

# **BAC MEETING 10/07/09**

**The fourth meeting of the 2010 Budget Advisory Committee met on Wednesday, October 7, 2009, in the Peter Feeney Conference Room.**

**Present:**

BAC Members: Hough, Waig, Villa, Witonis, Anton, Robinson and Coward (at 4:55PM).

**Commissioners:** Richard Feeney and James Cloutier (at 5:30 PM)

Staff: Crichton, Labrecque, Tarbox, Joyce, Dion, O'Brien, Mazziotti Gauditz, and Pettersen

Meeting called to order by Chairman Mark Hough at 4:36 PM. Approval of minutes was unanimous with one abstaining.

Presentation from Probate:

Crichton noted that the Probate budget was very low, and the Register is in agreement with the proposed budget.

Register O'Brien presented a number of statistics indicating that overall Probate activity continues to grow each year. O'Brien explained that 20% of his clerks were cut from last year's budget, but he has managed to keep abreast of the increasing volume of activity.

Robinson asked Crichton to explain the 20% in the clerks from last year and asked to explain the increase in Professional expenses from 2008 to 2009. Peter explained that the increase was for a paralegal to assist the Judge.

Presentation from the Sheriff's Office

Peter explained that the increased jail expenses are no longer in the Sheriff's Budget. This is good because of the rising financial burden of the jail the past few years and the fact the jail is experiencing a decrease in revenues from the lack of Federal inmates. Peter explained that as part of the cutbacks in 2009 that the Sheriff had agreed to not hire the two new law enforcement positions approved in the 2009 budget. Then in preparation of the draft budget the sergeant's position was restored, but not the deputy position. Now Peter is proposing to reinstate the second position in the 2010 budget by moving the vehicle lease cost of approx \$55,000 into the CIP. The Sheriff has endorsed this concept for the 2010 budget.

Sheriff Dion and Chief Joyce

Dion stated that he would be brief and that Selectman Witonis would not get her usual update of statistics on crime in her area. He stated that he agrees with the Manager's recommendations including the re-instatement of one deputy. The chief and his captains worked many hours on the current budget, and he is satisfied with the proposal.

He continues to work with the State Police to identify resources, however the State Police have only 2 officers available for the entire county on any 12 hour basis.

Carol Waig asked that if the budget becomes tight in 2010 will the Manager hold the positions again. Peter responded that at the beginning of 2009 the positions had not yet been advertised and that is why they could be frozen. He said that the two positions would not be eliminated if the county ran into a revenues problem again and that other cutbacks would have to be made.

Carol Waig asked the Sheriff to clarify how many total patrol officers are at his disposal. The Sheriff also explained that one contract was not renewed this past year.

#### Presentation from Human Services.

Manager Crichton explained that he had cut 25% from the 2009 allocations to help assist in the revenue shortfall that has occurred in 2009. Since then the revenue picture for 2010 has improved somewhat and he is proposing an across the board cut of 15% for Human Service agencies with the 2010 draft budget.

Five Human Service Agencies presented some general information about their services. Sexual Assault Services, Community Counseling Services, Learning Works (formerly Portland West) Salvation Army and Peaks Island food pantry.

There was a general discussion as to why more Human Service Agencies did not come to support their budget request. The Manager is concerned about the turnout and with the chairman's permission will follow up with the agencies to invite them to the next budget meeting. Mr. Hough agreed that a limited amount of time should be set aside for agencies to speak at the next meeting.

#### Facilities Presentation:

The Manager explained that Bruce Tarbox is responsible for over 400,000 square feet of county buildings and does a fine job. The Facilities budget is clearly a "bare bones" budget that has had a number of cuts throughout the last two years.

Bruce circulated some statistics as to the number of systems that he has to maintain throughout the County.

#### Miscellaneous Discussion:

There was some discussion as to why the DA's office is so cramped for office space and how did we get into this position with the State Judicial System. Carol Waig asked to define the space before 1976, and was it the same as today.

Lisa Villa did echo the important need for more space in the DA Office.

Linda Boudreas agrees with the space problem and suggested that the Commissioners look into leasing some extra office space.

Carol Waig suggested that the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor space could better be utilized by the DA staff

Tom Coward responded eloquently that he was familiar with the available space in 1976 and in fact the courts have less space today than in 1976.

Chairman Mark Hough suggested that this topic be discussed further with the Commissioners outside of the BAC purview.

John Anton cannot make next week's vote and noted that he would support extra funds for the Cooperative Extension Service, but it must not increase the "zero budget" presented

Matt Robinson will be unavailable next week as well with a work conflict.

Peter Crichton explained the agenda for next week to the BAC members.

The meeting was unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:29 PM

**Next meeting will be held in the Peter Feeney Room on October 14, 2009, Wednesday from 4:30-6 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Vic Labrecque