

MARSHALL COUNTY COUNCIL
2012 BUDGET HEARINGS
FIRST READING - AUGUST 22 and 23, 2011

The budget hearing was called to order by President Matt Hassel. Also present were Vice President Don Morrison, members John Benedict, Ralph Booker, Ward Byers, Rex Gilliland, and Judith Stone; and Auditor Penny Lukenbill. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council offered the opportunity for public comment, but there was none.

SOLID WASTE BUDGET

Copies of the Solid Waste budget were distributed for consideration by Solid Waste Board member Ralph Booker, who noted that except for the proposed 2% pay increase, the \$321,980 budget was basically the same as 2011. The Solid Waste Board has reviewed and approved the budget, and the second reading and adoption will take place at 9:00 am on September 12.

SOUTH WEST LAKE MAXINKUCKEE
CONSERVANCY DISTRICT BUDGET

Copies of the South West Lake Maxinkuckee Conservancy District 2012 budget were also distributed. Although the budget has increased from \$90,000 in 2011 to \$273,111 for 2012, the requested levy will be \$50,000 rather than \$99,000. Rosy Oshry with O.W. Krohn Associates, financial advisors for the conservancy, stated that the Conservancy has secured a loan and a grant from the State Revolving Fund, as well as a line of credit. They anticipate a nominal levy for 2013. By October or November of this year, they will be assessing a \$6,000 sewer hookup fee, and expect that all 158 freeholders will be connected by September, 2012.

COMMISSIONER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commissioners expressed their appreciation to the elected officials and department heads for their efforts in holding budgets to nearly the same levels as 2011, even with the proposed 2% pay increase. They made the following recommendations for the 2012 budget:

Personnel:

- 1) A 2% pay increase for all employees
- 2) Veterans Service Officer - increase to full-time
- 3) Highway – additional driver/sign person to assist with the federally mandated sign inventory program.
- 4) Prosecutor – additional Deputy Prosecutor, to be supported by IVD and Pre-Trial Diversion Funds
- 5) Sheriff – additional patrol officer
- 6) Superior 2 – receptionist, with support from Court Services Fund
- 7) Maintain the State holiday schedule setting thirteen holidays for 2012

General recommendations:

- (1) Establish a \$75,000 limit for the purchase of Sheriff vehicles
- (2) Replacement of windows and doors in County Building. The windows are in poor condition and are not energy efficient, and many of the doors are not ADA compliant. Rich Ulrich is exploring the possibility of retrofitting the current doors, and is in the process of securing quotes for replacements.
- (3) IT Department should continue to evaluate and recommend all computer replacements and upgrades.
- (4) Department are encouraged to use special funds available to support their General Fund budgets.

Additional recommendations:

The 2012 budget should not be reduced below the current budget of \$10,577,251 to preserve the maximum levy.

Mr. Hassel asked the Commissioners to further explain the proposal to increase the Veterans Service Officer to full-time. Mr. Overmyer stated that the number of veterans is increasing and that they are facing a number of different challenges. Josh Wakeland, the current Service Officer, has automated the benefits application procedure and completes the forms online while the veterans are in his office, whereas in the past, they had to navigate the process themselves. The Commissioners feel that the county owes it to the veterans to provide a Service Officer who can assist them in securing their benefits.

BUDGET DISCUSSIONS

Department heads and elected officials were invited to discuss with the Council any changes or increases in their budgets. Mr. Hassel stated that the Council would try to adhere to the time schedule as much as possible.

Commissioners - The PERF line has increased substantially due to the state-mandated increase from 6 ½% to 8% next year. Also, a 10% increase was built into the Health Insurance line, but there is still no definite figure on the actual increase. The Vehicle Maintenance Supplies line increased \$2,000, and includes the Buildings and Grounds vehicles.

The entire commitments to the Bowen Center, Marshall Starke Development Center, Boys & Girls Clubs, Senior Centers and 4-H were included in the Commissioners' budget, rather than split with the Rainy Day Fund. The 4-H support was formerly divided into separate lines in the Commissioner's budget, and has now been combined into one line.

CCD – No vehicle purchases were included in the Rainy Day budget, as the Commissioners felt the General Fund could absorb the recommended \$75,000 allotment for the sheriff's vehicles. Mr. Marshall will discuss the software maintenance and computer equipment requests.

Rainy Day Fund - The County's contribution to the Marshall County Economic Development remains at \$150,000, and has been budgeted in Rainy Day. Professional Services includes \$150,000 to establish a backup of many county records, including property record cards and transfer books. Mr. Overmyer stated that a coordinated backup plan is long overdue and that they plan to meet with department heads to determine develop a plan. He stated it is not necessary to complete the project all at once, and that it could be done over several years if the Council felt the request should be reduced. Several Council members agreed that a plan was needed, and cited other counties which have lost valuable records due to fire or natural disaster.

CAGIT – Mr. Hassel stated that the Council has anticipated reducing the number employees from this budget for the past several years. The Commissioners felt that the General Fund is sound enough to bear the cost of transferring one employee from the special CAGIT this year.

Mr. Overmyer reminded Council members that the special CAGIT will end in 2025 when the jail bonds are paid out. He suggested that Council consider leaving the ¼% CAGIT in place to support public safety, rather than consider enacting a Local Option Income Tax. It would take special legislation to continue the CAGIT collection.

Mr. Hassel stated he has always felt that all personnel should be transferred to the General Fund eventually, and that he personally was not in favor of extending the collection.

Highway, Cum Bridge and Local Road and Street – Neal Haeck recapped the road and bridge construction projects currently underway or anticipated in the next year or so. The Pine Road project will be completed within the next month, and he expects very few expenditures on that project. The 13th Road bridge should have been completed in August, but is nearly 90 days behind schedule and the contractor is now in the penalty phase. The Pierce Street bridge replacement is

underway and contractors are making good progress. The construction of 7th Road between Michigan Road and Linden is the next major project. He has budgeted \$557,000 in Cum Bridge for construction and project engineers. He reported he expects to have sufficient federal funds for the project, but is trying to line up his match dollars.

Mr. Haeck asked to fill a combined driver and sign position. The federally-mandated sign inventory program which goes into effect in 2012 will require that the all signs must be entered into a program, located by GPS and monitored for proper reflectivity on an ongoing basis.

Building and Grounds – Mr. Ulrich noted that his total budget was nearly identical to last year. He was able to reduce in some areas to compensate for the increased chemical and petroleum prices, as well as equipment maintenance contracts and vehicle repairs. Ms. Stone asked whether he could reduce his Overtime line. Mr. Ulrich stated he was in the process of rearranging schedules, and offered to reduce Overtime by \$2000. He reported that the HVAC systems were being maintained now, but preferred to wait until windows and doors are replaced before making changes to the county building system. He is hoping to realize a 25 to 30% energy savings by replacing the windows. He also noted that standard light bulbs will no longer be available as of June, 2012, and that China is the only manufacturer of the new bulbs, and he anticipates they will be passing along substantial cost increase.

Clerk of the Circuit Court - Clerk Julie Fox explained that her budget remained nearly the same as 2011. She had budgeted \$6,000 in Capital Outlays to purchase a new copier, but may use funds from her 2011 budget instead. She may be able to reduce the request to cover a desktop copier instead.

Voter Registration – Ms. Fox stated that her \$1500 request for office supplies may be low since 2012 is a Presidential election year, and may need to seek an additional appropriation.

Election Board - The Clerk reported that the after considering precinct consolidation, the vote center board has found it would not save the county as much money as previously thought. However, consolidation of voting sites would reduce the number and expense of poll workers, but it cannot be considered until after redistricting is complete.

The Election Board has recommended increasing the poll workers' pay. Many work 17 hours on Election Day, and are not making minimum wage. The board has recommended increasing Inspectors to \$120; Judges and Sheriffs to \$100; the Democrat Judge to \$110; and Clerks to \$100. She may also need to request an additional after the first of the year for poll workers meals, as \$4,000 meals may not be enough. .

Clerk's Records Perpetuation Fund - The budget has decreased budget \$32,000 to \$12,000, and will be used for Clerical wages, Microfilming and Office Supplies.

Information Systems - Michael Marshall reported that CCD includes \$290,000 for software maintenance, and feels it should be sufficient, but vendors do not usually advise the amount of next year's maintenance until later in the year. He also included \$50,000 for equipment upgrades and computer replacements, which he is now doing on an as-needed basis. He noted that servers now do much of the work that the PC's used to.

County Council – The Council budget remained exactly the same, and Mr. Hassel noted that members are foregoing the 2% pay increase.

DARE – Mr. Hassel reported that due to the death of Bourbon DARE Officer Collins, a new DARE officer will be trained. Also, the DARE curriculum will be revised and updated in 2012.

Plan Commission and BZA - Mr. Booker stated he has budgeted \$5,000 in the Plan Commission budget, in anticipation of wind farm applications. However, he was willing to reduce the line by \$2,000.

Auditor – The Auditor's budget is 98% of last year's figure, as the result of not replacing a recently retired employee.

Weights & Measures - Mr. Wenino anticipates increased repairs or replacement of his 1994 van

which has over 100,000 miles. The Highway Department is assisting with current repairs.

Coroner – Mr. Cleavenger increased Autopsy Expense and Emergency Deputies, but decreased other lines, resulting in a budget 98% of last year's.

Recorder - Marlene Mahler explained that she recently purchased a new software program from her Perpetuation Fund, saving the General Fund the expense. She had estimated hardware maintenance at \$5,000, but the actual cost will be \$3586, enabling her to offer a \$1,500 reduction. She also offered to reduce Training by \$300.

Surveyor - Mr. Fisher reported he has increased his Training and Furniture/Fixtures lines slightly, resulting in an overall increase of only 2%.

Treasurer – The Treasurer's budget was presented at 98% of last year's figure.

Superior Court #1 - The Department Head stipend of \$5,000 was eliminated, along with the \$1,000 in liability insurance. It was noted that the insurance line has not been used for several years, and the court's liaison will check to see why it has been requested and not used.

Health Department - The Health Department budget increased 3% overall, with the PERF line showing the largest percentage of increase. Wes Burden explained that he uses his various funds to supplement staff in the Health Department. He plans to hire a part-time Health Educator out of the Local Health Department Trust Fund (formerly Tobacco Cessation), and the Health Maintenance Fund pays \$20,000 toward the salary of a food sanitarian. Both funds supplement wages of an assistant nurse.

Circuit Court - Judge Palmer explained the CASA grant match has been reduced from \$17,269 to \$11,891, due to a decrease in available state funds. The grant is based on the number of CHINS cases, and is also supported locally by an in-kind contribution of office space for the program. In addition, after originally requesting \$13,000 to purchase a new copier, he stated that \$7,500 is a more realistic figure, and offered a \$5,500 reduction.

(Recessed at 11:50 am)

(Reconvened at 1:15)

Building Inspector: Mr. DeWitt explained he had provided for the same full-time salary as the former building inspector at \$45,040. He stated he preferred to have the salary to remain the same as last year, but the Commissioners had offered a salary of \$38,272. The resulting reduction would be \$6,768.

Superior Court # 2 – Judge Colvin had included a 3% raise for court employees which can be reduced to whatever the Council agrees on. He also included the receptionist position which has been paid for the past few years out of the Court Services budget, which is being reduced substantially due to poor economic conditions. The receptionist position would assist in with receptionist/clerical duties in Superior 2, and would also serve as the Hispanic coordinator/translator for Superior Courts 1 and 2. He offered to reduce Capital Outlays by \$5,000 and plans to try to refurbish his present copier rather than buying new.

The number of Hispanic civil cases has increased, and he has requested an additional \$2,000 translator stipend to be paid to a current employee.

Judge Colvin reported that due to the large volume of people coming through his court, he is investigating the use of a kiosk system to automate check in. Video conferencing is working well, but reception is sometimes poor between the mobile units in the court and bailiff's office, and he feels perhaps a remote antenna might help. He is also investigating a reporting system which will digitalize and index reporting notes.

Council eliminated the \$5,000 Department Head stipend, and reduced the requested 3% pay increase to 2%, resulting in the following reductions: Bailiff - \$229; Court Administrator - \$313; Court Reporter - \$339; Court Clerk/Secretary - \$249; Assist Court Clerk - \$240; Administrative

Assistant - \$307; Court Security Officer - \$307.

Court Services - Steve Pifer reported that the program is suffering a cash-flow problem, and the decision to reduce three staff members came after budgets were submitted. However, he would like to leave the Personal Services lines intact, in case revenues increase to the point where they can be reinstated. Judge Colvin also requested to retain the proposed figures in personnel. He stated that this is a necessary program, and feels the revenues will be coming in. The Unemployment line was increased by \$5,000, and they anticipate there will be enough in the Court Services Fund to pay the claims. Judge Colvin stated that the reduced revenues may force a change in the way home detention operates. Mr. Pifer noted that the cost of 4,250 monitoring days at \$35.00 a day is cheaper than the \$145,000 it would cost to jail the offenders.

Probation - Mary Jane Walsworth requested an additional probation officer at \$29,268. The probation officer salary structure will remain the same as 2011 with no pay increases. However, the Probation Administrative Fees fund still does not generate enough revenue to cover the state-mandated probation officer wage increases from several years ago. As in the past, the judges have agreed to continue to supplement the shortage with Probation User Fees.

Care of Patients & Inmates, which pays for the Porter County Juvenile Detention Facility contract, has been reduced to \$95,000. Ms. Walsworth stated she is looking at other options to this contract, and they could include transportation, resulting in a savings in the Sheriff's budget.

Drug Free Community: Valerie Hite, part-time program coordinator, explained that the \$60,000 budget is funded by fines from alcohol and drug countermeasures, and is used to issue grants mandated by state law for treatment, education and prevention of drug issues. Grants have been awarded to police agencies, to high schools for random drug screens, and to provide substance abuse treatment for indigents. 75% of the funds remain in the county, with 25% going to the Governor's Committee for a Drug Free Indiana.

Prosecutor - Prosecutor David Holmes explained personnel changes and requests in the Prosecutor's budget. He has requested an additional Deputy Prosecutor for IVD work at a salary of \$59,610, which includes a 2% increase over last year's deputy position. He would like to move the receptionist to an IVD secretarial position at a rate of \$14.42. He would like to reclassify the secretaries to caseworkers.

He will be incorporating the Victims Assistance program into his office, keeping only the investigator position. Eliminating the Victim Assistance position will save the General Fund \$32,888. Mr. Holmes will apply \$31,610 of that amount to the new deputy position, supplementing it with \$20,000 from the Prosecutor's IVD Fund and \$8,000 from Pre-Trial Diversion. Total amount requested for the Deputy Prosecutors' line was \$94,746, which is \$3,526 more than is needed. He was also willing to reduce his \$8,000 request for a Law Clerk by \$5,000 and will supplement this line from Pre-Trial Diversion. He has increased the Law Books line to incorporate on line research.

IVD - Mr. Holmes noted that ours is one of the most successful support collection programs in the state, and he uses the IVD Fund to pay 6 part-time clerical.

Pre-Trial Diversion - This fund is used to significantly supplement his clerical budget and to assist local police departments in purchasing needed equipment.

WIC - Annette Osborn explained that the only changes in her budget were the proposed 2% pay increase, and the increased office rent when the program relocates to Community Resource Center.

EMA - The EMA budget was 93% of last year's budget.

Sheriff - Sheriff Chamberlin reported he does not plan to fill the second Detective Sergeant position at \$21.29, and has requested an additional patrol officer instead at \$20.74 per hour. Emergency Deputies will be eliminated, and deputies on patrol will now have emergency duty, resulting in a reduction from last year of \$7,150. He has also increased Vehicle Maintenance Supplies, and reported that his department has reduced gallons used, but the high fuel prices make

the increase necessary. He has also increased the Uniform Expense and Body Armor in anticipation of the new patrol officer. He has requested \$125,000 to purchase new vehicles, and anticipates each will cost between \$23,000 and \$26,000. Also increased were Video Cams and Radar Units, for vehicles that do not currently have them.

Jail: The Sheriff has eliminated the Bookkeeper position, resulting in a reduction of \$28,655, and Council proposed transferring a records clerk from CAGIT to the Jail budget at \$36,333. This may have to be accomplished through an additional appropriation after January 1 if enough reductions cannot be made in the General Fund. Others proposed also eliminating the Jail Physician line of \$24,000 and reducing Prisoner Care by \$10,000, and putting them in the County Corrections budget by additional appropriation in 2012.

E911 and Wireless 911: This fund is supported by the surcharge on land lines and is suffering from declining revenues. To take the pressure off, the Sheriff has transferred one Turnkey/Dispatcher and the benefits costs for the remainder to the Wireless 911 fund, which is more stable.

County Corrections – Jail Physician could be increased \$24,000 and Prisoner Care \$10,000 by additional appropriation, or by reducing other lines to accommodate the increases.

CAGIT: Council proposed transferring a Records Clerk to the General Fund, reducing the CAGIT budget by \$36,333, which would also decrease Holiday Pay by \$5,470, Social Security by \$4,853 and PERF by \$4,476.

Lake Enforcement Fund: The increased budget represents lake patrol services for the entire summer of 2012. The Sheriff anticipates that the \$15,000 DNR grant will be available again next year; the remainder of the budget is funded through a contribution from the Lake Maxinkuckee Association.

Assessor and Reassessment – The Assessor’s budget remains substantially the same as 2011. The Assessor and four deputies are paid from the Assessor’s budget, and three are paid from Reassessment. Legal Services has been transferred to the Reassessment Budget.

The Reassessment levy is now being collected for the 2017 Reassessment Fund, and will accrue for the next five years to fund the next reassessment. Ms. Dunning has worked hard to maintain sufficient monies to pay for the reassessment, and anticipates being able to roll a balance of approximately \$195,000 into the new Reassessment Fund at the beginning of 2013.

ADJOURNMENT

At the close of the first day of budget hearings, preliminary reductions of \$82,000 had been made to the General Fund. Having completed the day’s agenda at 3:30 p.m., and with no further business to come before the Council, **Ralph Booker moved, seconded by John Benedict, to adjourn until 9:00 am August 23, 2011. Motion carried 7-0.**

AUGUST 23, 2011

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council offered the opportunity for public comment, but there was none.

BUDGET DISCUSSIONS CONTINUED

Extension Service – Karen Richey again requested that the Council consider increasing the mileage rate from 40 cents to 44 cents, which is the state reimbursement rate. She is driving fewer miles, but the increased cost of gasoline has taken more than half of that line in her 2011 budget. Purdue has increased their contract by 1% to \$100,830, but by rearranging other areas, the budget has increased only 1%.

Museum - Linda Rippe reported that the museum budget was nearly the same as last year. Office

machine supplies have increased, and utilities are up slightly, as is Furniture/Equipment Repair. She reported that the Historical Society is raising funds to purchase a new reader/printer. The new Transportation Center is nearly ready, and the Museum will be hosting an open house in the next few weeks.

CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

Executive Director Mike Woolfington reported a 25-28% increase in motel occupancy over the last year, which reverses a five-year trend. The interactive website is up and running, and they are continuing with the co-op marketing strategy.

He reported that the Barn Quilt project is attracting visitors from all over the country, and this translates into revenues in the county. We are also one of six counties on the Art and Earth Trail, and Mystic Hills Golf Course is a part of the Pete Dye Golf Trail.

Mr. Woolfington stated that the increase in the innkeepers' tax at the beginning of this year has resulted in increased revenues, and he offered assistance with museum brochures if their needed.

Veterans Service Officer: Veterans Service Officer Josh Wakeland was present for further discussion of a full-time Veterans Service Officer. When he began as part-time Service Officer earlier this year, he intended to work 15 hours a week. After becoming familiar with online research and regulations and completing online training, he publicized the availability of the office through word of mouth and social media. As a result, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of veterans seeking benefits. He often works six to eight hours a day, and keeps daily office hours from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Mr. Wakeland reported that there is an ever-increasing number of returning veterans, who are coming back with an increased variety of serious health issues and other challenges, and they are seeking assistance with their benefits claims. He has organized a claims packet for veterans or family members so they do not have to come back several times before they can initiate their claims. He personally completes claims online for the veterans, which improves the quality of the claim, resulting in a better approval rate. He estimates that \$9 million in benefits has been returned to the community, and attributes this to the quality of claims submitted, knowledge of the process and changes in the laws.

He noted that approximately 50% of the Veterans Service Officers in the state are full-time.

Kevin Overmyer stated that Mr. Wakeland has compassion for the veterans, is dedicated to assisting them receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

Several veterans spoke in support of a full-time service officer, including representatives of the American Legion and the Disabled American Veterans. They emphasized the need for a dedicated and knowledgeable Service Officer to assist Marshall County's veterans, and urged the Council to approve the full-time position.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Hassel stated that throughout the hearings, members have proposed some cuts and noted other areas they feel can be reduced. On September 12, Council will go through the budgets again and make reductions where members agree they should be made. Mr. Hassel recapped the personnel requests, and asked that they be considered carefully: Moving one CAGIT employee to the General Fund; moving the Veteran's Service Officer to full time; hiring an additional patrol officer in the Sheriff's budget and a Deputy Prosecutor in the Prosecutor, IVD and Pre-Trial Diversion

budgets. He stated that the Sheriff and Prosecutor have made sufficient reductions in their budgets to allow for the additional personnel.

Council members expressed appreciation to department heads for submitting such responsible budgets, and Mr. Hassel remarked that they are the best he has seen, but he challenged the other members to seek \$250,000 in further reductions.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Council, **the 2011 budget hearings were adjourned at 10:20 a.m. upon motion by Ralph Booker, seconded by Ward Byers. Motion carried 7-0.** The Council will meet at 9:00 am on Monday, September 12, 2011 to adopt the Solid Waste and South West Lake Maxinkuckee Conservancy District budgets, review unit budgets and issue non-binding recommendations, and adopt the 2012 county budgets.

Matt Hassel, President

Don Morrison, Vice President

John Benedict

Ralph Booker

Ward Byers

Rex Gilliland

Judith Stone

ATTEST:

Penny Lukenbill, Auditor