONE**

**FISCAL YEAR 2016 BUDGET HEARINGS WITH COMMISSIONERS**

County Clerk JoLynn Drage said the extra payroll in FY2016 was included in each department's budget.

- **Road and Bridge** - County Operations Director Char Nelson and County Road and Bridge Manager Tom Duffy  
FY2016 Budget Request: \$2,075,522.

Blaine County Road and Bridge maintains 125 miles of paved roads, 325 miles of gravel/dirt roads, 54 bridges, 750 culverts, and rights-of-way. The department snowplows 300 miles of roadway; removes avalanches and mudslides; and maintains roads by grading, dust guarding, crack and chip sealing; and installing culverts, drainage systems and signs. Department staff also maintain department trucks and heavy equipment.

The BCC said there are a lot of purchases and expenditures being put off to 2017; and asked if funds should be put into a capital reserve account. Nelson agreed, especially since Road and Bridge has a serious problem with aging equipment that needs frequent repairs. Blaine County Road and Bridge Manager Tom Duffy said the reserve is around \$500,000, and will stay at about that amount. He suggested at least \$100,000 out of the increased gas tax revenue should be put toward used equipment; and, in the future, toward replacing bridges that are deteriorating.

Nelson said Blaine County Road and Bridge cannot continue to exist at the current funding level. Greenberg acknowledged that lack of funding affected morale. Funds can come from increased federal and/or state gas tax, registration fees or an override levy.

Schoen commended Road and Bridge on redesigning and improving roads to extend their life.

- **Waterways** – County Operations Director Char Nelson and Blaine County Waterways Coordinator Lamar Waters  
FY2016 Budget Request: \$17,900 and Marine Program request \$12,800.

Waterways is funded through the State's boater registration fees and grants from Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.

The budget includes contract to pay the Waterways Coordinator to oversee the program; and additional individuals to install, adjust and remove docks and clean and maintain restrooms at West and East Magic. Waterways utilities include placement of seasonal restrooms and garbage service at some sites; fuel costs for equipment and mileage reimbursement for dock workers; and supplies to repair the docks. Waterways accumulates money in Reserves for a few years and then uses it as a grant match. Camas County has contributed \$2,000 for Waterways and grant projects.

Waterways shares about \$12,833 with the Sheriff's Marine program, which is partially funded with a grant. The Sheriff asked Waterways to contribute funds over the next few years to purchase a new patrol boat, which is good because Waters has been using his personal boat for County work.

The BCC thanked Waters for his efforts in obtaining grants and coordinating volunteers, which has vastly improved the County's waterways program in the last few years.

- **Recycling** - County Operations Director Char Nelson and Blaine County Recycle Center Supervisor Lamar Waters  
FY2016 Budget Request: \$327,475

Also present: Chief Deputy Assessor Martha Heuston.

The Blaine County Recycle Center is an environmentally-sound recycling program that takes into consideration the entire life of the product. Blaine County's goal is a high quality product that buyers don't complain about or reject. Recycle Center staff sorted out 34 pounds of contamination in the last month,

or about 1.7% of collected recyclables. National average is 7 to 10% contamination. The Recycle Center facility is clean and litter free. Recycle Center building walls were recently retrofitted. The department's goal for the future is clear communication, education and outreach to the public.

In 2015, the County's profit from the sale of recyclables was \$29,869. The largest recycling revenues are cardboard and aluminum. Sale of mixed paper is increasing. The County offers plastic film recycling through a new partnership with the School District and Trex.

The Recycle Center budget includes a request for \$25,000 for a used forklift with a rotator head. The baler recently received full service, and staff is trained to maintain and repair the baler.

The Southern Idaho Solid Waste District considers Blaine County's Recycle Center a model program to share with other counties in the district.

- **Buildings and Grounds** - County Operations Director Char Nelson and Blaine County Buildings and Grounds Manager Patrick Boyle  
FY2016 Budget Request: \$626,414.

Buildings and Grounds maintains the Old County Courthouse (OCC), the County Annex, the Judicial Building, the McBride building, the Public Safety Facility, the former Blaine Manor property, two Road and Bridge shops and a Noxious Weed shop, grounds and parking lots. Most maintenance is done in-house. The County owns but doesn't maintain the Blaine County Fairgrounds and Wood River Fire and Rescue building.

One County maintenance technician maintains the PSF, grounds and parking lot, according to security protocol; and mows the Blaine Manor property. Two full-time custodians are responsible for upkeep of the OCC, the Judicial Building and McBride building, flower beds and some irrigation work. The County utilizes contracts for the Annex and the PSF, as well as a number of contracts for mechanical equipment.

The Old County Courthouse roof was finally replaced in FY2015. The existing 60-year-old roof was not designed to hold snowloads and past dormer additions made it difficult for the roof to shed snow, contributing to potentially dangerous scenarios for employees and the public. The roof was not attached to the walls, and the building was not structurally sound.

A 5-year energy audit showed the County's four-day work week resulted in a considerable reduction in energy use, substantial energy savings, \$16,400 annual reduction in custodian services, and 22% reduction of carbon emissions.

Maintenance staff saved the County thousands of dollars in FY2015 by doing in-house a number of repair and retrofit projects to the Old Courthouse, the McBride and Judicial buildings.

Buildings and Grounds suggests the BCC consider the following Capital Improvement Projects for FY2016, some of which include staff work:

- paint and repair mortar on the Old Courthouse.
- replace HVAC control system in the County Annex.
- replace three or four of the old furnaces in the Old Courthouse.
- move emergency generator from Blaine Manor to the Glendale Road and Bridge shop, and retrofit the Road and Bridge shop to accommodate the generator.
- establish a Buildings and Grounds Capital Improvement Fund to allow the County to manage safe and comfortable County facilities proactively, and to begin to address deferred maintenance.

County Operations Director Char Nelson explained FY2016 budget reductions and increases.

County Clerk JoLynn Drage said potential Blaine Manor expenses will be put into the Buildings and Grounds budget.

The BCC thanked Buildings and Grounds for doing in-house projects to such high standards. The BCC asked how hiring subcontractors in the future would affect the budget and project efficiencies. Schoen said a lot of projects are exponentially faster when two people work together. Boyle said he was now responsible for Blaine Manor as well, and may not have time to continue doing in-house projects.

## **BUDGET DISCUSSION WORKSHOP WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS, Discussion and Consideration**

Also present: Blaine County Sheriff Gene Ramsey; Chief Deputy Sheriff Steve Harkins; Command Staff Assistant Holly Carter; County Clerk JoLynn Drage; County GIS Program Manager Joel Hall; Human Resources Generalist Henry Brown; County Emergency Communications Director Robin Stellers; County Treasurer John David Davidson; County Weed Department Manager John Cenarrusa; Court Supervisor Andrea Logan; County Chief Probation Officer Teresa Espedal; County Assessor Valdi Pace and Chief Deputy Assessor Martha Heuston; County Indigent Services Manager Brooke Baird; County Operations Director Char Nelson; and County Buildings and Grounds Manager Patrick Boyle.

Chairman Greenberg said Blaine County has been using reserves to balance the budget the last few years. The BCC asked County departments to find ways to improve efficiency and productivity, and help the BCC make wise budget decisions and functional changes to get on a road to a sustainable future. Schoen added that they needed to think clearly, so decisions made don't result in future crisis management. McCleary said she didn't think County departments could make significant reductions and keep the same service level.

Joel Hall said the BCC asked County departments to be excellent. Department heads can't reduce their budgets until the BCC tells them which priorities can be removed and services reduced.

Voss said the County had added 38 full-time employees in the last 20 years. He suggested one way to get serious about reducing the budget was to cut staff by about 10 FTEs in the next year. Voss said he would reduce his FTEs by three or four positions. Sheriff Ramsey said his employees would prefer to have their raises, even if it meant losing some employees; but he didn't want to automatically eliminate a position when there was a vacancy. County Clerk Drage said she could cut \$100,000 from her budget, but probably couldn't add service with a reduced budget.

- **Weeds** - County Operations Director Char Nelson and Blaine County Weed Department Manager John Cenarrusa  
FY2015 Budget Request: \$252,911.

Also present: Blaine County Operations Administrative Assistant Andrea Walton.

Blaine County Weed Department is required by State Law and regulated by Idaho Code, Title 22, Chapter 34. The Weed Department protects Blaine County and its property owners from the harmful impacts of noxious weeds, using integrated pest management practices.

The Weed Department provides property inspections, weed identification, integrated pest management control, and noxious weed enforcement. The Blaine County Weed Department supports biocontrol when appropriate and helps fund the Southern Idaho Bug Crew. The State requires Weed Department field personnel be licensed in pesticide control, and to be current on laws and pesticide licensing, regulations, and technology. The County purchases chemicals at wholesale for Weed Department use on County property. A Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) grant allows the Weed Department to purchase chemicals through a piggyback program and provide them for free to appropriate people.

The Weed Department shop in Carey has a new roof and is now dry. The Buildings and Grounds budget includes new doors for the Weed Department building.

The BCC encouraged the Weed Department to work closely with County Road and Bridge for better weed control.

- **Nursing Home Operations** - County Operations Director Char Nelson  
No FY2016 Budget

The budget for the former Blaine Manor property is minimal to cover maintenance, utilities when the current tenants leave, basic repairs and expenses.

The BCC directed staff to give notice to the tenants and prepare to close and winterize the building in the fall; and inventory items of value in the building.

- **McBride Building**

Schoen said keeping the McBride Building open is costly. He suggested the BCC consider moving the Extension office into the Annex.

- **9-1-1 Emergency Communications and Consolidated Emergency Communications** -  
Emergency Communications Director Robin Stellers  
FY2016 Budget Request: \$468,381.  
FY2016 Consolidated Emergency Communications Budget Request \$1,059,315.

Also present: Blaine County CAD Administrator Chris Corwin; County Disaster Services Coordinator Chuck Turner; and Ketchum Fire Chief Mike Elle.

Blaine County Emergency Communications provides an efficient conduit for the public to request public safety services and to satisfy immediate information needs of the service agencies. The Department has spent the last few years focused on successfully integrating (PSAP) Public Safety Answering Point standards and best practices; but staff experienced stressful changes in leadership, equipment, infrastructure and software. The department's current focus is on consistent leadership policy, continuing education and the tools to support staff's desire to serve the public efficiently and effectively. Emergency Communications continues to build liaisons with emergency responders and work with them in Technical Advisory Committee meetings.

Blaine County dispatchers are professionals who are the real first responders. Dispatchers must be physically, mentally and technically capable of doing the job. The department's first outcome is highly-

engaged and well-trained employees who serve the public through customer service, public education, teamwork, technology, efficiency and accuracy.

Emergency Communications experienced a large increase in ILETS (Idaho Public Safety and Security System) access fees this year. A viable source of funding within the Title Transfer Fee was not forthcoming, so the ILETS Board voted to approve a plan to have state and users share in providing needed additional funding, which is creating hardships for some partners.

Voss said support of Emergency Communications was a good investment. Rewarding dispatchers who go above and beyond with limited career growth is good for Emergency Communications.

Emergency Communications 9-1-1 phone system currently uses Window 2003, which will no longer be supported, so the Director is working with IT to research upgrading to a current system, which will probably cost around \$100,000. This is still not NextGen, but no one is sure what the NextGen solution is.

**STAFF COMMENT:**

- Ketchum Fire Chief Mike Elle asked the BCC to support this request. Responders acknowledge a big improvement in County Dispatch in the last five years, due partially to less staff turnover.
- Blaine County Disaster Services Coordinator Chuck Turner’s office is next to Dispatch. He is impressed by dispatchers’ ability to stay clear-headed in response to an amazing volume and variety of calls, from mundane to crisis.
- GIS Analyst/CAD Administrator Chris Corwin said Dispatch is a tough job, and dispatchers need to be compensated for the stressful work they do.

Both West Magic Fire Department and Smiley Creek are interested in contracting with Blaine County Dispatch.

**BUDGET DISCUSSION WORKSHOP RECAP**

Chairman Greenberg felt the BCC had lost a year in making crucial budget decisions, and now the BCC was looking at taking the next year to make those decisions. The Commissioners each listed how they would balance the budget; and made additional comments:

- McCleary reiterated her concern that severely cutting the budget would adversely impact necessary repairs and services, and could result in added expense in the future.
- Schoen said the County could save a substantial amount by not funding outside agencies.
- Greenberg said the County could save up to \$106,000 in funding University of Idaho Extension and 4-H.
- Local attorneys have expressed interest in being considered as a Blaine County public defender.

Drage will review the budget in realistic numbers with the BCC and County Administrator over the next month.

**ADJOURN**

At the hour of 4:52 p.m., the BCC finding no more business before them adjourned.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved \_\_\_\_\_

JoLynn Drage  
County Clerk

Jacob Greenberg  
Chairman