

EUREKA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Budget Meeting - May 17, 2010

STATE OF NEVADA)
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COUNTY OF EUREKA)

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Eureka County Commissioners met pursuant to law on May 17, 2010. Present were Chairman Leonard Fiorenzi, Vice Chair Jim Ithurrealde, Member Mike Page, Deputy District Attorney Kelly Brown, and Clerk & Treasurer Jackie Berg. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and began with the Pledge of Allegiance. The interactive video conference system was connected and utilized between Crescent Valley and Eureka for the entire meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Ithurrealde motioned to approve the agenda as posted; Commissioner Page seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

PUBLIC HEARING TO SET FISCAL YEAR 2010-2011 TAX RATES

Notice was given that the Eureka County Board of Commissioners would hold a public hearing to adopt the tax rates for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2010. The purpose of this hearing was to accept comments from the public and to take action to adopt the tax rates for Fiscal Year 2010-2011. No tax increases were proposed for the upcoming fiscal year.

Chairman Fiorenzi opened the floor for public comments related to the tax rate; there were none. Commissioner Page motioned to adopt the proposed tax rates for the various subdivisions in Eureka County, as follows: EUREKA COUNTY \$0.8458; TELEVISION DISTRICT \$0.0085; EUREKA TOWN \$0.2153; CRESCENT VALLEY TOWN \$0.2153; DIAMOND VALLEY WEED DISTRICT \$0.0781; DIAMOND VALLEY RODENT DISTRICT \$0.0400; EUREKA SCHOOL DISTRICT \$0.7500; STATE OF NEVADA \$0.1700. Commissioner Ithurrealde seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chairman called for public comments, and there were none.

PUBLIC WORKS

Benches and Trash Receptacles for Main Street: Public Works Director, Ron Damele, reported that these items were budgeted. A committee selected the items and recommended buying eight receptacles from BP Products for \$4,328.10 and six contour benches from Webco, Inc. for \$4,809.30. Commissioner Ithurrealde motioned to approve the purchase of trash receptacles and benches for Main Street in Eureka, not to exceed \$10,000.00; Commissioner Page seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

Replacement Fuel Dispensers: At the last meeting Mr. Damele reported serious maintenance issues with the fuel dispensers and card reader at the Eureka site and received approval to move forward with replacement. Since that time the system has failed completely and a couple of thousand gallon fuel tanks will be set up for temporary use until the new system is in place. A quote was received from LA Perks for replacement and installation. Commissioner Ithurrealde motioned to ratify the purchase of the fuel dispenser and card readers from LA Perks, not to exceed \$30,578.00; Commissioner Page seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

ELKO-LANDER-EUREKA COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

Library Contract for Fiscal Year 2010-2011: Chairman Fiorenzi commented that the library contract had not yet been approved because there were some questions about the post-

employee benefits section. The Board reviewed that portion of the contract and agreed that it seemed to indicate that library employees are eligible for Eureka County post-employment benefits; but this is not the case, because they are employees of Elko County. The Board directed Deputy District Attorney to contact the Elko County Library and request a change to paragraph #9 of the contract. Commissioner Ithurralde motioned to amend paragraph #9 of the library contract to include, *'Elko will provide the salary and other post-employee benefits for said library assistants as mandated by Nevada state law and paid out of funds herein provided,'* allowing the District Attorney's office to adjust that wording as necessary, and to authorize the Chairman to sign the contract outside of the meeting once Elko County has made the suggested changes; Commissioner Page seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0. Commissioner Ithurralde amended his motion to include contract amounts of \$15,933.00 for operating costs, \$59,868.00 for salaries, and \$27,250.00 for the contract library fee, for a grand total contract amount of \$103,051.00; Commissioner Page seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

EUREKA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Annual Grant to Eureka Conservation District: Recorder/Auditor, Mike Rebaleati, presented the budget and annual grant request from the Eureka Conservation District in the amount of \$28,625.00. The amount requested is an increase over the previous year's amount, mainly due to the Center Pivot Management Monitoring Project. The Board inquired about the status of a previous cooperative agreement between Eureka County and the Conservation District for maintenance of three grain drills. The Board asked the Clerk to contact the Conservation District to request a copy of the agreement and to request attendance at a future meeting to give an update on current projects and status of the grain drills. Commissioner Ithurralde motioned to approve the Conservation District's budget and grant request of \$28,625.00; Commissioner Page seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

CONSIDER CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS BUS SERVICE

Financial Support for Bus Service to Eureka: Chairman Fiorenzi suggested that money be included in the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 budget, since the Board is in discussions with, and awaiting paperwork and a proposal from, Northern Nevada Transit Coalition regarding possibility of establishing a bus service to Eureka. Commissioner Ithurralde motioned to include \$20,000.00 in the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 budget for possibility of supporting a bimonthly bus service from Eureka to Reno and Elko; Commissioner Page seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

EUREKA COUNTY WILDLIFE ADVISORY BOARD BUDGET

Request for Travel Expenses: Mr. Rebaleati explained that the State provides some funding for Wildlife Advisory Board members to attend the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commission meetings, but it only covers a couple meetings per year and they meet approximately six times. The local board would like to be more involved by sending two members to each meeting, so have requested this supplement to their budget. Commissioner Ithurralde motioned to include an additional \$3,000.00 in the Wildlife Advisory Board budget for Fiscal Year 2010-2011; Commissioner Page seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

EUREKA COUNTY SALARY SCALE

Set Salary Schedule and Cost of Living Increase: Mr. Rebaleati stated a cost of living of 4% and updated salary scale have been discussed and basically approved during previous budget meetings, but he requested confirmation before filing the final budget. Commissioner Page motioned to approve the cost of living salary increase of 4% for all County exempt and non-exempt employees; Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Review of Capital Improvement Plan for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Budget: Mr. Rebaleati reviewed capital improvement projects and purchases included in the upcoming fiscal year budget, including ambulance equipment upgrades \$45,000.00; computer network upgrades \$50,000.00; NDF fire apparatus and equipment \$218,000.00; Ag Extension \$20,000.00; building maintenance \$700,000.00; County carpool \$40,000.00; data processing equipment \$60,000.00; fire equipment \$100,000.00; new bleachers and other improvements at the Fairgrounds \$67,500.00; radio repeater upgrades \$50,000.00 (a portion is being done in the current year); Sheriff and public safety vehicle replacements \$155,000.00; used bucket truck \$12,500.00; water/sewer truck \$37,500.00; street lighting; Eureka spring rehabilitation project \$350,000.00; snotel site at Vaccaro Springs \$25,000.00; continuation of the water and sewer replacement project in Eureka; clean and inspect Crescent Valley (CV) water tanks \$11,000.00; CV Park water efficiency redesign \$15,000.00; CV water equipment \$10,000.00; CV water well and generator \$200,000.00; CV parks \$50,000.00; CV arsenic treatment (the first phase has begun in the current fiscal year); Devil's Gate GID water system improvements \$30,000.00; Devil's Gate GID arsenic treatment project \$2,700,000.00. Nominal amounts were included for the Weed District and Rodent District; and the Television District funding will diminish in future years as they get the infrastructure in place.

The Road Fund and RTC Fund include: regular equipment replacements; a small truck plow for the Crescent Valley area \$12,000.00; first phase of Bullion Street improvements \$50,000.00; Carlin freeway entrance \$500,000.00; road maintenance program \$1,250,000.00;

The Board had two questions regarding the capital improvement items. They reviewed the NDF budget in more detail and removed \$40,000.00 for medical equipment which Sam Hicks, Eureka County Battalion Chief, had withdrawn during an earlier meeting, reducing the NDF equipment amount to \$178,000.00. The second question was regarding necessity of the all-terrain rescue vehicle and trailer for EMS. This item was denied in the current budget, but over the past year there was at least one incident where this type of vehicle was needed.

At request of the Public Works Director, the Board added \$5,000.00 to the five-year plan for the purpose of acquiring land for an additional water tank at the site of the south tank for the Eureka water system (FY 2014-2015).

The Board agreed to discuss funding of the annual operating costs for the Crescent Valley arsenic treatment plant during the July 15th quarterly meeting in Crescent Valley; the engineer estimates the operating cost to be \$85,000.00 annually. Mr. Damele commented that the project is still more than a year out before the system is operational. Mr. Rebaleati asked if similar operating costs could be expected for the Devil's Gate arsenic treatment. Mr. Damele replied that operating costs will actually go down since the system will eliminate a booster station, thereby saving on maintenance and electricity costs.

ESTIMATED REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

Estimated Revenues and Expenditures Included in the Final Budget: Mr. Rebaleati briefly reviewed the estimated revenues and expenditures included in the final budget, focusing on items that have been adjusted since the last budget meeting. The main change was related to an unexpected increase in the telephone bill for the 911 system at the Sheriff's Office. AT&T has begun charging a mileage rate, which isn't unusual, but Mr. Rebaleati plans on inquiring why they are charging that transmission rate now, when they haven't in the past. This will increase charges for the 911 system by \$4,800.00 per year.

The Department of Taxation did request several changes from the tentative budget. They asked that all net proceeds be included in Fiscal Year 2010, so net proceeds are not reflected in Fiscal Year 2011. For Devil's Gate GID, they requested that both funds be classified as enterprise funds. The improvement fund has always been an enterprise fund, but the regular water district fund was formerly treated as a special revenue fund, but has now been converted

to an enterprise fund. The Department of Taxation is also notifying counties that they don't want to see planned expenditures in the future reserve funds unless other funds and revenues are depleted drastically, to more closely follow the intent of the NRS.

FISCAL YEAR 2010-2011 FINAL BUDGET

Final Budget Review and Signing of Departmental Top Sheets: The final budget was basically a review of all that has been covered to date. Mr. Rebaleati will conduct a final check and submit the budget before the June 1st deadline. Copies will be available in the Recorder's office and the Clerk's office for public review. All that remains is final approval by the Board and signing of the departmental top sheets. Commissioner Page motioned to approve the final budget for Fiscal Year 2010-2011, including signing of the departmental top sheets and filing with the Nevada Department of Taxation; Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

Special Audit: Mr. Rebaleati explained that one or two special audits are conducted each year in addition to the overall County audit. This year he is considering a review of Title 3 of the County Code. He does not feel a second special audit is needed this year. The Board requested a cost estimate before the special audit is conducted and asked that this be placed on a future agenda.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Current Legislative Issues: The Chairman opened the floor for discussion of current legislative issues. Commissioner Ithurralde stated the big issue coming up is review of, and possible modifications to, special tax abatements.

RECESS UNTIL 5:00 P.M. PUBLIC HEARING

The Board recessed from 2:38 until the 5:00 p.m. public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING – EUREKA COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

Notice was given that the Board of Eureka County Commissioners would hold a public hearing at 5:00 p.m. on May 17, 2010, to hear public comments and take action to adopt the Eureka County Personnel Policy Manual as revised. Copies of the revised Personnel Policy Manual were distributed to all County departments, all County employees, and have been available for review by the public, upon request, at the Eureka County Human Resources' office and the Eureka County Clerk's office.

Chairman Fiorenzi noted that changes to the Personnel Policy have been discussed at length during regular Commission meetings, Commission meetings requesting employee input and comment, and focus meetings conducted by Human Resources.

Human Resources Analyst, Jerry Larson, stated there was one more item that should be addressed before moving on to public comment. An issue was brought to his attention that certain employees, who have not yet reached their first anniversary date, were hired with the understanding that they would be eligible for a two-step merit increase on their one-year anniversary. When the new Personnel Policy and salary/wage scale go into effect, this will not be the case, since the new performance evaluation and wage scale allow for a one-step increase. Mr. Larson stated he began working for the County in September 2009 and since that time has notified all new hires during orientation of the impending policy changes.

A lengthy discussion ensued between the Board and staff. Public Works Director, Ron Damele, has two Road Department employees that were hired around September/October 2009. At that time, department heads were not receiving any instruction regarding upcoming policy changes, so new hires were informed of the current wage scale, performance evaluations, and possibility of a two-step increase.

Todd Hubbard, Ladd Dubray, and Raymond Hodson also commented on the inequity the new policy would cause for the few new hires that fall in this interim period. The Board understood the dilemma, but everyone who is a current employee has been anticipating that their next annual evaluation held the possibility of a two-step merit increase, and Chairman Fiorenzi was concerned that making an exception for a handful of employees was actually unfair to the other employees.

The Board decided to accept the Personnel Policy as amended and then to consider some sort of a variance regarding recent new hires. Deputy District Attorney, Kelly Brown, cautioned the Board to identify a specific cut-off date if they decided to adopt a variance to address this matter.

Chairman Fiorenzi opened the floor for public comments regarding revisions to the Eureka County Personnel Policy Manual. Mr. Larson explained a new availability form that was incorporated into the manual, which would help identify employment candidates that were only available part-time, or who were students that must return to school following summer or other breaks. There were no further comments. Commissioner Ithurralde motioned to adopt the Eureka County personnel Policy Manual as revised; Commissioner Page seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

New Hire Variance: The Board directed staff to draft language for a one year variance, from the date of the last hire as of the current date (05-17-10) that would allow for utilization of the old wage/salary scale and merit increase system. Mr. Larson stated he would take care of the draft language and would place this item on the next agenda for Board review and approval.

Effective Date of Revised Personnel Policy Manual: Commissioner Ithurralde motioned that the effective date for the newly adopted Eureka County Personnel Policy Manual will be July 1, 2010; Commissioner Page seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Fiorenzi called for public comment. Mr. Damele stated he just wanted to say that he appreciated the Board considering a solution for the new hires that would have been adversely affected by the new policy. Mr. Hubbard also thanked the Board. There were no further comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Page motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5.39 p.m.; Commissioner Ithurralde seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

Approved this 7th day of June, 2010.

/s/ Leonard Fiorenzi
Leonard Fiorenzi, Chairman

Attest: /s/ Jackie Berg
Jackie Berg, Clerk