

**Budget Committee Minutes**  
**Tuesday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 4:00 PM**

The Budget Committee of the Rock Island County Board met at the above date and time in the County Board Chambers on the third floor of the County Office Building. Minutes as follow:

Chairman L. Moreno called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

A roll call was taken.

Members present: Chairman L. Moreno, D. Adams, R. Simmer, L. Burns, D. Beck, K. Swanson, J. Deppe

Others Present: J.Snider, R. Brunk, K. Davis, D. Villarreal, Hon. F. Fuhr, V. Bluedorn, G. Bustos, T. Vandersnick, J. Boudi, G. Thorpe, J. Massa, B. Edgeworth, N. Ludwig, G. Bryant, A. Allman, E. Hughes, C. Przybyla

Approval of the minutes from the August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Budget Committee Meeting

Motion to approve as presented by D. Adams. Seconded R. Simmer

A roll call was taken:

Motion carried

County Administrator J. Snider presented his memo; He stated the Health Insurance committee would be meeting in September and deciding on an increased amount in health insurance premium. The administration budgets were listed. He proposed adding a third maintenance staff member. The executive assistant position and that position were both eligible for ARPA reimbursement funds in the FY22 budget. He also stated setting the third and fourth budget committee for September 9<sup>th</sup> and October 5<sup>th</sup> at 4 PM. He was anticipating no overall increase in property taxes.

Mr. Swanson asked if the forest preserve lost revenues could still use as a separate category against which the sale of Hope Creek would not count. Mr. Snider stated that the rules for ARPA funds require offsetting any selling of property.

**04 Circuit Court Judge Fuhr, Vicki Bluedorn**

Judge Fuhr provided a written narrative and stated the office is competing for quality employees. He continued that at this time, they have quality employees and was concerned about keeping them considering wage competition from private business. He stated that he did not think the \$65/hr. rate for attorneys had been raised in years.

**08- Sheriff Bustos**

Sheriff Bustos stated his narrative was provided and he and State's Attorney Villarreal split his presentation into current FY21 Budget and the FY22 Budget. She presented narrative on American Rescue Plan Expenditures and Justification. She stated the two main points for budget purposes were from the frequently asked questions (FAQs) document from the treasury department.

She stated the document stated funds allocated could be used to address court case backlog and mentioned pre-covid there were just over 27,000 cases pending. She stated at the end of June 2021 there were 33,000 criminal cases; felonies, misdemeanor, juvenile and traffic handled by the States Attorney's Office and the Public Defender handled about 85 percent of the cases as well. There were 27 inmates awaiting homicide trials in the County, charged from up to 4 years old. The average caseload was 150-200 cases per attorney with the average from the National Bar Association being 75 per attorney. She stated a sharp decrease in States Attorneys. There has also been an increase in crime. In 2021 there were already 4 homicides.

She stated the office is at a crisis. She stated due to staffing issues, they can no longer process cases as normal such as damage to property, retail theft, and certain violent offenders cannot be kept in custody due to backlog. She stated this is an issue nationwide and the ARP acknowledged this. ARPA money can be used to assist in those areas including case

backlog, technologies etc.

Zoom and paperless courtrooms were recommended due to Covid spikes and Ms. Villarreal stated the cases needed to be kept moving to protect the rights of everyone and a duty to protect the community through funding the sheriff's office. Costs were mentioned such as consultant firm and an increase for an IT specialist from 32 hours to 40 as well as three more attorneys; 1 paralegal and an office assistant. She also requested a premium paid bonus of \$2,000 per employee and mentioned additional staffing through 2024 if the office cannot find funds to maintain these positions.

Sheriff Bustos stated that Ms. Villarreal outlined many things in relation to using the ARPA funds correctly. He continued FY21 would be presented through the committee process in September hoping the Board would approve the ARPA funds. The sheriff's office mentioned expenditures that are part of the current operating budget allows for use of ARPA funds.

He stated in FY21 there was 130,000 budgeted for overtime in the jail. Due to covid, illness, and difficulties in hiring; There were currently 9 open positions for correctional officers. He stated the department would hit \$260,000 in overtime alone and that "we are wearing our employees' out." He anticipated requesting \$260,000 in overtime. There was a request for an additional deputy and the broadband for the Emergency Services Building. He requested hazardous duty pay for the extra work his staff has had to do in coming to work since March of 2020; screening, quarantine and testing for employees. He asked for \$2,000 premium for any employee in the sheriff's office totaling \$320,000; \$2000 for full time employees and \$500 for part-time employees. He stated this was well in the parameters of the ARPA funds.

FY22, he continued that 43.3% of general fund salaries dealing with covid and offset those salaries with ARPA funding. He stated the cost saving would be about 3 million dollars.

Repairs to EMA would total about \$90,000 to repair and upgrade buildings where COVID-19 operations are run out of, housing for PPE, and place to stock vaccine. Lastly, he mentioned that in FY21 the department was not able to purchase squad cars and that item was pulled. He wanted to offset those costs at \$270,000.

Per the State's Attorney Professional Services were increased from \$5000 to \$56,000; she stated forensic experts, witnesses etc. were needed for certain cases and remote technology.

Sheriff Bustos continued with justification; highlighting maintenance to increase \$710,000 for a locking system as the current system in the jail is obsolete. He hoped the Public Building Commission cost but is part of his budget.

#### **17- Health Department, Nita Ludwig**

Ms. Ludwig provided written narrative the budget for FY22 is back to pre covid conditions. She stated at this time, there was no more covid money allocated. Their budget would be presented to the board of health

#### **06- GIS, Josh Boudi**

Mr. Boudi stated written narrative was provided and that part of the ARPA funds would be used in conjunction with the Assessment office and to update 900 parcel maps. The township parcel numbers would be changed to township numbers per state law.

#### **16 Information Systems, Kurt Davis**

Mr. Davis provided written narrative and highlighted. to the County wide email system, archiver, and server operating systems, as well as the County-wide backup systems as explained in the narrative. He also stated there are some minor items for training purposes as well.

#### **13/14- Board of Review, Larry Wilson**

Written narrative provided.

## **States Attorney, Dora Villarreal**

As provided above in the Sheriff's presentation.

## **18 Public Works, Highway Department, John Massa**

Mr. Massa provided written narrative and requested two salary increases for nonunion employees. He stated \$15600 would be paid out of County Highway funds and the rest from motor fuel tax funds. He also wanted to request more money for training and education for risk management from \$4,000 to \$9,000.

Mr. Massa also stated that the diesel tanks would need to be replaced and wanted to place it in the budget, as there are wait lists for the tanks. He stated the ballpark figure was anywhere from \$80,000 to \$125,000. He stated the underground storage tanks would need to be replaced at some point.

## **20 County Office Building, Jim Snider**

### **22 Zoning, Greg Thorpe**

Mr. Thorpe stated the office was looking at increased expenses. He mentioned wanting to add back the Zoning and Building Department Coordinator, as without this position, the office is closed to the public part of the day. He also added \$9,000 to replace carpeting and one zoning vehicle, and was requesting new computers for the office.

### **25 General County, Jim Snider**

Mr. Snider stated that he was looking to use funding for HVAC systems in the County Office Building and Probation and possible move the mental health department into a new office building.

### **26- Court Services, Trent Vandersnick**

Mr. Vandersnick commented on his memo with about \$900,000 for salary reimbursement increase in \$200,000 for child welfare.

### **27-Public Defender Matthew Durbin**

Mr. Durbin provided written narrative and echoed everything Ms. Villarreal said. He stated the thousands of misdemeanor cases have yet to be addressed and the office does not have time or resources to address and hundreds of felonies that need to be addressed "ethically and aptly."

He proposed adding to his staff and his budget was cut last year due to covid. He asked for additional felony and misdemeanor attorneys. He was looking to hire contract attorneys to address misdemeanor backlog. One other line item he anticipated using ARPA money for is to update computer systems, as there are technological problems in the office. He also wanted to add a paralegal position for research, document preparation and supervisory tasks, as well as a liaison for court technology services.

## **Closed Session**

Closed session for the following: *5 ILCS 120/2(c) (1) – The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity.*

There were no items for closed session.

## **Committee member opportunity for brief comment**

Mr. Adams stated that as a new member of the budget committee he saw several departments ask for items through the finance committee. He asked how to set the budget or property taxes or levies not knowing about other expenses. Chairman Moreno stated there are budget adjustment through the year. He stated it would be for consideration not approval.

Ms. Beck asked when requesting for ARPA funds the need for those positions would go away when the funding goes out. She stated there were no long term discussions on positions.

Chairman Moreno stated in an earlier meeting those requesting ARPA funds to not put those line items in the permanent budget but to create a separate line item so when the funding is finished, so is the line item.

Mr. Deppe stated in listening to the different departments, the risk management plan should be addressed.

**Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn by J. Deppe. Seconded L. Burns

Motion carried