

**BOARD OF MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES  
Monday, October 31, 2011  
Commission Chambers  
411 North Fifth Street, Shelton WA 98584**

The 2012 budget workshop commenced at 1:31 p.m. Commissioners Ring Erickson, Sheldon, and Bloomfield were in attendance.

The Commissioners opened the workshop by stating that Treasurer Lisa Frazier had briefed them this morning regarding the Governor's 2012 budget proposal. Ms. Frazier considered the Governor's worst case scenario and anticipates Mason County's revenues could be reduced by at least \$1 million. She recommended the Board plan for reduced revenues from the State.

The Commissioners then circulated a memo requesting a 8.5% 2012 budget reduction in all departments. The Commissioners goal is to reduce the expenditures by \$2 million. Cmmr. Sheldon stated that although the legislature writes the budget, the Commissioners anticipate the revenues will be reduced.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson commented that although we don't know exactly where the cuts will be, it is fairly clear that revenues won't be back in a year and we have to offer the mandated services. We need to look at new way to deliver services and reset for the future.

Cmmr. Bloomfield commented that is could be worse than it looks and doesn't see any help.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson added that she doesn't anticipate help from the state or federal government.

Cmmr. Sheldon stated that ER&R rates need to be looked at. November 17 is the next revenue forecast from the state and there has been a long stretch of declining revenue.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson agreed that ER&R rates and the car replacement policy need to be reviewed. Other services may need to be eliminated.

Tom Davis asked if there is a priorities list.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson replied there are several mandates – the county has to count votes, assess property, provide public safety, run the jail, have a coroner, conduct restaurant inspections, etc.

Cmmr. Sheldon stated there are mandated services and then there are non-mandated services such as selling passports that need to be reviewed.

Tom Davis asked about social services.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson said that would depend on if they have dedicated revenue.

Commissioners

Diane Zoren presented a proposed budget reduction for the Commissioners 2012 budget. It includes the Commissioners waiving their medical coverage and returning up to 12 furlough days as additional revenue in order to meet the 8.5% reduction.

Community Development (Fire Investigation Services)

Barbara Adkins stated the Fire Chiefs Association have been providing fire investigation services at no charge and for 2012 they have proposed an interlocal governmental agreement where they will be reimbursed for time and services mandated under fire code. The County no longer employees a fire

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marshal but has to provide fire investigation services. Ms. Adkins presented a 2012 budget change for \$79,768 for fire investigation services.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson stated this replaces having a full time fire marshal position.

#### Public Works

Charlie Butros stated Public Works has already proposed a reduced budget by 7.5%. They have vacant positions that they are not intending to fill and before filling critical positions, they will bring the request to the Board.

The ER&R budget was reviewed. Money has been collected for equipment replacement.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson explained that ER&R collects money each year for equipment replacement and then the equipment is replaced when it is at the end of its useful life.

Mr. Butros stated the primary increases are the indirect cost and the financial system. There are new servers needed for the financial system.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson asked if there are any opportunities for consolidating services with the city.

Mr. Butros stated they looked at that a few years ago for things such as design work and he'll look at it again.

Cmmr. Sheldon commented they should be able to get good deals on equipment, due to the economy.

Mr. Butros referred to the road budget, there is a contingency for chip seal and paving. This was held back because most of the money has to go to projects that do not have grant funding. The grant funding has been reduced. When work is deferred, any increases over the grant funding are paid from county revenues.

#### .09 Rural Sales & Use Tax

Cmmr. Sheldon brought up the Rural County Sales Tax. - 09 fund. If that is reduced, as proposed in the Governor's proposal, that could impact water quality projects. If the county is anticipating a reduction, he asked if the county should be looking at reducing that service now.

#### WSU Extension Office

Bob Simmons stated that so far the WSU Extension office has been safe from state budget cuts. They have 18 staff, with 1.5 staff paid by the county and he noted they receive four times as much revenue from outside sources than what the county contributes. The other positions are funded by WSU, grants, and donations. They try to purchase their equipment from grants. They do receive \$30,000 from .09 funding for water quality. With today's news, he will look at their budget. He does have a \$19,920 supplemental request that is paid for from a Utilities & Waste Management Grant for rain gardens at the Belfair Sewer project. The Board approved the request.

#### Human Resources

Karen Jackson stated she resubmitted her budget for a benefit change. She added \$2,000 to training, rather than take her step increase. Her goal is to step up performance management to try to reduce grievances and she is trying to remove the Commissioners from the grievance process. The dues lines pay for WAPERLRA & AWC fees, which offer valuable information and low cost training.

On the Risk Management side, Dawn Twiddy is .5 FTE, which allows her to only process claims, not manage risk. Staff has scheduled some trainings, such as Public Records and EEOC. Budget changes are due to benefits and ER&R disbursement between Central Operations and Human Resources. The training

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budget lines are for required training/testing for employees countywide. The Risk Manager has paid to train a deputy to conduct the first aid training which reduces the per employee cost by about \$25 per employee.

Utilities & Waste Management (Water Conservancy)

Emmett Dobey discussed a funding request for the Water Conservancy Board. He explained the Board was formed three years ago to expedite water right transfers. It was envisioned they would receive application fees, however there have not been any transfer requests. They have three active members, with one alternate who are required to have Ecology training. There are no resources for training in 2012 and he is requesting Current Expense funding for training. The Board has been providing review of the Coordinated Water System Plan.

After discussion of the fact there are no water right transfers, the Commissioners do not see a need to fund the Water Conservancy Board.

Rural Sales & Use Tax (.09)

Vicki Kirkpatrick asked if she should assume an elimination of .09 funding for Oakland Bay. Should she look at reducing certain services or reducing all services.

Cmmr. Sheldon stated she needs to look at the program. Sometimes if a program is reduced so much, it should just be cut.

Mr. Dobey noted the Board has pledged money from .09 Fund for stormwater and the Belfair sewer. If that is eliminated, it could change the sewer rate.

Adjourn

The workshop adjourned at 2:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Zoren, Assistant to the Commissioners

BOARD OF MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lynda Ring Erickson  
Chair

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Tim Sheldon  
Commissioner

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Steven Bloomfield  
Commissioner