

JEROME COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, July 11, 2023

PRESENT: Ben Crouch, Chairman
Charles Howell, Commissioner
Art Watkins, Commissioner
Cyril Lootens, County Clerk

Meeting convened at 9 A.M.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Chief Deputy Clerk Tracee McKim was present.

Tracee McKim presented commissioners with updated budget information, and an expenditure sheet with all budgets broken down that included changes from the last budget year to the new budget year.

Tracee asked if the commissioners have decided on a future HR position, and if it needs to be included in the budget. \$70,000 was agreed upon to put in the budget to cover an HR person's salary.

Tracee stated that \$1,200,000 was being set aside for the construction and remodel of the old jail space in the Courthouse. She then discussed the charity lines in the budget. She went through all other taxing districts and funds in the charity section of the budget and what was being allocated.

The commissioners discussed with Tracee a change in salary for Adult Probation supervisor Deserae Calbo. Deserae asked for an increase to be closer to the salary of the Juvenile Probation director. A 16 percent increase was included in the initial report, but after discussion among the County Commissioners they agreed to add an extra percent to her increase, for a total of 24 percent.

Next, a pay increase for Emergency Management was discussed—a salary increase for the director and an increase for the other employee. Tracee McKim stated a total 8.8 percent increase was added for cost of living and merit. She stated that the supervisor asked for a total increase this year of \$12 per hour for herself and \$3 for her assistant. The commissioners discussed among themselves, and researched pay for Emergency Managers around the valley, and at counties of similar size to Jerome through <https://transparent.idaho.gov/transparentidaho/Pages/home.aspx>. After the discussion and research, the commissioners decided not to add any additional increases to either employee.

Tracee and the commissioners discussed moving the cost-of-living amount and merit amount down one percent each for all employees in order to reduce the county budget. Tracee stated she will

Tuesday, July 11, 2023

Page 1 of 4

make the change and present the saving at a later date, but based on a quick review of wages it should reduce the cost by about \$160,000.

Next, Per Diem changes were discussed. Tracee was concerned that if they were increased by a large amount, she would have to refigure the travel budgets. After discussion of potential changes, it was decided to look over travel budgets and slightly increase ones that are almost depleted this year in preparation for next year.

Next, Tracee handed out a list of major projects the county is currently funding or preparing to fund next year. Funding sources and timelines of the projects were discussed as well.

Commissioner Crouch asked about the employee appreciation funds and what are the changes for this year. Tracee stated that the employee appreciation line was removed from all departments and combined as one fund under the County Commissioners. \$50 per full and part-time employee was added to the fund again this year. An additional \$10,000 will be added to the fund this budget.

Commissioner Crouch called for an executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

❖ 11 A.M. - A Motion was made by Commissioner Crouch to go into executive session per Idaho Code 74-206(1)(b), personnel. It was seconded and carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

11:30 A.M. – Return to open session.

Meeting recessed at 11:31 A.M.

Meeting reconvened at 2:05 P.M. with Deputy Clerk Jane White present.

MEET WITH THE TWIN FALLS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS—INMATE HOUSING

Present were Jack Johnson, Don Hall, and Brent Reinke, Twin Falls County commissioners; Tom Carter, Twin Falls County sheriff; Chris Hogan and Steven Byers, Twin Falls County deputy sheriffs; George Oppedyk, Jerome County sheriff; and Marisela Aguirre, Jerome County Jail Administrator.

Commissioner Crouch stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss per diem rates charged to Twin Falls County for beds in the Jerome County jail. He said Twin Falls County was wanting the guarantee of ten more beds from the 25 now guaranteed.

Sheriff George Oppedyk said the Marshal Service is paying Jerome County \$87 per bed and that Jerome County had not adjusted its \$70 rate for Twin Falls inmates for four years.

Sheriff Tom Carter stated Twin Falls County responds to all emergency calls in the Snake River Canyon, and Commissioner Jack Johnson said Twin Falls County also helps with accidents on the north side of the Snake River.

Commissioner Don Hall said Twin Falls has a great relationship with Jerome County because of being neighbors and that Twin Falls County does not yet know what it will need to include in its FY 2023-24 budget.

Sheriff Oppedyk stated there needs to be give and take on both sides but that prisoner expenses, such as food and employee salaries, had increased 45 percent.

Commissioner Hall said most citizens would understand that federal charges would be more than those to a neighboring county.

Sheriff Carter said Twin Falls County charges its surrounding counties only \$45 per bed.

Commissioner Jack Johnson said \$75 per bed would equal \$275,000 more from the Twin Falls County budget and asked for consideration of the mutual aid given to Jerome County from Twin Falls County.

Commissioner Hall said he agreed with \$70 for guaranteed beds.

Sheriff Oppedyk said Jerome County needs to consider mutual aid but that there needs to be a rate increase to cover the cost per inmate day.

Commissioner Hall then favored guaranteeing five more beds at \$75 a day and negotiating again for FY 2024-25. Deputy Marisela Aguirre believed it would be fair to charge \$80 for an increase of ten beds.

Looking for a compromise, Commissioner Watkins said \$77 or \$78 per bed might be more reasonable.

Commissioners Johnson, Hall, and Reinke; Sheriff Carter; and Deputy Sheriffs Hogan and Byers were excused.

The Commissioners discussed what to offer Twin Falls for bed space. Sheriff Oppedyk said the Twin Falls County commissioners had a good argument about mutual aid but that he would not favor guaranteeing more than 25 beds currently used by Twin Falls County because the Marshal Service fills any extra beds. Deputy Marisela Aguirre and Commissioner Howell agreed not to guarantee more than the 25 beds. Sheriff Oppedyk said he had told the captain in the Twin Falls jail in April that the County would be considering raising the per diem rate.

❖ A Motion was made by Commissioner Howell, upon discussion with Deputy Aguirre and Sheriff Oppedyk and being good neighbors, to offer Twin Falls County \$75 a bed per night for 25 guaranteed beds for the FY 2023-24. It was seconded and carried with unanimous ayes.

➤ It was determined that Sheriff Oppedyk would notify Sheriff Carter and that Commissioner Crouch would phone Commissioner Johnson about the Board's decision.

Respectively submitted:

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Cy Lootens, Clerk

A. Ben Crouch, Chairman

Jane White, Deputy Clerk

Charles M. Howell, Commissioner

Art Watkins, Commissioner