

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
BOARD OF LINCOLN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
2015/2016 BUDGET HEARING

Chairman Harmon called the hearing to order at 5:00 p.m. Others in attendance included the following: Commissioners Connelly and King; County Clerk, Jeanne Wagner, County Attorney, Josh Smith and Commissioner's Secretary, Corey Roberts.

Consent Items: **1. Commissioner King** moved to approve the agenda. Motion was adopted.
2. Commissioner Connelly moved to adjourn the hearing. Motion was adopted.

Commissioner Harmon gave the tentative budget numbers as follows: total budget - \$19,515,432, property tax mill - \$7,716,106, other revenue \$11,799,326. The tentative mill levy is 9.375 for the county, 1.618 for the library and .607 for the fair with a total mill levy of 11.6. The current budget has 2 major capital projects which include the Elkol road rebuild which is a 2 1/2 million reconstruction and the South Road and Bridge shop that is a 1 million dollar project. The Commissioners had met with administration from the City of Kemmerer earlier in the day, and worked on a budget number for the airport in the amount of \$52,000

Public Hearing – Bill Hoopes with the High County Behavioral Health Board made comments pertaining to the services the organization provides, and one being free counseling to soldiers. The county's funding help is appreciated.

Kip Dana, Executive Director of High Country Behavioral Health discussed the past funding they had received from the county. Current funding was first eliminated, but tentatively they had been given \$20,000. Kip stated they provide 24 hour coverage and in the last year, have done 66 assessments in crisis, and over 10,000 hours of counseling involving 440 clients. Of those 440 clients, 130 were substance abuse disorders. He asked the commissioners to reconsider and to budget the full \$38,000. Kip said that anyone that walks in the door receives service.

Cindy Richardson – She represents the homeowners on CR306 and had come before and asked for snow removal up to either West Pine Drive or the A entrance. Also, delineator poles had been taken down and she asked if they could get some put back up.

Clerk of District Court, Ken Roberts – He was denied \$10,000 for capital outlay which was for new carpet for the courtroom. The current carpet is over 30 years old and the jury room carpet is a wreck and smells. This facility is used a lot not and not just in court scenario but other meetings. He also noted that departments were supposedly getting 2% raises but saw that some others were getting 6%.

Connie McMillan – Kemmerer Airport and the county was giving them \$52,000. The last thing she wants is to see the airport close. Pilots are not sure the airport is open. It was overgrown with weeds and when there was a possible lack of funding, city employees were finally up making it presentable. She asked if someone was going to be hired full time. She hopes for accountability as to where the county money is going and that the airport needs an airport manager.

Mickey McMillan – He was the 1st airport manager and discussed the 1986 amendment to Joint Powers Board Agreement. The city was the managing agent and the city hired a full time manager. He was required to live at the airport full time and he it worked full time. He did the annual budget and presented it to the Commissioners every year. Everything he did was on a purchase order system and a budget summary was done monthly and there was full accountability. He mowed weeds, did snow removal, wrote grant requests, and attended Aeronautics Commission meetings. He worked there for 17 years, and received numerous comments on the condition of the airport. FAA requirements aren't posted and no one actively from the City of Kemmerer is on the list. The city needs to hire a full time manager or will it will continue to go downhill.

Lynn Putnam – He had the same concerns that Mickey and Connie expressed. Jerry’s (Commissioner Harmon) comments in the gazette illuminate on accountability issues and it’s a significant issue.

Commissioner King – Their meeting with the city addressed accountability issues, and reporting be brought back to the Commissioners. The board will be increased from 4 to 6 members that will result in more input and diversity. The bills will be reviewed by the board prior to payment and maintenance will also be addressed.

Commissioner Connelly – This board will be an advisory board to the City of Kemmerer. Monthly accounting will take place with the airport funding and he wants the airport to succeed but wants to know where the money is going.

Tim Foppiano – Fire Chief, Alpine Fire District - The budget request for Alpine EMS was \$34,500 and the \$12,000 budgeted by the county is not enough to provide the service. They ran into deficits last year and had to run on reserves. A group of 7 volunteers is running the service. They hope to collect 60 percent of the cost of a call, but in total, they receive about \$35,000 per year. They receive numerous calls due to the area they serve being recreational and commuters to Jackson. It’s difficult to provide a service when you are in a deficit.

Jeremy Larsen – Alpine EMS – the \$12,000 is not enough to sustain an ambulance service for the county area calls. They have roughly \$54,000 in their reserves, but that money is for a new ambulance and equipment.

Commissioner Connelly – The assessed valuation is up a bit from last year. The bulk of money for the county comes from other sources and not property tax. Budgeting for the future is imperative and we are blessed as a county compared to some others.

Commissioner King – Funding EMS is critical and the frustration is there due to lack of funding. We need to go to our legislators for them to enact EMS districts. He will work with them on getting this done.

Chairman Harmon – The Commissioners and Elected Officials are a close body and we are united and doing the best we can for the county.

Meeting adjourned at 6:13 p.m.

Attest:

Jeanne Wagner, County Clerk

Jerry T. Harmon, Chairman