

**EUREKA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET MEETING
March 10, 2008**

STATE OF NEVADA)
 : ss
COUNTY OF EUREKA)

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Eureka County Commissioners met pursuant to law on March 10, 2008. Present were Chairman Jim Ithurralde; Vice Chairman Kenneth Benson; Member Donna Bailey; District Attorney Theodore Beutel; and Clerk & Treasurer Jackie Berg. Chairman Ithurralde called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. The interactive video conference system was connected and utilized between Crescent Valley and Eureka for the entire meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Bailey motioned to approve the agenda as posted. Commissioner Benson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chairman called for public comment and there was none.

INTERLOCAL CONTRACT REGARDING EMPLOYEES' DEFERRED COMPENSATION

The State of Nevada administers an employee deferred compensation plan nearly identical to the one administered by Eureka County. The State of Nevada Alliance Plan actually offers more options because they represent a larger group. Budget Director, Mr. Rebaleati, has spoken with the Hartford Group (current County planholder) and the Nevada Attorney General's office, and Eureka County could join the state group with no detriment to anyone enrolled in the County plan. This will require an Interlocal Contract with the state for an initial period of 2008-2012. Commissioner Benson motioned to approve entering into an Interlocal Contract between Eureka County and the State of Nevada for inclusion into the State of Nevada Alliance Plan for employees' deferred compensation, and authorized the Chairman to sign the contract outside of the meeting. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

REFUND FOR OVERPAYMENT OF TAXES

Refund to Newmont Mining Corporation: Newmont Mining Corporation filed claims with the Eureka County Board of Equalization. Based on the Board of Equalization's ruling, Newmont Mining was successful on a portion of the claims and is owed a refund from Eureka County for overpayment of taxes. Assessor, Michael Mears, reported that he had no knowledge whether Newmont Mining had appealed any claims to the State Board of Equalization, but the taxpayer had until March 15th to meet this deadline. The overpaid tax dollars were already distributed by Eureka County, including substantial portions to the School District and State of Nevada. Repayment options were discussed and the Board asked Mr. Rebaleati to notify the School District of their portion, to be refunded directly to the County; the County would in turn refund the combined amount, minus any monies distributed to the state. Newmont Mining would be notified to collect that portion directly from the State of Nevada.

District Attorney, Ted Beutel, informed the Board that, should no appeal be filed with the State Board of Equalization, the County has until April 15th to certify the amount of the refund and generate payment; so statutorily it would be satisfactory for the payment to be made sometime in May. The likelihood of an appeal was substantial because some of the claims had

precedent setting qualities; therefore, Mr. Beutel recommended that the County not make payment ahead of any possible rulings by the state. Commissioner Benson motioned that refund of this overpayment be delayed pending possible appeal and subsequent decision by the State Board of Equalization. Chairman Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

REVIEW TENTATIVE REVENUE ESTIMATES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008-2009

Mr. Rebaleati explained that revenue estimates are reviewed at each budget meeting and did not require a detailed review. The tentative revenue estimate for the General Fund is \$11,676,000.00, which is very close to the previous year's estimate. This estimate will be instrumental in identifying which projects can be funded for the upcoming fiscal year. The following revenue estimates were reviewed by fund: Road Fund-\$1,910,000.00; RTC Fund-\$401,000.00; Ag Extension Fund-\$167,000.00; Ag District #15/Fair Board Fund-\$78,736.00; Capital Improvements Fund-\$417,000.00; Town of Eureka-\$235,000.00; Town of Crescent Valley-\$88,637.00; Television District Fund-\$157,000.00; Diamond Valley Weed District-\$66,000.00; Devil's Gate Water District-\$38,750.00; and Landfill Fund-\$330,000.00. The remaining funds are fairly static from year to year, and the Assessor's Technology Fund is driven by the commission percentage on net proceeds and personal property tax.

Overall revenue estimates are in the range of 16 million dollars. More defined estimates will be provided at the March 27th meeting, after the final estimates are received from the state.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Budget Officer, Mike Rebaleati, reviewed capital projects tentatively planned for the next five years. This plan is the result of extensive discussions during the last two budget meetings and, as currently outlined, would require approximately \$41,078,000.00 in funding. This calculation includes long term estimates, but also includes some very specific estimates developed by the County Engineer. More defined revenue estimates should be received from the state before the next budget meeting (March 27th), which will allow for refinement of the plan, especially for the impending fiscal year.

Fiscal Year 2008-2009 improvements included: Eureka Airport; Eureka Fire Station; Dunphy tender; County's match for the Ruby Hill Sidewalk Project; JD Ranch Bridge Project; Street Maintenance Project, including culvert replacements; portions of the Eureka Town Water & Sewer Project, as follows: million gallon water tank, water booster station, telemetry station, refurbishment of up to four springs, back-up generator for the Diamond Valley well, and Ruby Hill sewer line replacement; vehicle replacements for the Sheriff's Department, Senior Center, and EMS/Ambulance; equipment replacements for the Road Department and Fire Departments; building repairs and upgrades; computer upgrades; data processing; public park improvements; swimming pool upgrades; radio repeater upgrades; office furniture replacements; and standard amounts for various funds including Landfill, Ag Extension, Yucca Mountain, Assessor's Technology Fund, etc. A budget augmentation was under consideration for the Television District because funds have been exhausted with the large tower project; Mr. Rebaleati stated the Television District budget for future years will be fairly static and should be self-supporting.

Mr. Rebaleati highlighted long term projects, noting that some may be deferred out as long as ten years, while others may need to be accelerated depending on growth related to the molybdenum mine. This includes the Devil's Gate GID water system. Commissioner Benson commented that he, Tom Young, and Ron Damele recently met with a developer and his team of engineers regarding a planned development immediately adjacent to the Devil's Gate subdivision. Commissioner Benson credited Mr. Damele and Mr. Young with negotiating an attractive position, in line with the County's perspective that the bulk of infrastructure costs for new developments should be the responsibility of the developer and not a burden to the taxpayers.

RETIREE BENEFIT VALUATION, REPORT, AND FUNDING

Mr. Rebaleati provided an actuarial evaluation of post employment benefit programs as prepared by Actuary, Jeff Furnish, of Bickmore Risk Services. Mr. Rebaleati gave a brief introduction, noting that the report outlined a '*no pre-funding option*' and a '*pre-funding option*' per GASBY 45 requirements. The *pre-funding option* estimates an initial investment of 4.5 million, and the *no pre-funding option* will cost the County in excess of seven million over the next 20 to 30 years. Funding of the non-PEBP retiree benefits, addressed several months ago, represents a substantial portion of this obligation.

Mr. Furnish was available to participate by teleconference and provided an overview of the complex report. The Government Accounting Standards Board is requiring local governments to disclose future liabilities associated with post employee benefits (retiree benefits other than pensions). Eureka County has retirees that fall under two categories – those enrolled in the state retirement plan, with Eureka County paying the state subsidy rate; and those enrolled in the County retirement plan, which also carries a subsidy. Legislation requires that all enrollees to be rated together, applying the same premium rate to active employees and retirees; creating an 'implicit subsidy' where the rates paid by the active employees essentially fund the higher medical costs of the older group. Other areas of the report examined the effect of legislation and court rulings on projected costs, and the valuation process and actual funding methods.

Mr. Furnish reviewed '*past service liability*', which involves a detailed calculation of active employees' service (both past service and anticipated service to retirement age) to compute an accrued liability, which under GASBY is viewed as a liability already owed. Local governments that could be bankrupted by incorporating this liability on their balance sheets can adopt a prospective method and pay set contributions prescribed under GASBY.

Mr. Furnish recommended the more aggressive funding method for Eureka County, provided reserves are available for the initial investment of 4.5 million dollars. One benefit of aggressive funding is that the large up-front investment will minimize future contributions, which is desirable in a fluctuating economy. Future burden is reduced, which is beneficial should mining activity slow.

The State of Nevada is working out details of a state fund for investment of monies for these post employee benefits programs, but preliminary discussions indicate it will be stringently regulated, including the inability to opt out unless you have at least 100 million in the program. Following a brief question and answer period, the Board thanked Mr. Furnish for his input.

Mr. Rebaleati stated a POOL/PACT workshop was scheduled for March 20th to discuss this subject, including the state investment program; officials from various counties want to ensure that the state doesn't dictate what the local governments can or cannot do.

PROJECTED EMPLOYEE COSTS

Mr. Rebaleati provided the Board with a spreadsheet of employee costs, showing additional staffing requests. Current staffing level calculates out to a base of 191,000 working hours a year; additional staffing would increase this to 201,000 hours, an increase of about 10,000 hours. This will raise the yearly salary and wages from 4.1 million dollars to about 4.5 million dollars. Premium rate estimates for employee insurance have not yet been received, but Mr. Rebaleati based these projections on a ten percent increase, which has been standard in the insurance industry over recent years. Overall employee costs, including wages, benefits, an estimated 3.5 percent cost of living increase (not yet approved), and estimated merit increases, bring projected employee costs to 6.3 million for Fiscal Year 2008-2009.

KAFOURY, ARMSTRONG & COMPANY

Jerrie Norton, of Kafoury Armstrong & Company, had planned to be present, but notified the Clerk that due to prior commitments related to the tax season, she was unable to attend.

EUREKA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION BUDGET

Mr. Rebaleati explained that a two-cent tax rate finances the Ag Extension each year. Gary McCuin, Extension Educator, is working on final figures for salaries, but the remainder of the budget is virtually the same as previous years. The only major request was for the addition of a 40'x70' building at the Eureka Fairgrounds to be utilized by the 4H Program. The Board asked Lynn Conley, 4H Program Assistant, to bring this building request forward during budget discussions for the 2009-2010 Fiscal Year.

NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Judy Overton, Department Assistant, presented the budget for the Natural Resources. Most adjustments were merely reflections of items approved during the past year, including moving the Administrative Assistant into a full-time position. Contract services, except the Natural Resources Manager, were reallocated to the Commissioners' budget.

Ms. Overton reported that the Natural Resources Manager position was re-advertised with assistance from the Clerk's office, with Natural Resources as the point of contact. Commissioner Benson requested that the notice also be placed on the County website.

GRANT TO SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Soil Conservation receives an annual operating grant from the Commissioners. This year, they requested an increase from \$15,000.00 to \$21,500.00. The total projected budget is \$26,550.00, which will be partially funded with a state grant for \$5,000.00. Judy Overton reported that the main budget increase is for 4,000 hours of cooperative work planned with the Da Ka Doiyabe Project, which will increase office expenses and mileage.

Commissioner Benson stated he would abstain from deliberation and vote on this item, since his wife is an officer for the Conservation District. The remaining Board members discussed budgetary needs, and commented it was not too long ago that this budget was raised from \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00. Chairman Ithurralde motioned to grant \$16,000.00 to the Soil Conservation for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 operating expenses. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-0; Commissioner Benson abstained.

NEVADA DIVISION OF FORESTRY

Joe Anelli, Battalion Chief, and Sam Hicks, Fire Management Officer, were present to discuss budgets under the administration of Nevada Division of Forestry. Mr. Anelli presented run report charts, incident types, geographic response, and manhour breakdown by department. Mr. Rebaleati reviewed budgetary requests for the upcoming fiscal year. The largest increases were requested in three areas – fuel (up from \$120,000.00 to \$176,000.00), repairs, and firefighter hours (to cover the request for a full-time position).

The Board, NDF staff, and Mr. Rebaleati engaged in a brief conversation regarding upgrading the seasonal position to full-time status. Commissioner Benson motioned to convert the nine-month seasonal to a full-time firefighter position, with anticipation of keeping this position on the roster for two to three years, providing funds are available. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. Mr. Hicks asked the County to submit a certified letter acknowledging approval of this position and notification that funding would be available July 1st, to avoid procedural delays. Mr. Rebaleati agreed to send the letter.

Purchasing Policy for Eureka County Fire Departments: The Board invited Terry Conaway, Acting Chief of the Diamond Valley Fire Department, to come forward. Mr. Conaway stated he was not there in opposition to NDF, but because there was a problem that needed to be resolved. The volunteers were finding it difficult to get parts approved through NDF, even minor parts when volunteers were willing to do the labor themselves, and Mr. Conaway requested that a fund be set up so that parts could be obtained in a timely fashion.

Mr. Anelli had received several bills from the local parts store that he had no prior knowledge of; so he informed the manager that he had to be notified prior to parts being ordered, or they weren't to be charged to the NDF account. Mr. Hicks stated that NDF has an internal control policy for tracking purposes, with a point of contact in the Elko office (Cheryl Deacons, Administrative Assistant), and she simply needed to be called for a purchase order. A Duty Officer is also available 24/7 to cover non-business hours.

Commissioner Benson asked whether the Chiefs from the various departments would run into any obstacles in using this system, and asked if there were financial limits in this procedure. Mr. Hicks said there are set parameters and Ms. Deacon is very good at discerning immediate needs, or calling a Duty Officer for authorization. Mr. Hicks reassured the Board that this is a long-established system with NDF, and NDF will continue to contact Ron Damele, of Public Works, regarding any major repairs to Eureka County equipment.

Commissioner Benson commented he did not want to cause grief to NDF, but that the Board has confidence in the judgement of the Chiefs regarding maintenance and repair needs of the equipment. Commissioner Benson advanced a motion that the Chiefs of the Eureka County Fire Departments (and Assistant Chiefs in their absence) be authorized to procure parts up to the amount of \$750.00, with the requirement of notifying the NDF Duty Officer for purchase order authorization. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. Chairman Ithurralde asked that NDF release a memo to all Chiefs notifying them of this decision.

Mr. Hicks requested that the firemen not work on steering components or brake components for liability reasons, stating this policy has been implemented with other fire staff. Commissioner Benson concurred.

Cost Share Workshop: Per direction of Commissioner Benson, Mr. Hicks has been working on a workshop to review cost share allocations and impacts of the various fires, and requested a timeframe that would work for the Commissioners. The Board decided on the afternoon of May 5th at 1:30 p.m. and requested that the Clerk post an agenda for this workshop. Mr. Hicks stated the he and Tom Turk, Regional Forester, will give the presentation, as Mr. Anelli would be away at that time.

Update on Meeting with Newmont Power Plant Representatives: The purpose of a recent meeting between Eureka County, NDF staff, and Newmont Power Plant representatives, was to identify what the County and the Fire District could provide as far as an all-risk response into the power plant and possibility of housing emergency equipment in that area. The Board agreed to postpone consideration of this to the next fiscal year, in part because they are also facing the need for addition of emergency services in southern Eureka County because of the probable population growth.

EUREKA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The budget for the Sheriff's Office was discussed at a previous budget meeting, and the current request was specific to salary for the Undersheriff. When the Undersheriff was hired mid-budget year (January 2007), the salary was established at 90 percent of the Sheriff's salary, per recommendation of Sheriff Ken Jones. Statute changes during the 2007 Nevada Legislative Session provided for an increase to certain elected officials' salaries, including Sheriffs. Sheriff Jones contended that this caused a disparity in the salaries of the two positions, which went against his original intent.

Commissioner Benson noted that the Undersheriff benefited from the 3.5 percent cost of living increase, effective July 1, 2007, which is extended to all employees, but is not extended to elected officials. He had no problem with the 90 percent formula, but opposed the inequity that the Undersheriff position could benefit from two separate formulas for salary enhancements. Sheriff Jones clarified that his request was for the 90 percent rate, and would not include the cost of living allowance. Commissioner Benson motioned to approve a 90 percent formula for

establishing the Undersheriff salary, in lieu of other salary enhancements, to be effective July 1, 2008. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

EUREKA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

District Attorney, Ted Beutel, presented budget requests for the upcoming fiscal year, including a need for new phones, additional furniture to accommodate the recent office move, and need for improved file storage/tracking system. Due to diminishing space, and to meet the legislative requirement to provide a law library to the general public, Mr. Beutel recommended providing computer stations and electronic files instead of retaining and updating the multiple volumes required each year. An additional staff position was requested, with the objective of being a shared position with the Sheriff's Office.

Mr. Rebaleati pointed out that office furniture comes out of the buildings and grounds fund, and doesn't have to be accounted for in departmental budgets. Mr. Rebaleati also noted that the complete County phone system is being evaluated and should be revamped, hopefully by this summer, but the present phone units should be compatible with a new system.

Regarding the employee request, Commissioner Benson felt that the position might be a better fit combined with the Administrative Assistant for the Commissioners, and asked the other Commissioners if they would consider this shared position. Both agreed that this might be a better fit. Mr. Rebaleati and Mr. Beutel also agreed. Commissioner Benson motioned that the Commissioners entertain a full-time position in conjunction with the District Attorney's office to serve as Administrative Assistant. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. A job description will be prepared and presented for approval at the March 20th meeting.

Public Guardian: Mr. Beutel explained that during the 2007 Legislative Session, the word 'may' in the statute regarding Public Guardians was changed to 'shall' and four options were offered to County Commissioners for engaging a Public Guardian. A person can be appointed to a four-year term, serving at the pleasure of the Board; an elected or appointed County official can be designated to serve as Ex-Officio Public Guardian; a private professional can be contracted; or a Public Guardian can be engaged in cooperation with another Board of County Commissioners within the same Judicial District. Mr. Beutel offered another alternative. Public Administrators are not mandated by law, but Eureka County has, on occasion, demonstrated a need for these services as well. This is an elected position by law, and could be the elected official appointed as the Public Guardian, in effect meeting two County needs with one position.

Mr. Rebaleati stated another solution might be to petition the State Legislature for a legislative change more suitable to Eureka County. Commissioner Benson asked that Mr. Beutel and Mr. Rebaleati meet to research this further, and felt the Chairman should also be involved. This will be included on the agenda for the next budget meeting on March 27th.

RECESS FOR LUNCH

The Board recessed for lunch from 12:00 p.m. to 1:08 p.m.

EUREKA COUNTY ASSESSOR

Assessor, Michael Mears, presented his tentative budget for Fiscal Year 2008-2009. Minor adjustments were made to salaries and wages for an employee who advanced from a 24-hour week to a 30-hour week. \$10,000.00 was included in last year's budget in anticipation of the need for a contract appraiser to assist in valuation of the Newmont Power Plant, and Mr. Mears expects to use that in the upcoming fiscal year. The amount may or may not be sufficient, depending on the level of appraisal services the County hopes to utilize. Because of the type of appraisal required by statute, the majority of plant assets will be classified as personal property, and a physical appraisal will be conducted using the Marshall and Swift appraisal method.

Mr. Mears recommended an approach similar to the one taken in valuing the power plant built in Storey County. A Marshall and Swift appraisal was conducted by the County Assessor, followed by an outside professional appraisal; both appraisals were instrumental in negotiations that resulted in figures satisfactory to both Storey County and the taxpayer. An independent appraisal can prove helpful in defending the County's position (whether the plant is centrally or locally assessed) and in establishing a solid base cost approach that will likely hold through the duration of the depreciation cycle of the plant.

The Board strongly agreed with the benefits of an independent appraisal. Commissioner Benson felt the budgeted amount should be increased to at least \$25,000.00. Commissioner Bailey motioned to approve the Assessor's budget as presented, with an enhancement for appraisal services. Commissioner Benson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Mr. Mears reported that the Assessors will testify on behalf of the Assessor's Technology Fund during the 2009 Legislative Session, and the Legislators will determine if the fund will then be sunsetted or allowed to continue for an additional two years.

CRESCENT VALLEY TOWN

Wage Increase Request: The Board welcomed Gloris Sharrow, Chairwoman of the Crescent Valley Town Advisory Board. Budgetary requests from the Town Advisory Board were reviewed. First was a request to increase the member stipend to \$150.00 per meeting. Compensation per meeting is currently set at \$45.00 and the Commissioners concurred that this was in line with the amount paid to other advisory boards. Commissioner Benson advanced a motion that per meeting compensation for the Crescent Valley Town Advisory Board remain at \$45.00 per meeting. Commissioner Bailey seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Consideration of Enhanced Clinic Services: Ms. Sharrow stated many residents would like to have improved medical services, such as a full-time doctor, or the recently proposed telemedicine service. The Town Board members conducted a survey; 200 surveys were mailed out and 50 were returned within 5 days. Of those 50, 47 stated affirmatively that they would like to try the telemedicine service. The Board stated this would be discussed in detail later that day when the Nevada Health Centers contracts were presented by Dr. Carl Heard, CEO.

Paving Requests: Chairman Ithurralde commented that very little paving is being considered anywhere in the County for the upcoming fiscal year. Mr. Rebaleati noted that no major paving was planned until Fiscal Year 2010-2011.

Motocross/Trap Shoot: Ms. Sharrow reported that Town Board member, Chuck Henry, had researched the motocross/trap shoot in detail and had circulated a signature form to determine interest in a club to generate dues to help support this activity. Mr. Henry was interested in having the County sponsor an application for an RP&P (recreational and public purposes) lease with the Bureau of Land Management, preferring to locate this outside of town and not at the Fairgrounds. Commissioner Benson motioned to approve the County sponsoring application for an RP&P Lease from the BLM in consideration of a motocross/trap shoot facility in the Crescent Valley area. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Update on Community Center: Ms. Sharrow stated the Board had remarked earlier that further upgrades to the community building wouldn't be considered until they saw the level of use. Ms. Sharrow reported that an Open House was being planned, several groups were already interested in using the facility, and in future years it will be used for Founders' Day activities. The Board asked that the town keep an official record of the center's use.

Additional budget requests from included mini blinds and picnic tables at the Community Center, canopies for the picnic tables, and bleacher covers for the bleachers at the arena area of the Fairgrounds. The Board stated mini blinds and picnic tables could be included in the buildings and grounds budget, but asked that the canopies for the picnic tables be postponed to

next year's budget discussions. Commissioner Bailey motioned to leave the bleacher covers in the tentative budget; Commissioner Benson seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

Activity Fund: Ms. Sharrow said an activity fund was requested to cover expenses related to community activities such as Founders' Day, the Open House for the Community Center, etc. Mr. Rebaleati explained that the Town Board would still have to follow County policy regarding approval of purchases in excess of \$1,000.00, but this could pre-fund certain events, so individual grants wouldn't have to be requested. Commissioner Benson motioned to approve an activity fund in the amount of \$10,000.00 to be administered by the Crescent Valley Town Advisory Board. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

CRESCENT VALLEY TOWN FIRE DEPARTMENT

Terry Henderson, Chief, presented budget requests for the Crescent Valley Town Fire Department. The department is strong with 18 current members, and Chief Henderson anticipates that will jump to 20 members by summer. The department just disposed of several sets of structure gear (protective clothing/boots) that were over 25 years old. They are still utilizing nine sets of structure gear that are 15 years old. Chief Henderson would like to phase these out and purchase four sets in the current fiscal year, and four more sets in the next fiscal year. Additional requests were for some new helmets, replacement of helmet shields which are 12 years old, three handheld radios, and three shoulder microphones. Chairman Ithurralde motioned to approve the requests as presented and to adjust budget amounts to accommodate this equipment. Commissioner Benson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

NEVADA HEALTH CENTERS, INC.

The Board welcomed Dr. Carl Heard, Chief Executive Officer, of Nevada Health Centers. Dr. Heard reported that after 12 years of service, former CEO, Steve Hansen, has moved on to manage one of the largest community health centers in the nation in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Discussion of Enhanced Services in Crescent Valley: Dr. Heard stated that, at the prompting of the community – which sees a need for five-day a week service at the Crescent Valley Clinic – they have considered several options. One option would be to provide a full-time physician, but with current recruiting difficulties, the probability of engaging a physician is not great and would likely take years. Unfortunately, placing a full-time Physician's Assistant faces similar recruiting difficulties. So another solution was considered, involving an electronic telemedicine option in addition to the current health care providers. Nevada Health Centers has this service in place in Austin, and it seems to be serving them quite well. Dr. Heard provided three spreadsheets showing the cost breakdown for the following options: full-time physician placement (highest cost), telemedicine option, or current level of services (lowest cost).

Chairman Ithurralde noted there wasn't a huge cost difference between the full-time physician option and the telemedicine option. Dr. Heard agreed there was only a \$30,000.00 difference, but explained that the first year for the telemedicine option includes a lot of up-front expenses for equipment and establishing network connections; he offered to do a projected cost estimate that would provide the actual sustained cost once the initial equipment is in place. Chairman Ithurralde said these updates would be reviewed at the March 27th budget meeting.

Contract for Fiscal Year 2008-2009: Approval of the overall contract was tabled to March 27th, pending a decision on level of services for Crescent Valley.

ELKO-LANDER-EUREKA COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

Elko is still working on estimates regarding possible closure of the Beowawe Library, and will present contracts at a future meeting. Chairman Ithurralde agreed to table this until the March 27th budget meeting.

EUREKA COUNTY SENIOR CENTERS

Millie Oram and Adell Panning, Site Directors for the Eureka County Senior Center and the Fannie Komp Senior Center, respectively, present their Fiscal Year 2008-2009 budget. Ms. Panning outlined three major requests: replacement of the food bank van used to transport supplies from Eureka to Crescent Valley, upgrading a casual position in Crescent Valley to a full-time position; and replacement of serviceware (dishes, pots, pans, utensils).

The Board acknowledged the need for vehicle replacement, because the current van has 150,000 miles and an upgraded vehicle is desirable (heavy-duty 4-wheel drive). Ms. Panning detailed the schedule for her current casual and full-time employees to justify need for additional employee hours. Commissioner Bailey agreed there was a need at the Fannie Komp Senior Center and motioned to upgrade one casual position to a full-time position beginning July 1, 2008. Commissioner Benson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Serviceware has not been replaced for ten years, and it was time to replace the full set. Commissioner Benson motioned to include these replacement costs in the upcoming year's budget. Chairman Ithurralde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Ms. Oram stated that Department Heads are not eligible for merit increases, and haven't had a raise (other than cost of living) for four years, so a salary enhancement was being requested for all Department Heads. The Board asked the ladies to meet with the Budget Officer regarding this and to provide a recommendation at the March 27th budget meeting.

EUREKA COUNTY JUSTICE COURTS

A portion of the Justice Court budget had been discussed in previous budget sessions, but an increase in services and supplies was needed directly related to court costs, which are beyond the control of the department. Judge John Schweble, and Court Clerk, Cindy Garcia, detailed the budget, focusing on court related costs that were increasing simply due to the higher number of court cases. Audio/video upgrades were also needed for the JAVs system, and those costs will be split between the current fiscal year and the next fiscal year.

Judge Susan Fye was present at the Crescent Valley site. It was noted that Beowawe Justice Court will be installing a JAVs system in the new Justice Facility, and those costs may also be split between fiscal years.

Certain court fees incorporate an amount payable directly to the Judge. Eureka County has been tracking these amounts and issuing a separate check to the Judges. Mr. Rebaleati researched how other counties handle this, and some simply calculate an average of the fees and include that amount on the regular payroll checks. This simplifies the tracking process and Mr. Rebaleati suggested that the Commissioners authorize Eureka County to change to this less encumbered method. In cases of a substitute Judge, individual vouchers can be generated for these fees. Chairman Ithurralde motioned to approve paying the Judges based on an average of fees collected. Commissioner Benson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Judge Schweble recently reviewed wage ranges in the County and found that his clerks are still at range 111, while other employees in jobs with similar responsibilities are set several ranges higher. Mr. Rebaleati explained that as job duties increase, job descriptions are updated and a new wage range is attached directly related to level of duties. The Board directed Mr. Rebaleati and Judge Schweble to collaborate on updating the Justice Court job descriptions and bring them before the Board for approval on March 20th or March 27th.

Regarding Judge's salaries, Judge Schweble noted that they are set by the Board of Commissioners, and were not included in the 2007 legislation that authorized salary increases for other elected officials. Judge Schweble requested that the Commissioners approve an increase for the Judges that paralleled their own percentage increases as set by the Legislature. Commissioner Benson requested that the Chairman meet with Mr. Rebaleati to work on a proposal regarding this request.

Judge Fye concluded with a comment that her department had also experienced increased duties, and asked that her staff be included in any changes relating to job descriptions and wage increases. Commissioner Bailey agreed that one Justice Court could not be singled out, and adjustments should be consistent throughout the department.

OPERA HOUSE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SENTINEL MUSEUM

Facilities Director, Wally Cuchine, presented budgetary requests for the upcoming fiscal year. The Sentinel Museum budget remains basically the same; signage may be purchased from the exhibit category, but that amount has never been exhausted. Economic Development budget also remains fairly consistent; furniture must be purchased for the Railroad Car to convert it into an office, but that will come out of the buildings fund for office furniture.

The Opera House budget included an increase for convention supplies. Painting and carpeting are being considered, but will come out of the buildings and grounds budget. Per a request to consider keeping the Opera House open on Saturdays during the tourist season, Mr. Cuchine prepared an estimate which showed this would require an increase of 176 hours and redistribution of casual hours so the weekly limit is not exceeded. Mr. Rebaleati noted that this would increase total operating expenses in order to accommodate tourists, and asked the Board to weigh if the added burden and cost were justified. Mr. Cuchine noted that individuals and groups are accommodated when requests are received to open the Opera House on Saturdays.

In conclusion, Mr. Cuchine stated he supported the request put forward regarding Department Head salaries, and appreciated the Commission's consideration.

EUREKA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

An agreement has been in place since Fiscal Year 1999-2000 for the School District's use of the County AS/400 system. This is a basic contract for \$500.00 per month and stipulates that the County is responsible for maintenance of the AS/400 system. The contract expired in 2007, and approval was requested to renew the contract for a three year period. Commissioner Benson motioned to renew the contract with the School District for use of the AS/400 system, stipulating that the School District sign first and authorizing the Chairman to sign the contract outside of the meeting. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

EUREKA COUNTY AMBULANCE AND EMS

EMS Coordinator, Mike Sullivan, presented a summary of his budget requests, explaining that most increases were based on overages experienced in the previous year, mostly attributed to rising costs. Increases were requested in: services and supplies, postage, telephone and fax, protective clothing, laundry, equipment replacement, training equipment, and radio replacements. Acquisition of a new ambulance was the large capital improvement item. Mr. Sullivan was interested in a unit currently being bid in Lander County, an F350 with a 6.4 diesel engine, at approximately \$122,000.00. Another option would be to go with a heavier unit, at an additional cost of \$45,000.00, but the lighter unit was considered for two reasons: (1) the cost savings; and (2) some of the volunteers were more comfortable driving a smaller unit. Commissioner Benson was concerned that the lighter unit would not hold up and asked Mr. Sullivan to work up some bid specifications, recommending a heavier chassis with an Allison transmission.

EMS Volunteer Stipend Policy: The original policy allowed for volunteers to deny their stipend and defer it into a fund to be used towards a dinner or to purchase items for the volunteers. This required internal tracking, and Mr. Rebaleati recommended doing away with this and simply having the County sponsor any dinners or extras they would like to provide the volunteers. Chairmain Ithurralde motioned to amend the EMS Stipend Policy to eliminate the option of deferring the stipend into a special fund, and instead volunteers can simply accept or deny the stipend. Commissioner Benson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Request for Two Rescue Ranger 6x6 ATV Units: EMS Volunteer, Earl Overholser, brought up the idea of having two ATV-type vehicles that could be used by all County entities and departments. He has talked with the Sheriff and Undersheriff, EMS Coordinator, and Public Works Director. Mr. Overholser detailed several specific incidents over the past year, where these vehicles would have served in rescue efforts or been beneficial to County departments. He was able to obtain information from two of the three companies that manufacture these units.

The Board engaged in a lengthy conversation considering storage, management, maintenance, and liability associated with using a rescue vehicle being used for other tasks. Chairman Ithurralde felt that contemplation of these vehicles should be deferred to a future budget year. Commissioner Benson motioned to address them during the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 budget cycle. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

EUREKA COUNTY TELEVISION DISTRICT

The Board agreed to table discussions and action related to the Eureka County Television District to the March 27th meeting.

PERDIZ SPORT SHOOTING, INC.

Jerry White, of Perdiz Sport Shooting, presented a request for continued support of this non-profit organization, which is run entirely by volunteers. Perdiz Sport Shooting provides recreational and tourism services and depends on a grant each year from the County. This year's requests were for replacement of windows, installation of new carpet and linoleum, and an awning over the clubhouse deck, at an estimated total cost of \$30,000.00. The Board agreed that carpeting, linoleum, and windows were sorely needed at the range clubhouse, but felt a canopy for the deck could be postponed another year. Commissioner Benson motioned to support the repairs and upgrades with a grant in the amount of \$20,000.00. Commissioner Benson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Chairman Ithurralde had opportunity to work at the State Shoot which was sponsored by Perdiz Sport Shooting this past year, and commented that it was very well organized and professionally run, with over 100 visiting shooters. Additionally, the Chairman was pleased to see the 4H Program was making use of the shooting range. Mr. White thanked the Board for their comments and continued support.

EUREKA COUNTY CLERK/TREASURER

Clerk & Treasurer, Jackie Berg, presented budget requests to the Board. The greatest increase was for District Court costs, almost entirely related to increased court activity. Budget needs included a minimal amount to return to the AS/400 jury tracking system. For the past few years, Eureka County has participated in a trial program, along with White Pine and Lincoln Counties, to test Jury View, a computer program promoted by the Administrative Office of the Courts. All three counties have concluded that this is a problematic program and simply doesn't work in smaller jurisdictions. Costs have also increased directly related to the number of jury trials scheduled. A substantial portion is paid up front for postage and documentation to summons the jury; and often, the defendant will plea down at the pre-trial hearing, after these costs have already been expended. Mr. Beutel has spoken with the Public Defender regarding this specific problem, and they are amenable to working with him to petition the court to change the plea deadline to a date before the jury gets selected.

There has also been a rise in interpretation fees. One defendant is currently using an interpreter who travels from Reno at a cost of over \$1,000.00 per visit. Based on scheduled court dates and meetings with Parole and Probation, it is estimated the County will pay over \$6,000.00 in interpretation fees for this one defendant. Unlike some court costs that can be recovered, these fees are totally the responsibility of the County. Ms. Berg would like to budget

