



MINUTES OF BUDGET MEETING - CLERK

DESCHUTES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 2015

Allen Room, Deschutes Services Building

Present were Commissioners Anthony DeBone, Alan Unger and Tammy Baney. Also present were Tom Anderson, County Administrator; Erik Kropp, Deputy County Administrator; Mike Maier, Clay Higuchi and Bruce Barrett, Budget Committee; Wayne Lowry, Finance Director, Loni Burk, Financial/Budget Analyst; Nancy Blankenship, County Clerk, Jeff Sageser, Elections/Recording Supervisor, and Barb Hagen, Elections/Recording Supervisor.

Meeting minutes were taken by Robin Edwards, Senior Secretary, Risk Management.

Chair Bruce Barrett opened the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Nancy Blankenship said there are not a lot of changes to their budget; it is basically the same as before. They have higher recording revenues due to the improving economy. They will talk about the new Motor Voter bill, the purchase of two ballot drop-boxes, voter participation promotion ideas, and a proposed equipment purchase for next year. They want to show a few things they do for their customers that they have been working on for the past couple of years. Providing excellent customer service is part of their mission statement.

Jeff Sageser and his staff have been developing tools to provide information more efficiently to customers. They have some “coming-soon” instructional videos that will be available on their website that will help customers. Then Mr. Sageser will demonstrate one of the over fifty e-mail templates they use daily.

Mr. Sageser showed an example of a one-minute video on “How to Record a Deed in Deschutes County” that will make the process easier for customers. Commissioner Unger asked if this is how the younger generation likes to access information. Mr. Sageser said yes, but hard copy information and forms will also be available.

Clay Higuchi asked if there are more mistakes with the level of business. Ms. Blankenship said they hope the videos will help prevent mistakes; they received 160 documents last week and all were non-conforming. The documents are accepted, but if mistakes need to be corrected or have missing information, the customer is charged \$20 in addition to the recording fee.

Ms. Blankenship stated they get numerous inquiries on the phone, and many are the same questions over and over again. As an example, Mr. Sageser talked about a question regarding the three-day waiting period for marriage for a customer who won't be in Central Oregon long enough (e.g., the fiancé is on a brief military leave). The Clerk's Office can waive the three-day waiting period. Mr. Sageser or staff will obtain the customer's e-mail address, and he has a template of an informational e-mail he can send to them (and copy staff to notify them). The e-mail also has a link to the marriage application. Ms. Blankenship noted that Deschutes County is the first county to offer online marriage applications.

These were two examples of how they are providing better customer service.

Ms. Blankenship said that one of the new items that will affect their budget is the new Motor Voter bill, House bill 2177, signed by Governor Brown. With four budgeted elections, it will increase the budget by about \$44,000. Those that have a driver's license or permit, and are citizens in the DMV database, are going to be moved into the Oregon centralized voter registration system over a six-year period. They can choose to opt out; if they don't, they will be added to the voter roll.

Tom Anderson asked if this information will be received electronically or by hard copy, and Ms. Blankenship replied electronically. Mr. Anderson asked if the State or the Clerk's Office could track voter participation from this system; Ms. Blankenship stated they hope so, as statistics will be part of that. She anticipates that voter registration will go up.

Regarding the new law, Mr. Higuchi stated that if he moves and changes his address, he notifies the DMV. He thought the DMV would then notify the Secretary of State for voting purposes, but that didn't happen. Ms. Blankenship replied that you have to fill out a change of address form. Mr. Higuchi asked if that will change with the new Bill; Ms. Blankenship replied that the DMV is in the process of implementing new computer systems, but she doesn't know how it will work with the Clerk's system. She is hoping to build stronger ties with DMV. Mike Maier asked about RV travelers who don't have a permanent home; what address do they use? Ms. Blankenship said they would use their last residence address for registration, but the ballot could be mailed to a P.O. Box.

Commissioner Baney asked about those who are incarcerated; Ms. Blankenship noted that they would receive a ballot based on where they lived at the time of incarceration.

Ms. Blankenship said that the cost of ballots are part of the increase (.25 - .50 cents apiece), as well as voter's pamphlets, envelopes, postage, and notices. Envelope prices are going to increase. When they purchase envelopes in bulk, the adhesive loses its effectiveness if it sits too long. They have been able to reduce the undeliverables from 5% to 3-4%. It costs about .69 cents for returned ballots.

Also, they want to put in two new drop site locations to increase safety and relieve congestion – one each in northwest and southwest Bend. The traffic last year at the Lafayette/Wall Street drop site created a safety issue. It will cost \$5,000 to purchase and install the structures, and then the additional ongoing cost of delivering and picking them up.

Next year they'd like to update the tabulation equipment to the next version, which will cost \$201,500. The last election equipment was purchased in 2005, and the third tabulator in 2007. It takes three to six years to certify the equipment, so the current technology is from the late 1990's and early 2000's. The tabulation remains accurate, but it takes more time and maintenance to keep the equipment calibrated.

Lastly, Ms. Blankenship spoke about ideas for voter participation promotion. They tried to distribute posters through the Bend and Redmond Chambers. For the most recent election, there was less than 19% voter turnout, but most other counties that did not have a money measure on the ballot also had low turnout.

The most expensive idea is the Tax Fairy, which would be about \$20,000 for promotion costs. Radio and TV interviews would be no cost. Ms. Blankenship has done them in the past and could do more. If they go with the Tax Fairy idea, they could take pieces of the video and put them on their website as short educational pieces. They could do another poster campaign. Also, they could do a youth art contest for artwork for the front of the voter pamphlet (she mentioned that the State of Washington has a similar contest).

Mr. Anderson asked if any of her colleagues have used any of these promotion methods and if they've been successful. She said that Multnomah County has a video but it's probably not as fancy as the Tax Fairy video. Washington County has a basic video, but it's hard to know if they were successful. Trying to derive a cost benefit is difficult.

Mr. Maier asked if there was any interest from other counties for all of them to utilize the same video, such as the Tax Fairy. Ms. Blankenship stated that she's been in contact with the Secretary of State's Office since she thinks that's where it should come from. But she's had resistance since they already have such a full schedule. She hopes to work with a contact at the Secretary of State's Office who has some ideas and who works with voter registration/elections. If the State paid for it, statewide, the cost would be minor.

Commissioner Baney supports these ideas, as does Mr. Maier. Commissioner Baney mentioned how well done the Veterans' Office video was, what a good job Anna Johnson did with it, and would like to see something like that. She asked how we could educate residents about the Motor Voter law. Wayne Lowry says it would be a General Fund expenditure. The Budget Committee would need to decide how much to add for Clerk's expenses. He noted that Veterans' had a grant for their promotional video. Commissioner Unger suggested getting ideas from the Mayor's office.

Regarding the youth art contest, Ms. Blankenship said there shouldn't be much cost involved except for the prizes. She mentioned contacting the library, the Deschutes Historical Society, Bend Park & Recreation and other places outside the schools where kids can be reached. Commissioner Baney noted that they could try to promote to student bodies in school classes such as government or art. Bruce Barrett asked if they are generally in favor of \$20,000 for these promotional ideas, they can make a decision Friday, and everyone agreed.

Commissioner Unger asked if they could collect e-mail addresses from voters. Ms. Blankenship said it's optional to provide it. She said that for this last election, three Oregon counties, Multnomah, Yamhill and Marion, did a test with a company called TrackIt to collect e-mail addresses or phone numbers from voters, and the voter could choose to get an e-mail, call or text reminder. State elections is looking into more research on this and possibly paying for it in the future.

Being no further discussion, the session ended at 11:00 am.

DATED this 15th Day of June 2015 for the
Deschutes County Board of Commissioners.

Anthony DeBone
Anthony DeBone, Chair

Alan Unger
Alan Unger, Vice Chair

ATTEST:

Bonnie Baker
Recording Secretary

Tammy Baney
Tammy Baney, Commissioner

BUDGET COMMITTEE AGENDA

Wednesday, May 27th, 2015

Program
Budget
Tab/Page

9:00 AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reconvene the Deschutes County budget meeting	
9:00 – 9:30 AM	<u>Fair and Expo Center (Funds 617-619 and 601)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions• Budget discussion	4 / 153
9:30 – 10:00 AM	<u>County Assessor's Office (Fund 001-02)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions• Budget discussion; Special Requests 14/395	4 / 125
10:00 – 10:15 AM	Break	
10:15 – 10:45 AM	<u>County Clerk's Office (Funds 001-05, 001-06 and 218)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions• Budget discussion; Special Requests 14/399	4 / 131
10:45 – 11:45 AM	<u>Solid Waste (Funds 610-614)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions• Budget discussion; Special Requests 14/439	4 / 175
11:45 – 12:30 PM	Elected Officials Compensation Committee (Lunch – Discussion)	
12:30 – 1:00 PM	<u>Natural Resources Protection (Funds 326-327)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions• Budget discussion	4 / 171
1:00 – 2:00 PM	<u>Road (Funds 325, 328-340)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions• Budget discussion	4 / 159
2:00 – 2:15 PM	Break	
2:15 – 3:15 PM	<u>Community Development (Funds 290-303)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions• Budget discussion; Special Requests 14/425	4 / 139