Official Proceedings of the Stutsman County Commission

August 11, 2009

At 7:00 a.m., Chairman Klose called the special meeting of the Stutsman County Commission to order. Dennis Ova, Dale Marks, Doug Kaiser Craig Neys and Mark T. Klose answered roll call.

Noel Johnson, County COO, presented the 2010 revenue and expenditure budgets, the five year fixed asset requests, the outside agency requests and projected 2010 ending fund balances. The expenditures included no change in employee wages. Any decision on a wage adjustment would be made later by the Commission. The total expenditure requests were $18.1 million – revenue projections were $16.5 million. Reserves would decrease from $7.6 million to $5.9 million. The revenue projections were made assuming a total county mill levy similar to last year. Any narrowing of the budget deficit would require expenditure decreases or mill levy increases.

Mike Zimmerman, County Highway Superintendent, reviewed the 2010 road budget - $2.8 million expenditures, $2.6 million revenues. Several of the County gravel pits were depleted. More gravel was needed to do FEMA work this fall. Ova made a motion seconded by Kaiser to crush up to $50,000 at the Brown pit in Sharlow Township. Roll call vote – Ova, Marks, Kaiser, Neys and Klose voted aye.

Zimmerman stressed the need for a plan to either continue to patch roads or to recycle roads. The current $150,000 budget was not adequate and patching was an annual, growing expense. The County could purchase a recycle machine or hire the work. The Commission requested information on the patching cost per road and a priority list of roads for possible recycling. The patching expense was increased from $150,000 to $200,000.

Bjorn Ringdahl, Jamestown Area Ambulance, requested an increase in the County's support for the ambulance service from $15,000 to $18,000. There has been no increase in the County's support for many years. Basic costs such as fuel, inflation and employees justified the request. The ambulance provides service for 1,300 calls per year – approximately 844 city calls, 100 county calls and 365 transfers. The service loses $80 per call. 80% of the ambulance calls were for Medicare. Medicare will only pay a specific amount. The amount paid does not cover the cost of the service.

Jan Thompson, County Treasurer, and Warren Tobin, Veteran Service Officer, representing the employee wage and benefit committee, presented the employees request for the 2010 budgets – a 2.5% cost of living adjustment, one step on the pay scale (2%) for eligible employees, and no additional cost to the employees for health insurance. The cost of labor index for the area was between 2% and 3%. The employees were appreciative of the past efforts of the Commission to keep wages and benefits competitive.

Del Horn, Director of Jamestown Community Corrections, requested an increase in the County's support of the Community Corrections program from $7,500 to $15,000 per year. The 2010 request was the same as 2009. The legislature had approved $14,300 for the program. They have had to supplement the program with reserves. Klose questioned the need for additional County funds when the state had provided funds equal to about 20% of their budget.

Tracey Trapp, Law Enforcement Center Administrator, reviewed the Law Enforcement Center budget - $2.4 million expenditures - $2.3 million revenue. Both budgets were slightly higher than last year. Efforts would be made to increase the rates for housing federal, state and other county's inmates.

Jerry Bergquist, 9-1-1 Coordinator/Emergency Manager, reviewed the Communications budget and the 911 Emergency Phone budget. The communications budget was up slightly due to employee health insurance costs. The 9-1-1 budget was down slightly due to decreases in GIS expenses.

Dave Orr, County Sheriff, reviewed his budget. The budget was about the same as last year. A possible county overweight ordinance and its impact on his budget were discussed. Another deputy would have to be hired plus the purchase of scales and a vehicle. Possible sharing of personnel and/or equipment would be discussed with adjacent counties. Sheriff Orr suggested requesting the ND Highway Patrol to add personnel for this region to assist with overweight compliance. $100,000 was added to the Sheriff's Department budget – the money would be available but not necessarily spent.

Neys made a motion that was seconded by Ova to adjourn. At 10:17 a.m., the special meeting of the Stutsman County Commission was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Noel A. Johnson
County COO (Auditor)

Mark Klose
Commission Chairman