

**BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
PRELIMINARY BUDGET HEARINGS  
May 22, 2019, Minutes**

On Wednesday, May 22, 2019, the Board of Madison County Commissioners conducted Preliminary Budget Hearings beginning at 10:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room of the Madison County Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana, with Commissioners Ron Nye, Chairman, Jim Hart, and Dan Allhands present. Laurie Buyan, Commissioners Assistant, was present to take minutes.

Those people in attendance at the hearings were Jack Albrecht, Christina Koch, Lucy Ennis, Jan Thomas, Bonnie O'Neill, Vicki Tilstra, Lynda Holt, Phil Fortner, Craig Schroder, Emily Hayes, Jake Stewart, David Welsh, and Tom Roberts.

**Library Preliminary Budget Hearing:** Jack Albrecht, Library Director, Christina Koch, Assistant Librarian, and Lucy Ennis and Jan Thomas, Library Board members, met with the Board to review the preliminary budget for the Library. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, were present for this hearing. Jack discussed various line items that are being increased or decreased for various reasons. Vicki stated that she combined the lines for water and sewer since they are both on the same bill. Jack noted that Line item 212-Small items of Equipment, will be decreased by \$2,000; 322-Books, will increase from \$12,000 to \$14,000; 344-Gas Utility Services will increase by \$1,000 but they may look at a new provider; 357-Professional Services, Increased from \$5,000 to \$6,000; and 364-computers, was reduced by \$1,000. It was noted that the Pace Fund will remain the same, and that a lady gave them \$50,000 which was put in a separate cash account that is reduced when they do capital improvements. Vicki stated that there is still \$3,558 in Fund 4100-Library Depreciation. She added that she can put the remaining funds into that account to save for improvements but the Library Board needs to direct her to do that. There was discussion about the Playground Project, the digitalization of Madisonian newspapers, the relationship between the Library and the Museum for staffing purposes, and extended Library hours in the summertime.

**Communications Preliminary Budget Hearing:** Lynda Holt, Communications Coordinator, Phil Fortner, Sheriff, and Craig Schroder, Undersheriff, met with the Board to review the preliminary budget for the Communications Department. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, were present for this hearing. Lynda reviewed the budget noting that she is not asking for more money just moving line items around. Ron Nye asked about contract services. Lynda responded that this is what she uses to pay for installation and repairs to the radios. Jim Hart asked about the communications line item. Lynda explained that this is for anything related to the repeater sites. There was further discussion about the various repeater sites.

**911 Preliminary Budget Hearing:** Lynda Holt, Communications Coordinator, Phil Fortner, Sheriff, and Craig Schroder, Undersheriff, met with the Board to review the preliminary budget for 911 Emergency. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, were present for this hearing. Lynda stated that she added \$100,000 to line item 397-Contract Payments for a contract with Gallatin County to pay the equivalent of two dispatchers in Big Sky. She noted that she is waiting to hear back from Rhonda Sullivan to be sure that 911 funds can be used for this purpose. Phil discussed an increase for the Communications Coordinator position. He stated that this position currently makes less than the Dispatch Supervisor who is at \$22.89. The proposal is to increase the Communications Coordinator from \$22.71 to \$23.79. He added that she used to have a vehicle to drive to and from work but when the new DES Deputy was added, the vehicle was given to him.

**Sheriff's Department Preliminary Budget Hearing:** Phil Fortner, Sheriff, and Craig Schroder, Undersheriff, met with the Board to review the preliminary budget for the Sheriff's Department. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer were present for this hearing. Phil reviewed the Sheriff's proposed budget, noting that he put an additional \$50559 in line item 397-Contract Payments for the cost of a dispatch officer to be added to the existing Big Sky Law Enforcement Agreement and added \$1,000 to towing (309). He cut \$31,000 from Transportation Equipment (944) and moved \$26,000 of that to Other Professional Services

(357) for up-fitting new vehicles. He also cut \$10,000 from Fuel (231); \$1,000 from Machinery Maintenance (363); and \$1,000 from Meals, Travel and Lodging (373). Phil and the Board discussed the status of deputies. Phil stated that he currently has vacancies for two deputies but might be down four if someone that's applying in other places gets a different job and taking into consideration one that will be gone for military duty. He stated that he is going to hire two now because it's difficult to train more than two at a time. He added that he would like to put funding in the budget for an additional deputy but probably won't hire for that position right away. Jim Hart agreed that he should have funding available in case the need arises.

**Coroner Preliminary Budget Hearing:** Phil Fortner, Sheriff, and Craig Schroder, Undersheriff, met with the Board to review the preliminary budget for the Coroner. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, were present for this hearing. Phil recommended no changes to this budget.

**Care and Custody of Prisoners Preliminary Budget Hearing:** Phil Fortner, Sheriff, and Craig Schroder, Undersheriff, met with the Board to review the preliminary budget for the Care and Custody of Prisoners. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer were present for this hearing. Phil discussed the proposed budget for Care and Custody of Prisoners noting that he cut \$2,000 from chemicals and laboratory supplies and cut \$4,000 from other operating supplies; but he added \$162,800 for boarding prisoners, for a total of \$262,800 in line item 392. He discussed how he arrived at that amount, stating that based on the recent average of 10 prisoners a day with 5 at Gallatin County for \$75 per day and 5 at other jails for \$69 per day, the total for 365 days per year totals \$262,800. He also added \$800 to line item 519 for inmate insurance. He further stated that he would like to move \$40,000 from the Detention line item (317) to the Contingency Fund (399) making it a total of \$45,000. Phil discussed the agreement with Gallatin County to house two prisoners per day and paying whether we use them or not. Phil noted that he has been getting turned down on extra beds and stated it's getting more difficult to find jails locally with a vacancy when he needs one. There was much discussion about housing and transporting prisoners; and the possible need to reclassify detention officers as deputies because they are armed. Phil questioned whether he could have two classifications of deputies, one being a patrol deputy and the other being a detention deputy. Bonnie will contact MACo with the question.

**Drug Forfeiture:** Phil Fortner, Sheriff, and Craig Schroder, Undersheriff, met with the Board to review the preliminary budget for Drug Forfeiture. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, were present for this hearing. Phil stated that he is leaving \$10,000 in the drug forfeiture fund because that is what the drug task force gets. There was discussion about a new jail. Phil stated that wherever the courts are is where jail should be. Ron Nye asked if Placer Loop would be more convenient than where they currently are. Phil responded that it would be better because it is out of the main part of town.

**Madison Valley Search and Rescue Preliminary Budget Hearing:** Emily Hayes, Secretary, and Jake Stewart, President, Madison Valley Search and Rescue, met with the Board to review the preliminary budget for the Madison Valley Search and Rescue Unit. Phil Fortner, Sheriff, Craig Schroder, Undersheriff, Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer were present for this hearing. Emily stated that she added line item 349-Other Utility Services, with \$3,300 to the budget. She stated they have extra funds because they have a renter now. Jake stated that they conducted an audit when the last bookkeeper left and everything looks okay. Emily added that there is nothing that is sending up red flags. There was discussion about how the rent/cash account is handled.

**Ruby Valley Search and Rescue Preliminary Budget Hearing:** David Welsh, President, and Tom Roberts, Treasurer, Ruby Valley Search and Rescue, met with the Board to review the preliminary budget for the Ruby Valley Search and Rescue Unit. Phil Fortner, Sheriff, Craig Schroder, Undersheriff, Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer were present for this hearing. Tom stated that the budget was \$55,302 last year and that the proposal is slightly less this year at \$49,015. David listed items that are reimbursable through the state such as mission fuel, mission training, mission meals, travel and lodging. There was discussion about a new capital improvements line. Tom explained that they are keeping funds there in case one of the renters doesn't renew or for the difference in what insurance will cover if a vehicle is damaged. There was discussion about the Madison and Ruby Units working and training together; and discussion about training deputies to assist with Search and Rescue Missions. Phil stated that Chris Tenny will probably be the liaison for both sides but stressed that all deputies need to be trained. There was also discussion about the purchase and use of the jet boat.

With no further business, the hearings concluded at 3:15 p.m.

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Ronald E. Nye, Chairman  
Board of Madison County Commissioners

Date Approved: June 18, 2019

Minutes prepared by:

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Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant

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