

**BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
PRELIMINARY BUDGET HEARINGS  
May 20, 2020, Minutes**

On Wednesday, May 20, 2020, the Board of Madison County Commissioners conducted Preliminary Budget Hearings beginning at 10:13 a.m. in the Public Meeting Room of the Madison County Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana, with Commissioners Dan Allhands, Chairman, and Ron Nye present. Commissioner Jim Hart was absent to participate in a National Association of Counties conference call. Jane Bacon, Commissioner's Clerk, was present to take minutes.

Those people in attendance at the hearings were Alex Hogle, Vicki Tilstra, Bonnie O'Neill, and Jani Flinn.

**Planning Preliminary Budget Hearing:** Alex Hogle, Planning Director, met with the Board to present the preliminary budget for the Planning Department. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, and Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, were present for this portion of the hearings. Alex was inclined to decrease line 398, Contract Services, from \$2,000 to \$0, but has recently learned that some of it is for copying and printing so will confer with Vicki to see if anything should be left there. Due to staffing changes over the past year, Alex anticipates Salaries and Wages will be decreased. He discussed coding other items differently in the future to correct line item expenditure discrepancies, and the possible purchase of rolling storage/filing shelves in the current fiscal year. When asked about overtime, he said he doesn't anticipate any.

Commissioner Jim Hart joined the meeting at this point and was present for the remainder of the hearings.

**Public Health Preliminary Budget Hearing:** A call was made to Melissa Brummell, Public Health Nurse, who presented the preliminary budget for the Public Health Department. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, were present for this portion of the hearings. Melissa reviewed Revenue and discussed several grant areas, and pointed out a total increase in 2020/2021 grant funding of almost \$97,000 for COVID-related response and relief. She mentioned that nearly \$23,000 has already been brought in to cover current fiscal year expenses. Melissa moved on to review the Expenditures budget, which she said looks much different than previous years, because with the COVID emergency she was able to move things around based on the experience, as well as adding the increased funding. She discussed planning for vaccination needs and supplies, and explained increases and decreases in several line items. A significant amount of the COVID funding was added to Other Operating Supplies, anticipating this will be the major category of increased expenses for cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) during the pandemic. There were increases in Gas & Fuel, for COVID response travel and training, and in Printing, Duplicating, Publishing, for educating the public, advertising, and distributing printed information. Schooling-Tuition was increased due to additional funding, but she was able to decrease Contract Services significantly. Vehicles & Equipment remained at \$38,000, and Melissa discussed how she has built this line item over the years in order to purchase an additional vehicle this year, and listed several benefits of having a larger vehicle. The Tobacco Prevention Program was discussed, Melissa said it is going really well in spite of school being out, and described how the Tobacco Prevention Specialist is thinking outside the box and finding creative ways to meet the deliverables of the grant, as well as help with the COVID response. Bonnie suggested an increase to Melissa's salary.

**Airports Preliminary Budget Hearing:** Jani Flinn, Airport Board Secretary, presented the preliminary budgets for the airports. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Ennis Big Sky Airport:** Jani said the Airport Board asked to increase the Gas/Diesel/Fuel line item, line 231, by \$1,000 due to the length of runways and the two snowplow machines. They also asked for a \$2,500 increase for Other Machinery Repair & Maintenance, line 362, a \$1,000 increase in Grounds & Improvement, and a \$100 increase in Printing, line 320. She, Lance and Vicki will go through the last three line items in the next month, some of which will be reimbursed by grants but not necessarily this year, and she discussed the timing and complexities involved in those line items.

- **Twin Bridges Airport:** Jani said Twin Bridges is adding \$1,000 to the line item for Gas & Fuel, line 231, due to new equipment, but cutting \$1,000 from line 357, Other Utility Services. Line 357, Other Professional Services, didn't get used this year, but AWOS was completed this year and there is an annual \$5,500 fee, so she is recommending an increase of \$10,000, which will also cover the airport manager, plus any other consulting fees that are needed. Jani went on to review several lines that were not changed. She said the Revenue budget will be determined by Lance and Vicki. Construction Maintenance Machinery & Equipment, line 942, is being left open for now, for both airports, and will be addressed within a few weeks. Further discussion included grant reimbursements and timing, land acquisitions, and BARSSA funds

**Madison County Commissioners Preliminary Budget Hearing:** The Board discussed the preliminary budget for the Commissioner's Office. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, and Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting. It was surmised that the \$3,000 in line 212 is for a laptop computer, and discussion ensued about General Government funds, covering needs that come up such as the Courthouse, grants that lack funds for administration, Soil Conservation Districts, compost and livestock losses, road budgets, adding to the Commissioner's Contingency fund, and what it pays for. Wage increases were also discussed, as well as job risks for road and solid waste crews.

**Roads, Bridge, and Gas Tax Preliminary Budget Hearing:** This hearing was rescheduled to a later date.

**Madison County Nursing Homes Preliminary Budget Hearings:** Steve McNeece, Nursing Home Administrator, presented and reviewed an Operating Plan for the nursing homes. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, and Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting. Steve said having a plan is necessary as a basis for the budget, it provides direction and focus for the staff as well as the community, and he wants to make sure the Board, as the governing body, is either supportive of this plan or has other thoughts. The presentation included priorities and foundations of nursing home administration, how success in these areas is measured, resident quality and safety, staffing and employee goals, COVID-19 safety and compliance, provider relationships, community involvement, maximizing revenue opportunities to achieve financial targets, and providing education and quarterly reports for the Commissioners. The Board expressed support and asked questions, and further discussion included retooling resident admissions, achievement of staffing goals, the Foundation's capital campaign, curbing community misinformation, state/federal/CMS guidelines for the re-opening process, COVID funding inequities, nursing home regulations versus funding, Madison County's risk level due to tourism, and maintaining strict visitor protocols.

- **Madison Valley Manor Preliminary Budget Hearing:** Vicki presented a preliminary budget for Madison Valley Manor. She pointed out non-levied funds and the cash reserve line, which is where the year ends up. She is still collecting taxes, transferring funds to appropriate accounts, has estimated wages and payables, and thinks there will be more left in the cash reserve line than what was projected. Bonnie and Vicki explained increases and decreases in several line items, Vicki said most lines are self-explanatory, they tried to stay consistent with last year's budget, and that the bottom line is \$4,925,323. She also noted they are always conservative with revenues, and are still in the black after experiencing a worst-case scenario with the COVID crisis. Bonnie discussed the challenges in admitting additional residents, such as waiting lists, trying to limit admissions to County residents versus out-of-county requests, the need for revenue, and considering whether certain levels of care can be maintained. She also discussed nursing home office staff and how they help with billing and revenue, hiring for the Human Resources position, and said she is still providing some support but hopes to step away from HR functions.
- **Tobacco Root Mountain Care Center Preliminary Budget Hearing:** Vicki presented a preliminary budget for Tobacco Root Mountain Care Center. Pointing out non-levied funds, she reviewed what was planned for the end of this fiscal year, said the cash line is currently in the red, but figuring all the transfers in, upcoming payrolls and accounts payable, the year-end cash is actually looking good. She explained several line items, reviewed the capital line, and discussion ensued about boilers, generator, roofing, sidewalks, obtaining a previous survey from Great West Engineering, and advertising for bids. Vicki discussed nursing and staffing line items, Bonnie reviewed traveler expenses, and she said Steve will soon have a discussion with the Board about increasing hourly wages to be competitive with local hospitals.

With no further business, the hearings concluded at 2:20 p.m.

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Dan W. Allhands, Chairman  
Board of Madison County Commissioners

Date Approved: June 9, 2019

Minutes prepared by:

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Jane Bacon, Commissioner's Clerk

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kathleen Mumme, Clerk and Recorder, Madison County