

Muscatine County Board of Supervisors
Tuesday, January 17, 2017

The Muscatine County Board of Supervisors met in special session at 9:00 A.M. with Howard, Sorensen, Sauer and Bonebrake present. Mather was absent. Chairperson Sorensen presiding.

On a motion by Howard, second by Bonebrake, the agenda was approved as revised. Ayes: All.

County Attorney Alan Ostergren reviewed the FY17/18 budget request for the Attorney's Office stating he budgeted \$10,000 for a prosecuting intern due to an assistant being out on leave this summer. Howard stated he sees a lot of travel throughout the year, but does not see it in the budget. Ostergren stated he is involved in several groups that he travels for that he considers valuable for his professional development and for the benefit of the County. Ostergren stated he is not spending tax dollars to get professional training that he brings back to his office because it is paid out of fine collections. Howard stated fine collections are for fines collected in Muscatine County. Ostergren stated the fines collected are for delinquent court debt and he as the elected official has oversight over those funds and chooses to spend those funds on more than basic training that he brings back to his office. Ostergren stated he would not go to any training that he did not think was valuable to his office. Ostergren stated he estimates FY16/17 to collect \$900,000 in fines with \$650,000 to be split of which the County Attorney's Office would receive 5%. Howard asked how much time is lost to go to conferences. Ostergren stated that when he travels he is still approving documents through email. Ostergren stated he maintains a case load, as do his assistants, but sometimes have to cover for each other. Ostergren stated compared to his peer group, he does not have the number of assistants that other counties have and some of those county attorneys do not maintain a case load like he does. Sorensen asked about the victim witness coordinator position. Ostergren stated he gets consistent positive feedback from victims. Ostergren stated it has created substantially more interaction between his office and victims of crime. Bonebrake asked about electronic filing. Ostergren stated it still presents challenges in managing the flow of information in the office, but it has been an asset to be able to access court records remotely. Ostergren stated they are getting by, so he is not going to ask for another position at this point. Sauer asked if the majority of conferences are one day or multi-day events. Ostergren stated most are multi-day, but some are meetings to Des Moines and back in one day. Sauer asked about several assistants attending the same conference. Ostergren stated those are normally the State conferences because each attorney has to complete 30 classroom hours in a two year period. Sorensen asked about the relationship with the City. Ostergren stated he has received good feedback and confirmed that he only handles criminal violations of city ordinance and traffic violations.

Christy Roby-Williams, Trinity Public Health Director, reviewed the FY17/18 budget request for the Board of Health stating she is requesting an increase in the County allocation because they have operated at a loss in FY14, FY15 and FY16. Roby-Williams stated she has made efforts towards financial stabilization by reducing 90 hours of staff time related to essential public health services to Muscatine County, eliminating services that were no longer sustainable and increasing fees. Roby-Williams stated she has budgeted to have the Fiscal Manager spend 8 hours per week on Public Health and increase the Nurse Practitioner by 2 hours per week. Roby-Williams stated rent is high, but the owner of the building will not renegotiate the contract.

Bonebrake stated he would be more likely to pay an increase for additional space rather than inflated rent. Roby-Williams stated that the County was never asked for an increase when they expanded into the lower level of the building. Bonebrake stated if the rent were renegotiated, at least half of the operating loss would be addressed. Roby-Williams stated she is asking for \$237,906 or \$5.55 per Muscatine County resident.

Sheriff C. J. Ryan reviewed the FY17/18 budget request for the Sheriff's Office and Jail stating the Sheriff's patrol budget was pretty much status quo with the exception of an increase in overtime and training. Ryan stated he has budgeted for the replacement of 3 patrol vehicles. Sorensen asked for an update on body cameras. Ryan stated they are still dealing with policy issues, but he believes it is inevitable because the public demands it and it will aid the County Attorney in prosecutions. Ryan stated that the move to all full-time jail staff has accomplished what they wanted it to accomplish. Ryan stated food costs are up because population is up and it is hard to predict from year to year based on what the population will do. Howard asked about the Clinton inmates. Ryan stated they have seen a reduction in Johnson County inmates that freed up cells so they pursued Clinton County inmates, but Clinton County is in the process of building a new jail and will not be outsourcing once that construction is completed. Howard asked if Clinton County will become a competitor for housing out-of-county inmates with their new jail. Ryan stated they are only building a jail large enough to house their own inmates so he does not see them as a competitor. Ryan stated he is requesting transitioning a Food Service Worker from part-time to full-time. Ryan stated the position is currently vacant because he cannot find anyone to fill the part-time position. Ryan stated that position has always had high turnaround because of it being part-time. Ryan stated he is also requesting moving the RN position to 40 hours per week and retaining the part-time LPN which would allow for 69 hours per week of coverage. Ryan stated 69 hours is still at the low end of the medical provider's recommendation, but would greatly reduce the County's liability. Administrative Services Director Nancy Schreiber stated the Sheriff would like the requests for transition from part-time to full-time to become effective February 1st stating the additional cost in the current fiscal year would be \$8,870 for the Food Service Worker and \$13,160 for the Jail Nurse. Board consensus was to put this item on an agenda for consideration in this fiscal year.

Conservation Director Curt Weiss reviewed the FY17/18 budget request for the Conservation Department stating his budget shows minor increases. Weiss stated the learning center is 11 years old and starting to require some maintenance. Weiss stated they still have not bonded for the cabins at deep lakes park, but should have their engineering report in the next week. Weiss stated they may consider trying to fundraise for the cabins rather than bonding because bonding will tie up user fees for the duration of the bond and they would not be able to do other projects. Weiss stated they are moving forward with the shooting range now that they have FEMA approval. Weiss stated he budgeted \$40,000 to replace the 2004 Chevy 4x4, a 1975 boat motor and a 1979 equipment trailer.

Mather joined the meeting at 11:46 A.M.

The Board recessed at 11:49 A.M. and reconvened at 12:00 P.M.

Veterans Affairs Director Jennifer Watkins-Schoenig reviewed the FY17/18 budget request for Veterans Affairs stating her budget shows an overall decrease in non-personnel items.

Community Services Director Mike Johannsen reviewed the FY17/18 budget request for General Assistance stating the County dollars are always the last dollars that are spent. Johannsen stated they use resources available from other agencies before they utilize the county dollars.

Johannsen reviewed the FY17/18 budget request for Mental Health stating the State has studied possible scenarios for long-term funding as follows: Scenario 1: The State buys out the Counties over 10 years; Scenario 2: Eliminates the \$125.8 million cap and allows all counties to levy \$47.28 per capita. Scenario 2 is supported by the Iowa State Association of Counties; Scenario 3: Eliminates the \$47.28 per capita limit and the \$125.8 million cap and reverts to a more traditional levy based on a cap of \$.93 per thousand dollars of taxable property value. Johannsen stated Scenario 2 is the best plan for County residents and encouraged the Board to contact their legislators to encourage them to support Scenario 2. Johannsen stated the FY17/18 budget is status quo and still funding core plus services and sheltered work. Board consensus was to maintain the maximum levy in mental health.

The Board reviewed the FY17/18 budget requests for Administration/Board of Supervisors, Court Services, Non-Departmental, General Services and DHS with Budget Administrator Sherry Seright and Administrative Services Director Nancy Schreiber.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:39 P.M.

ATTEST:

Leslie A. Soule, County Auditor

Jeff Sorensen, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors