

## **FINANCE AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

Thursday, October 16, 2015, at 8:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Minner, Holiday, Trucano, Tracy, Gorman, Goggin, Meyer

ABSENT:

OTHERS: A. Dunstan, J. Parente, J. Zoelzer, R. Faccin, Lisa Ciampoli, Doug Hulme, Kurt Prenzler, Donna Badman, Brenda Roosevelt, Steve Horrel, Bill Robertson, Robert Pollard, Corry Davenport, Liz Dalton, Lisa Ciampoli, Barry Harris, Tom McRae, Judy Kuhn, Amy Meyer

1. Approval of Resolution for the Community Development Department awarding contract for Weatherization HVAC Contractor.
2. Approval of Resolution for the Community Development Department awarding contract for the Weatherization Cellulose Insulation contract.
3. Approval of Resolution for the Community Development Department awarding contract for the LIHEAP HVAC Contractors.

Motion made by Tracy, Seconded by Holliday. Ayes: Holiday, Trucano, Tracy, Gorman, Goggin, Meyer. Nays: None. Motion Approved.

4. FY 2016 Budget Discussion:

Chairman Dunstan presented the proposed 2016 county budget and provided the following statement in his presentation:

1. The proposed 2016 county budget is \$1.3 million lower than the current year budget. This represents a 1% decrease.
2. This includes \$6 million in capital projects which includes replacing the Courthouse HVAC system and partial funding for the jail project.
3. The General Fund Budget, which pays for general governmental services, is up 3.4%. Most of the increases are from employee costs. All Collective Bargaining agreements are now settled.
4. The budget presented is balanced.
5. This budget was prepared assuming no net levy increase in county funds and we will again for the second year in a row proposing a reduction in our property tax levy.
6. As I have stated in the past, the difficult decisions made by this committee and the County Board over the past several years has put us in a better financial position as we move forward. It has been accomplished by Democrats and Republicans working together.
7. Dunstan hi-light some of these decisions further:
  - a. My policy has been to balance the county budget every year, to cut spending where needed, and to minimize and lower property tax rates when possible.

- b. The county is operating with 322 fewer employees (since becoming Chairman). This is a reduction of 25% of our workforce.
  - c. The General Operating Fund is just now (in 2015) returning to its same operating level since 2008 (pre-recession). Budget cuts made in 2009 helped carry us for seven budget years. During this time we absorbed inflationary increases including our largest cost in operating county government (wages and benefits).
  - d. We lowered property taxes last year and will lower them again this year. We have lowered property taxes and will continue to do so when possible. But like our cost reductions, we will do this very deliberately and will not jeopardize public safety and critical services to our residents. To do otherwise would be wreck less. There is also a very strong chance that a budget deal will be reached in Springfield that will result in a multi-year property tax freeze.
  - e. Madison County Government is 100% Debt Free and enjoys a strong bond rating.
  - f. We are trying to be good stewards of tax dollars. The budgets we present represent a fair deal for our taxpayers.
8. The establishment of the county budget is a collaboration of elected officials, department heads, and the county board. These folks do a good job in managing their departments in a cost effective manner. When we needed to reach back and cut during the great recession, we had a great deal of cooperation. The County Board does work together for the betterment of our taxpayers.
  9. We have been streamlining county government for several years. The county workforce is 25% smaller during my time in this position. When I became Chairman, we had 1,262 county employees. Today we have 945, a reduction of 322 employees. Mr. Prenzler goes around touting his budget savings. What you really did in your department was eliminate four or five positions. I, and this County Board, have been streamlining county government for years and much greater than five positions.
  10. We have done this through careful and deliberate cost reductions without jeopardizing public safety and services our taxpayers demand.
  11. We have lowered property taxes and will continue to do so when possible. But like our cost reductions, we will do this very deliberately and will not jeopardize public safety and critical services to our residents. To do otherwise would be wreck less.
  12. There is a very real chance that the state budget compromise will result in a property tax freeze for local government. There are other sources of local funding that the state is looking at, such as our share of income tax revenue. We will continue to approach our budgetary process in a very deliberate and responsible manner.

Mr. Minner opened up the meeting for questions from County Board members.

Mr. Parente proceeded to walk the committee through the budget document explaining each section of the budget including the budgetary process, budget policies, and the proposed budget which is presented in three different formats, county revenue, and fund descriptions.

The committee and board members discussed the proposed budget and questions were answered by Mr. Dunstan, Mr. Parente, and the Auditor's office.

Mr. Trucano moved, seconded by Ms. Kelly, to adjourn. **MOTION CARRIED.**