

Gilliam County Budget Committee  
May 10, 2017 Minutes

Present were Judge Steve Shaffer, Commissioner Michael Weimar, Commissioner Leslie Wetherell, Budget Officer Nathan Hammer, Budget Committee Chairman Brad Anderson, Committee Member Gary Miller, Court Administrator Leanne Durfey and Recorder Mary Dyer. Paul Barnett was absent.

Brad Anderson called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

The following entities presented information regarding previously submitted (attached) budget requests:

**Road Department**

Gilliam County Roadmaster Dewey Kennedy reported that Gilliam County maintains 428 miles of roads, all of which need some type of maintenance or repair. He noted that with consistent funding, the County has the equipment, manpower, materials and knowledge to maintain and make significant improvements to County roads. However, without funding, work will be limited to “dirt maintenance.” Kennedy also provided a plan for improvements to Lonerock Grade, as well as graphs outlining various sources of Road Department revenue and signatures of support for funding. He explained that uncertain funding makes it impossible to plan ahead.

Brad Anderson inquired about tax revenue from the upcoming wind project, and Budget Officer Hammer explained that the amount will remain relatively flat because as revenues increase due to the new projects, revenues from existing projects will drop.

Judge Shaffer discussed the transportation package currently before the legislature, explaining that although the package is considered a priority, the County probably won't see any revenue for two years.

Commissioner Weimar said that the County's aging equipment must be considered, and reiterated Kennedy's concern about the need for long-term planning.

**Sheriff's Department**

Gilliam County Sheriff Gary Bettencourt explained budgetary changes, including an increase in personnel services due to an error in salary and a decrease in fuel expense. Sheriff Bettencourt also explained that he plans to purchase ammunition this year. He said that he doesn't need or intend to purchase a vehicle this budget year, but he inquired if an amount should be entered into the budget as a placeholder in case something unexpected happens. Hammer explained that a placeholder isn't necessary, and if needed, money is available in a supplemental budget.

**Justice Court**

Gilliam County Justice Court Judge Chris Patnode outlined the duties and responsibilities of the Justice Court, noting that the freeway creates considerable workload. She noted that the recent speed limit increase and other legislative changes have impacted the Justice Court, and also explained that Magic User Group fees pertain to an online traffic system. Judge Patnode also discussed the need for indigent legal assistance, which is difficult to predict. While funding may not be required, potential needs for an indigent individual could include a certified interpreter, medical care, or a jury trial.

### **Port of Arlington**

Port of Arlington Manager Peter Mitchell said that the Port is considering four possible projects, depending on funding: a flex building, extension of water and sewer to Island Park, replacement of the restrooms at Island Park, and continued support for the Port's Small Business Assistance Program. In explanation, he said that a flex building would provide needed space for businesses as there is currently little available space. He also said that the Port has saved enough money for a small building but hopes to build a larger building of 10,000 to 12,000 square feet. Water and sewer extension would allow further development on Island Park, and new restroom facilities would replace the old restrooms, which aren't ADA-compliant. Funding the Small Business program would allow continued guidance, support and planning assistance for small businesses within Gilliam County. He commented that the County can choose to grow or stagnate, and even considering a five percent increase in jobs, workers aren't remaining in the County,

Brad Anderson said it doesn't make sense to place a flex building on the Island, and asked why the building isn't planned for the Arlington Mesa, where there is adequate space. When Commissioner Wetherell asked about expenses, Mitchell responded that he doesn't have hard numbers for the water and sewer expansion, but the bathrooms are expected to cost approximately \$200,000.

Commissioner Weimar asked if potential tenants for the flex building could include WI Construction and Mitchell said that it's a public facility and the company wouldn't be excluded from consideration.

### **Summit Springs Village Corporation**

SSV Director Cindy Hess was present, along with SSV Board Chairman Kathy Burres and Board Member Ed Cooney. The Board has requested that \$150,000 be set aside in case the facility needs assistance with operating expenses, noting that a large portion of the residents at this time are on state assistance.

Judge Shaffer asked about loan balances, and Hess said she would provide the amounts. Kathy Burres reported that the loans will be paid off in 2025.

### **Condon Community Food Pantry**

Condon Community Food Pantry Chairperson Cindy Hess and Food Pantry Coordinator Teddy Fennern requested funding. Gary Miller asked how food is attained, and Fennern explained that it comes from CAPECO, as well as community donations, a local Trick or Treat food drive, and a “perpetual ask” by Condon United Church of Christ.

Funds are also used for energy and water assistance, CAPECO’s monthly food delivery surcharge, and liability insurance.

### **OSU Extension**

Gilliam County OSU Extension Agent Jordan Maley explained that a requested increase is due to discontinuation of a subsidy for connectivity costs, which are significantly higher than the state average because of the County’s remote location. Office Specialist Lisa Greene noted that the 4-H program has gained 18 new families during the past year.

### **Arlington Public Schools**

Arlington School District Superintendent Kevin Hunking explained that the District is considering two projects: a continuation of the Early College Program in partnership with the County, which has grown every year; and one-time expenses for removal and replacement of the Elementary School roof, including removal of current roof, design and re-roofing.

### **Condon Public Schools**

Condon Schools Superintendent Michelle Geer explained that the District is requesting funding for the General Fund and the Early College Program. She noted that funding will help the District acquire grants and will help in prioritizing needs, including repair and/or replacement of boilers in both school buildings.

### **Gilliam County Library**

Library Board Chairman Cindy Osterlund explained that librarian Mary Reser is assuming a full-time position, an increase of 10 hours per week. The Youth Librarian will remain the same and an assistant library position will be eliminated. The City has been paying for propane and electricity and may continue to do so. Surplus carryover has been used to fund AWE tablets, and interactive programming for youth, patio furniture and a librarian desk.

### **District Attorney**

Present were District Attorney Marion Weatherford and April Aamodt, Witness Coordinator and Director of the Victim’s Assistance Program. Increased expenses include training and conventions for the newly hired legal assistant. Weatherford also discussed state requirements regarding child advocacy programs, noting that the number of sex abuse cases has increased significantly this year

### **South Gilliam Health District**

South Gilliam County Health Center Coordinator Hollie Winslow was present, along with Board Member Gary Bettencourt. Carol Harrison explained that the Board is considering the need for a generator to ensure the Clinic will have power in the event of an emergency she also said funding may be used for possible remodel of the dental clinic, including update of the County-owned dental equipment, and mitigation of privacy issues.

### **Condon Child Care**

Condon Child Care Executive Director Jennifer Bold was present, along with Teddy Fennern, Condon Child Care board member. Bold reported that the new building should be ready for use no later than Thanksgiving of this year. She also said changes in Early Education at the state and federal level have raised expenses considerably. CCC has implemented a wage reform plan to address competitive employment practices. In an effort to offset costs, the Board has approved a 2.5 percent increase of tuition and an increase of preschool tuition to \$175 per month. An after-school program and summer food program are ongoing.

### **Gilliam County Soil and Water Conservation District**

Conservation District Chair Jordan Maley commended the SWCD Board of Directors for stepping up to meet recent challenges, including substantial and unexpected increases in costs for a planned building on Condon's Main Street. He said the Board is implementing cost-cutting measures, including consolidation with USDA and other entities, and intends to move forward with a smaller, more reasonably priced building. Maley said that without a building, there is a good possibility SWCD will move to an adjacent county, which would mean a loss of four positions.

### **Arlington Child Care**

Present were Jeanette Potter and Verlene Williams of Arlington Child Care. Williams reported that things are going well and that an increase in babies required an additional part-time employee. Increases in wages and licensing costs are also reflected in the budget.

Break for lunch

The Committee noted the following requests by entities not present:

Arlington Community Preschool - \$34,000

Gilliam County Fire Services - \$60,000

Arlington Public Library - \$20,000

Arlington H.E.L.P. - \$8,000 (Increased from \$6,500)

USDA Wildlife Services - \$67,206.86 (Loss of funding for trapping program was noted)

Pioneer Community Development Corporation - \$50,000

**Motion** was made by Judge Shaffer, second by Gary Miller, to approve Budget Committee meeting minutes of May 4, 2016 and May 23, 2016. Anderson – Yes; Miller – Yes; Shaffer – Yes; Weimar - Yes; Wetherell – Yes; **Motion Carried.**

Brad Anderson requested clarification of earmarks, as follows:

- Arlington TV Cooperative has requested \$258,667, which is the final payment of three equal payments. The money was used to fund TV, Internet and telephone fiber for residents, as well as a remodel of the Arlington TV Coop building.
- City of Condon requested \$387,562, the balance remaining from the fiber project. The money may or may not be used.
- Condon Child Care's request for \$150,000 is a placeholder that will allow the building project to continue while waiting for grant funding.

Budget Committee deliberation and decisions on funding requests ensued, as follows:

### **Arlington Child Care**

Judge Shaffer commented that he has no problem with funding Arlington Child Care, but that ACC and Arlington Community Preschool should be encouraged to work together.

### **Arlington Port Commission**

Regarding the Port of Arlington's request for \$800,000, Judge Shaffer said he is reluctant to provide that much money. Brad Anderson again mentioned he is concerned that there isn't room on the Island for a large flex building and that Arlington Mesa Airport and Industrial Park would be a better location. The Committee agreed with Commissioner Wetherell's comment that an extension of water and sewer is a moot point, as there is inadequate space to build anything, and no room for parking.

It was mentioned that the Port owns the hangar at the airport and has applied to grow marijuana within the building, which may eliminate or decrease the possibility of receiving federal grants. It was also suggested that grant money would probably be available for new, ADA-compliant restrooms at Island Park.

A previous arrangement in which the Port agreed to repay County funding with Willow Creek gravel was also discussed. Port of Arlington Commission President Ron Wilson was present and said he had no knowledge of the arrangement.

Commissioner Weimar commented the Court shouldn't provide the full amount requested, and Judge Shaffer suggested that an amount totaling \$250,000 or less would be fair. Gary Miller asked if it's possible to provide \$250,000 with stipulations. Court Administrator Leanne Durfey said that it's possible for the grant to be specific, and suggested that the funding be reimbursable, which would allow the Court to track how the money is being spent.

Commissioner Weimar also commented that residents of South Gilliam County want to know how the Port's activities benefit them.

**Motion** made by Judge Shaffer, second by Gary Miller, to provide the Arlington Port with \$250,000, with the stipulation that funds be used for restrooms or a flex building, and that none of the funds be used for development or engineering of water and sewer. Anderson – Yes; Miller – Yes; Shaffer – Yes; Weimar - Yes; Wetherell – Yes; **Motion Carried.**

### **Summit Springs Village Corporation**

Budget Officer Hammer suggested that the county loan SSV money to pay the loan, which would allow SSV to repay the County and reduce or eliminate HUD stipulations. However, Commissioner Weimar commented that more research is needed, as SSV may still be required to fulfill certain covenants. Requirements and restrictions of SSV loans may be similar to those of Economic Development Administration loan to the Gilliam County Grain Lab.

### **Road Department**

Budge Officer Hammer commented that the Road Department, which isn't a taxing district, gets 30 percent of property taxes. He said he has no problem leaving the budget as-is, but that it's important to be aware of the proportion. The Committee agreed.

At this point, the Committee agreed by consensus that it wasn't necessary to discuss each request individually.

**Motion** was made by Commissioner Wetherell, second by Judge Shaffer, to approve the 2017-18 budget in the amount of \$51,471,393, and to certify the total ad valorem property tax in the amount of 3.8450 per thousand of the assessed value. Anderson – Yes; Miller – Yes; Shaffer – Yes; Weimar - Yes; Wetherell – Yes; **Motion Carried.**

**Motion** was made by Gary Miller, second by Commissioner Wetherell, to continue the Homestead Rebate in FY 2017-18 at 100% of the tax bill, not to exceed a maximum of \$500 per qualifying homestead. Anderson – Yes; Miller – Yes; Shaffer – Yes; Weimar - Yes; Wetherell – Yes; **Motion Carried.**

Brad Anderson adjourned the meeting at 2:05 p.m.

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Brad Anderson, Budget Committee Chair

Recorder: Mary Dyer