

**OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF BLAINE COUNTY
SPECIAL BUDGET HEARING MEETING OF THE MAY 2013 SESSION**

Third Day

Tuesday, May 8, 2013

Pursuant to Statutory Provisions, the Board of Blaine County Commissioners (BCC) met this day at 9:00 a.m. Present were Chairman Lawrence Schoen, Vice-Chairman Angenie McCleary, Commissioner Jacob Greenberg; County Administrator Derek Voss; and Recording Secretary Sunny Grant.

Chairman Schoen called the meeting to order at 9:23 a.m.

OUTSIDE ORGANIZATION FY2014 FUNDING REQUESTS

Animal Shelter of the Wood River Valley – JoAnne Dixon

Also present: Blaine County Sheriff Gene Ramsey; and County Animal Control Officer Paul Ramm.

The County is required to provide animal impound services. The Animal Shelter provides impounds as a Contract for Services with Blaine County for an annual fee of \$24,000. The Animal Shelter also provides impound services for Blaine County municipalities for a flat fee.

Blaine County Sheriff Ramsey said the Animal Shelter provides an important function for the Sheriff's office, and County funding is money well spent. Shelter staff go above and beyond contract obligations, and the contract is a good partnership. In addition to basic services, the Animal Shelter provides a pet food bank in partnership with The Hunger Coalition; and a Lost and Found network for people to call if their pet is missing.

Defenders of Wildlife – Suzanne Stone

Also present: John Peavey; Sawtooth National Forest Ketchum District Ranger Kurt Nelson; wolf specialist Carter Niemeyer; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Field Biologist Jacob Haag, and Jesse Timberlake.

DISCLOSURE: Chairman Schoen disclosed that he is on the Wood River Wolf Project Steering Committee.

A map of depredation-conflict rates in Idaho (primarily wolves against sheep) shows Blaine County with the least conflicts in the last few years, due to efforts of the Wood River Wolf Project. The Project uses non-lethal tools and techniques to reduce livestock conflicts between wolves and livestock; and now has six years of data on wolf interaction with sheep. There were 27,000 sheep in the Project area in 2012, with four known losses to wolves.

The Wolf Project encourages stakeholders to collaborate on solutions to predator conflicts through:

- Outreach and field workshops with local herders and ranchers and state and federal wildlife agencies;
- Training field technicians to help monitor wolf activity;
- Forest Service informing project personnel when sheep are moving through an area and their grazing patterns.

Project success depends on herders collecting data and removing sheep carcasses, and multiple herding dogs.

The Defenders of Wildlife requested \$3,000 from Blaine County for the Wood River Wolf Project. The Wolf Project is being used as a co-existence model for international conservation; and several areas in Montana want to use the non-lethal project as a model for cattle grazing.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Sheep rancher John Peavey said the Wolf Project is fairly effective, but that wolves are an enormous problem with sheep and cattle.

University of Idaho Extension Office – Lauren Hunter and Sarah Busdon

Also present: 4-H Coordinator Kathi Kimball; Brock Mary; Cade Schott; Scott and Devra Mary; and Gary and Cindy Schott.

The Extension's 4-H programs teach healthy life decisions, leadership and business skills to one-third of Blaine County's youth. Students Brock Mary and Cade Schott reported on a Know Your Government Conference they recently attended in Boise. The conference included special sessions of interest to each of them and a mock legislative session at the Capitol.

The University of Idaho Extension Office teaches sustainable agricultural practices that benefit Blaine County's land and water resources, which has an economic benefit to the entire community.

The Extension's FY2014 budget request is \$111,000, 56% of the Extension's overall budget. Remaining funding comes from the University of Idaho and other funding resources. The \$6,000 increase is mostly a capital contingency to cover the cost of new computer equipment that may be necessary. The other \$1,000 increase is half the cost of a \$2,000 match to fund an AmeriCorps

volunteer for one year. The volunteer would work with Blaine County non-profit partners on 4-H science curricula in Blaine County Schools.

The Advocates – Tricia Swartling

The Advocates teaches people of all ages how to build healthy relationships. The Advocates helps people change their attitudes, beliefs and behavior about relationship violence and power-based personal violence, including bullying, child abuse, sexual assault, etc. People who are experiencing physical and emotional abuse are given support and resources to help them out of such situations. The Advocates in 2012 directly helped 578 adults (including 20 men) and almost 200 children, through support groups, job and life skills training, legal assistance, and outreach and community education programs.

The Advocates requests \$5,000 from Blaine County.

The Advocates Shelter serves the County's strategic objectives by working to improve the social, emotional and economic well-being of all socioeconomic classes in Blaine County. The Shelter is open 24 hours a day to work with law enforcement; and reduces homelessness of adults and youth as a result of domestic violence. The Advocates also educates prosecutors and judges in gender- and domestic-related issues. The Sheriff's Department now includes Advocates training for all new deputies.

Resource Worker – Jeanette McIlhenny

Also present: Blaine County School District Business Manager Mike Chatterton.

The Community Resource Worker program started in 1989 with funds from Idaho Health and Welfare. The Resource Worker is located in the schools to do early intervention for at-risk children. Much of the work is done with families in the home to address whatever is impeding children's ability to come to school ready to learn, and to keep kids out of the courts. Resource Worker programs include:

- Community outreach and the Stephen Covey Five Habits of Successful Parenting program;
- 90 days of home intervention to try to avert Child Protection. Intervention includes budget planning and emergency assistance;
- The Lunch Buddy program that provides a mentor for a student once a week during lunch and recess. Lunch Buddy volunteers love their experience.

Referrals to the Resource worker come from teachers, social workers, and occasionally St. Luke's Hospital Center for Community Health. The Resource worker also occasionally deals with adults who don't have children, but have nowhere else to go for help. The Resource Worker request is \$15,000 for FY2014.

Mountain Rides – Jason Miller and Wendy Crosby

Mountain Rides operates on a Joint Powers Agreement with all cities in Blaine County except Carey, to provide fixed route bus service throughout the Wood River Valley. Mountain Rides also provides:

- ADA curb-to-curb paratransit van service;
- 14 Vanpool routes from Twin Falls, Shoshone, Jerome and Gooding. The monthly subscription fares pay the cost of operating the service and contribute to capital expense;
- bicycle/pedestrian programs focused on elementary schools;
- Safe Routes to School to facilitate kids biking and walking to school, and identify infrastructure needs;
- regional planning. Mountain Rides assisted the City of Hailey on the recent Woodside project;
- Carpool partnership with Idaho Rideshare that allows people to find carpool partners;
- BikeShare partnership with City of Hailey allows people to use bikes around town for short rides. The BikeShare program may soon expand to the north Valley;
- Website with integrated mapping ability will help someone bus/bike/walk to his destination.

Semi-annual surveys report 98% customer satisfaction.

Mountain Rides is currently looking for a facility in the south valley to lower overall operating costs; and is partnering with the City of Ketchum to provide a central hub for all routes in the north valley.

Idaho is the only state that doesn't have a state funding mechanism for public transit, so Mountain Rides is dependent on federal and local match funding. Federal funding is fading, and Mountain Rides is requesting \$153,000 for FY2014, an increase of 24%. Valley Route fares pay up to 24% of the total cost of the route.

American Lands Council – Demar Dahl, Rebecca Ivory

Also present: Chairman of the American Lands Council/Elko, Nevada County Commissioner Demar Dahl.

The American Lands Council requests \$5,000 from Blaine County. The apolitical American Lands Council thinks the extensive public lands in Western states can be managed more efficiently by the state and for the benefit of local residents than they are by the federal government. The State of Utah has already passed bills to transfer public lands (but not parks, monuments or wilderness areas) from

federal government to the state. Representatives of the American Lands Council are currently visiting counties in eight states to request funding. Two resolutions have passed both Idaho houses—one calling for a study and the second demands transfer of lands.

Blaine County is 82% public land. Important questions to consider are:

- What can be done on the land under state management, i.e., logging, mining, etc., and can the State retain multiple uses?
- What revenues will the state realize?
- How is federal Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funding affected? If PILT funding ends, can the state make up for this County revenue loss?
- Secure Rural Schools (SRS) funding.
- Federal lands need better management to reduce forest fires.

The BCC expressed concern about conservation and recreation, and protecting public land from resource exploitation for revenue.

Sustain Blaine – Harry Griffith

Also present: Sustain Blaine representative Joy Kasputys; and Wood River Economic Partnership Executive Director Doug Brown.

Sustain Blaine's biggest value proposition to Blaine County is keeping existing jobs and creating new business and more jobs, which will increase real estate values and the overall economy. Sustain Blaine has responded to 48 leads from the Department of Commerce, and answers calls from people who want to start businesses in Blaine County.

One way Sustain Blaine can bring more people and more sales to Blaine County is by providing statistics on why people visit Blaine County. Sustain Blaine promotes events and analyzes data of events; and recently partnered with the Recreation District to study summer trail use.

Sustain Blaine is renewing its three-year Idaho Department of Commerce grant of \$82,500; and is applying for a \$10,000 Idaho Power grant. Both grants require local matches. Sustain Blaine supports the entire Wood River Valley, and seeks balanced contributions from all cities in the community, in addition to public and private sector support. Sustain Blaine's FY2014 request from Blaine County is \$25,000.

BREAK

OUTSIDE ORGANIZATION FY2014 FUNDING REQUESTS, continued

Historical Museum – Bob Macleod

Also present: Historical Museum Secretary Jane Rosen, employee Nan Riley and Board Co-Chair Joan Davies.

The Blaine County Historical Museum is requesting \$25,100 from Blaine County for FY2014.

The Historical Museum is in the process of buying property adjacent to the museum. The Museum has a warehouse of historical artifacts that it wants to move into the museum; and additional space will allow a study and research area, and space for presentations.

Programs ongoing and for 2014:

- Idaho is celebrating its sesquicentennial, and commemorating 150 things that made Idaho what it is today. When the Episcopal Church opened a time capsule on the 100th anniversary of Idaho's statehood, everything in it was mining related.
- The Museum, in partnership with the Hailey Library and Hailey Interpretive Center, applied for a Smithsonian "Hometown Teams" exhibit that will feature high school and other local sports teams.
- A model train depicting the train from Shoshone to Ketchum is now installed in the Museum.
- The annual Heritage Court celebration honors a woman from every city in the valley who contributed to the development of the County.

Region IV Development – Joe Herring

Region IV has business loan money available. Historically, Region IV has done more business financing in Blaine County than in any of its other member counties, but last year didn't do a single business loan. Region IV has tried local outreach by opening an office in Blaine County two years ago, and this year, did a lenders seminar in Blaine County and met with local banks.

Annual county contributions to Region IV Development have been the same since 1997. The Region IV Board decided this year to charge a \$500 base per county and reduce the per capita rate from 12¢ to 9¢. This would make Blaine County's annual contribution \$2,224.

Region IV Development has provided funds for a number of projects in Blaine County, including turn lanes, a bridge, a new water system in Bellevue, and a new kitchen in the Blaine County Senior Center.

Blaine County Housing Authority – David Patrie

Also present: BCHA Program Administrator Bobi Bellows.

The BCHA acts as the County's housing-related department and works with developers to provide new housing for rental and sale. The BCHA is currently working with the County and cities of Ketchum and Sun Valley on updating their comprehensive plans. The BCHA closed or put under contract seven community homes this year.

The BCHA has adopted three goals for FY2014:

- Focus on core stewardship duties of the County's existing affordable housing stock, and build relationships with homeowners, applicants and stakeholders.
- Continue to investigate and act on opportunities to increase and diversify revenue sources. Pursue additional rental management opportunities and bolster grant applications and income. The BCHA's new program administrator has extensive experience in grant-writing.
- Increase Blaine County Housing Authority's visibility and stature in the community. The BCHA has an intern who is outreaching especially to underserved Spanish-speaking populations.

Blaine Soil Conservation District – Beverly Swainston

Also present: BSCD Board Chairman Aaron Andrews and Board members John Saili and Kathy Noble; BSCD supervisor Bryan Dilworth; and BSCD Administrative Assistant Beverly Swainston.

Firefighting agencies all have mutual aid agreements with public lands agencies; and landowners can now apply for a license to assist firefighters in fighting fires on BLM land adjacent to their private land. Schoen expressed concern that people who haven't been properly trained might try to fight fires.

The BSCD assists landowners and ranchers in conservation, use and development of soil, water, and other natural resources; and provides them with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) technical help and projects, funding and contracts. The BSCD facilitates several programs, including the Conservation Stewardship Program, Wetlands Reserve Program and Grassland Reserve Program. The BSCD also outreaches to schools and students. A couple Bellevue students placed in district poster competition; and two students from Carey won scholarships this year.

The BSCD requests \$14,000 from Blaine County for FY2014 to cover expenses.

Senior Connection – Kim Coonis

The Senior Connection is about 75% self sustaining. The remaining 25% comes from state and federal funds, Blaine County, grants, private donations and fundraising.

The Senior Connection's new program, "Home Connections," is a revenue generator. Home Connections is a certified transition/relocation specialist and move manager that helps people transition or move into or out of state or a nursing home or assisted living. Home Connections is also Medicaid certified to help people on Medicaid who want to transition out of a nursing home and into their own home.

The Senior Connection has had to reduce its budget and has cut back on employees and eliminated chronic budget drains. The Senior Connection delivers Meals on Wheels to Carey; but the Carey Senior Center lunch program costs the Connection about \$12,000 annually for just 10 people. The Connection would prefer to send the bus to Carey once or twice a week and bring Carey seniors into the Senior Center to socialize with other Blaine County seniors.

The Senior Connection requests an additional \$5,000 to cover expenses of adults who don't fit the senior criteria, but have Alzheimer's, dementia, aphasia or traumatic brain injury and have become part of The Senior Connection family. The now Connection Club gets together four days a week, and gives their caregivers some free time.

Crisis Hotline – Sher Foster

Crisis Hotline Event Coordinator/Development Director Robin Tomasi.

The Crisis Hotline requested \$5,000 from the Blaine County for FY2014.

The Crisis Hotline is a 24/7 public hotline service that partners with first responders and emergency services, The Advocates, financial counselors and other resources available in the County. The Crisis Hotline provides a six-week in-depth broad spectrum training course to qualify its counselors. The number of calls has significantly increased this year, due to the protracted financial downturn and lack of Health and Welfare resources available in the area. The Hotline also gets calls from out of Blaine County, particularly from people in smaller communities who want anonymity.

The Crisis Hotline aligns with County services and saves County money by saving lives and averting costly emergency situations. The Hotline will offer a new trauma and suicide intervention training course this year.

The Crisis Hotline is expanding their school program to make kids more aware of warning signs with

their friends and teach them what to do in an emergency. The Hotline is developing a community awareness program; updating its website, especially for kids to use; and working with Sustain Blaine on a fundraising event this fall.

ADJOURN

At the hour of 3:37 p.m., the BCC finding no more business before them adjourned.

Attest: _____ Approved _____
JoLynn Drage
County Clerk
Lawrence Schoen
Chairman