

STILLWATER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

Notice: These minutes reflect the proceedings of the Board of County Commissioners. The official minutes were approved and are on file with the Clerk and Recorder (MCA 7-4-2611(2)(b)).

PUBLIC HEARING AUGUST 25, 2015 - 1:30 PM

PRELIMINARY BUDGET 2015-2016

Present: Commissioners Dennis Shupak, Chair; Maureen Davey and Gerald W. Dell, Members; Lori Dobitz, Administrative Assistant; Joe Morse, Finance Specialist; Clifford Brophy, Sheriff; Heidi Stadel, Clerk & Recorder; Nancy Rohde, County Attorney; Carol Arkell, DES Coordinator; Jerry Friend, Treasurer; county citizens: John P. Simmons; Jay Heitman; and Rick Hanners, Stillwater County News.

Open the Hearing: Commissioner Shupak welcome everyone to the public hearing. He said this is the time and place for the public hearing on the Stillwater County Preliminary Budget for FY 2015-2016. The purpose of the hearing is for any taxpayer or resident to appear before the Board and be heard for or against any part of the proposed budget. Commissioner Shupak stated the Commissioners met with all department and each submitted their requests for the upcoming budget year. Joe Morse took those requests and drafted the preliminary budget for FY2015-2016, he said.

Comments: Commissioner Davey said as a side note - Yellowstone County is also holding their public hearing today with an adoption scheduled the following week. She told those present that the Department of Revenue submitted the taxable valuations to the Commission on August 3, 2015. Once the taxable valuations were received, we started plugging in figures and going through the budget line by line. All department requests were considered, she said.

Joe Morse, Finance Specialist, said as a result of the new appraisal system from the state, we are seeing an increase in the taxable value from the prior year. He said, basically what that does, through the formula to determine our maximum mills, we were authorized to levy 112.21 aggregate mills and 44.75 mills for the road and fire which excludes the Town of Columbus. He said both of those mills are down significantly from the prior year because our value in the general fund of one mill now raises \$40,650, whereas last year it was approximately \$36,000. He explained the number went down because the value of property in the county increased due to the reappraisal. With that being said, with all of the department requests, he plugged those in along with proposed salaries, capital transfers, equipment purchases. At this point we levied 87.09 mills for the aggregated funds, and 44.75 road and fire funds. Road and Fire depleted those. We will need to make adjustments in the Road fund as they are over 1.3 million, mostly due to equipment and the current rockslide. For the aggregated funds, we still have 25.12 mills not levied, so that would be a savings. Similar to last

year, he said, we had 16.2 mills we did not levy that we were authorized.

Commissioner Davey said we have committed \$482,000 for the improvement of the West Rosebud Road as a match to a federal grant that will come out of this budget.

Cliff Brophy, Sheriff, said he checked Friday and Monday to review the budget for personnel costs and wages/salaries, as it has been a big topic throughout the last few months, but from what he can see - they were not put into the budget. He asked where are those figures and how do we get them; and second, how is the public going to come in and give input if they don't have access to a complete budget to review to comment on.

Joe Morse said as of this morning he does have that information. Commissioner Davey said this is the day the preliminary budget was due. The Sheriff said he has not had the opportunity to meet with the commission to discuss wages and salaries. Commissioner Dell said Undersheriff Kem has a meeting scheduled with the Commission following the hearing. Commissioner Davey said numerous departments submitted salary requests during their initial budget meetings with the commissioners.

Joe Morse said next year it is his intention to have all wage/salary request submitted during the budget meetings with each department. He said he knows that is different than what they have done in the past where if you have a certain employee you wanted to recognize or promote, then we would take requests. He said he does not expect the Department Heads to figure out the hourly rate plus the fringe benefits, he would calculate that.

Sheriff Brophy said for every employee in the Sheriff's Office, Dispatch, Coroner, Victim Witness Advocate, he was told not to fill in the salary on the budget forms. He said he can not find out from the budget, that is suppose to be open to the public, what those figures are going to be or if there is any change, which is his concern. Commissioner Dell said those figures are in there right now.

Jay Heitmann, resident, said he backed the sheriff's concerns and asked if the budget will available online. Commissioner Dell said a copy of the preliminary budget has been available in the Finance Office as advertised in the Stillwater County News. John Simmons, resident, asked if money has been set aside to repair three alleys in Absarokee for drainage problems. Commissioner Dell said there is not a specific budget line for alley repairs in Absarokee. Dell said the county is awaiting an engineers report from Great West Engineering, the same firm working on the rockslide on the Stillwater River Road. Commissioner Davey said the residents of Park City have also been addressing drainage problems and the individual communities have the opportunity to create a rural special improvement district that would encompass that community. John Simmons said he can't understand why the alley's are not bladed.

Nancy Rohde, County Attorney, asked if the budget document is available electronically. She said she is concerned about the comments the public have in terms of what is being called a preliminary budget. She said she hasn't seen a copy of the budget until this morning, and as the Sheriff has indicated, it has not been a complete budget. She said although a copy of the budget was in the Finance Office it needs to be other places for public review. Commissioner Davey said the public hearing is opened until the budget is adopted. Heidi Stadel said the Clerk and Records Office can have a copy available for public review. Clifford Brophy, Sheriff, questioned the 4.5 million dollar

old hospital renovation project - according to the newspaper, you apparently decided to go forward with that or take some action. He asked if this project is covered in this budget. Commissioner Davey said there has been no action taken to move forward other than have the property appraised to see what the building is worth. Commissioner Dell said there is a Capital Improvements Fund money available if we so choose to use it for that.

John Simmons, asked if the approximately 12 mills for the West Rosebud Road project part of the 44.7 mills of the road fund. Joe Morse said it was. Commissioner Davey explained the those 12 mills is a match for a federal grant which also includes the Allen Grade Bridge.

Close this portion of Hearing: Hearing no further comment, Commissioner Davey **MOVED** to continue the public hearing and accept written comments until September 1, 2015, at which time a final budget will be adopted for FY 2015-2016. Commissioner Dell **SECONDED**. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:58 PM

Claims and Warrants:

Claims were examined and warrants ordered drawn in the amount of \$ 518,081.74 and payroll in the amount of \$ 361,636.46 for a total of \$ 879.718.20 for the month ending August 31, 2015.