

IN A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE WHITE PINE COUNTY COMMISSION HELD ON MARCH 7, 2018 IN THE COUNTY LIBRARY CONFERENCE ROOM IN ELY, NEVADA

The Following Were Present:

County Commission

Richard Howe, Chairman  
Shane Bybee, Vice-Chairman  
Carol McKenzie, Commissioner  
Gary Perea, Commissioner  
Steve Stork, Commissioner  
Nichole Baldwin, Clerk of the Board  
Susan Lujan, Deputy Clerk

County Officials

Juan Carlos Cervantes, UNR Coop Ext.  
Lori Romero, Library/Sr. Ctr. Program Admin.  
Desiree Barnson, Social Services Director  
Lance Gale, Airport Manager  
Catherine Bakaric, WPC Treasurer  
Bryan Pyle, Deputy District Attorney  
Mike Wheable, District Attorney

Also Present

Travis Godon

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Chairman Richard Howe called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. Commissioner Steve Stork led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Finance Director Elizabeth Frances advised that she had to travel to Carson City to meet with the Nevada Tax Commission, which is the reason Monday's meeting was switched, just for the record. Regarding the County's guaranteed status, they did approve our request to maintain that, she reported.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

**FY2019 BUDGET WORKSHOP/DISCUSSION/DIRECTION – ANCILLARY SERVICES, COMMUNITIES, MISCELLANEOUS BUDGETS, PAYROLL, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS AND PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS ON BALANCING THE BUDGET**

8:30-9:45 Ancillary Services

- Library – Finance Director Elizabeth Frances noted there are two budgets in the Library Fund; the General Fund and the Gift Fund, which is based on donations and grants. Library Director Lori Romero noted her budget doesn't have a lot of changes; reduced Postage and increased Miscellaneous, for example. An employee was hired as a Trainee, but they could only keep them for 2 years and that time is nearly up. They use State funds for their travel; a 3-D printer was located, but they also need a computer tower with an SD slot in conjunction with that printer. While the Library has laptops for that purpose, she advised it would be more convenient to have a regular employee computer tower to use for that. Commissioner Gary Perea felt there are adapters available that could be used instead; she will check into that. For their long term needs, Director Romero noted the part-time position being requested. The main part of the Library really needs new carpets, as well as the outside of the building needing new paint. Director Frances wasn't aware of the request to move the Assistant Trainee into a different position, but she will make that adjustment and get the figures provided to the Board. She estimated that the change would be a 7% increase. The Gift Fund is from donations and groups such as Friends of the Library, State funding, etc. She added that the Gift Fund has a balance of \$61,000 in there, in reply to a query from the Board, and that's the source for many of the Library programs that they provide. She noted that they are requesting the carpet in their budget, as it's a County facility and we've done much in good

faith for the Library in the past. Commissioner Perea expressed his appreciation and commended the Library Board for the Expansion, which has been working very well since its inception.

- Airport – Director Frances advised the Airport operates in the General Fund, as well as the Capital Improvements budget which makes transfers to support Airport projects. Airport Manager Lance Gale cited some request changes in the operating budget, such as adding an additional request with respect to the BLM offices coming in. It was clarified they are waiting for the Federal budget to be approved before committing to that project. He noted the water mains are already in and the power is ready to be installed. \$12,500 is being requested to cover the septic system; once the “footprint” of the project is provided to us, then they will commence with the infrastructure. In reply to a query from the Board, Director Gale advised the septic system is required after the BLM signs the contract. The estimated \$10,000 for the lease per year would be available once the Federal funding is in place. Director Gale felt we haven’t had much snow removal so far this winter, and perhaps there would be some cost savings there that could be used. Travel was increased slightly; he noted for the Board that he does his business along the way, uses his own vehicle, and all he ever asks for is some mileage and lodging if necessary. The Miscellaneous increases are to help put on various upcoming events; he noted some additional Insurance requirements may be needed for some of those, so that was also increased. The cost of some cones/barricades are also included in conjunction with those events, he added. Commissioner Steve Stork asked about the \$150,000 for Airport Improvements; Director Gale explained that we expend first, and then we are reimbursed. Director Frances confirmed that. He continued that everything is in place with respect to the 5-Year Plan for the Capital Improvement Projects; Armstrong Consultants are reviewing some of the lighting, etc. at the Airport today. A backup emergency generator is being considered to replace the old one, which has been inoperable for several years; it would be obtained through the bid process, as it was explained to the Board, with the FAA advising us who placed the bids. Commissioner Perea suggested a solar powered battery option, which Director Gale felt might be a good idea. Commissioner Steve Stork noted that the generator would cost \$50,000 but the actual cost to the County would be about \$3,000 due to the match for the grant. Following some discussion, it was noted that \$16,318 will be coming back to us as we didn’t expend those funds due to lack of completion of a project’s second phase. Director Frances noted the money will be put back into an Airport fund to be used for other projects instead.

- Agricultural Extension – Director Frances noted this fund is well expended; they are requesting 3 new positions, all of whom are interns. The revenues here are estimates from the ad valorem tax; the other amounts are carried forward, as we haven’t received the updated revenues at this time. Mr. Juan Carlos Cervantes provided a brief history/update of the Ag. Extension office, and then of their activities. He’s working on mapping all the residential areas in the County specifically for weeds, as they are an ongoing problem. He’s also putting together articles in the Eureka and Ely Times to educate residents on how to identify weeds and report them. He noted it’s relatively easy to treat weeds on the range, but there are many areas in the City that also need eradication; he needs to hire a GIS mapping expert to assist him with this and he noted it’s included in the budget. We will be participating in a resource assessment regarding the White Pine County Land Use Plan. Another item is the rodent problem, namely gophers; he and a colleague in Eureka will be putting together workshops on how to control those. It was noted there’s a major problem with gophers at the Golf Course; Mr. Cervantes advised that just advising him of these areas is sufficient to get someone out there to help eradicate those. On another activity, he continued that the drone events done at the High School were sufficient for the government to designate White Pine High School as a recipient of STEM classes. He added that Steptoe High School is also working towards getting that designation. There are two de-commissioned airports at Duckwater, and he is working on us being able to utilize one of those as a drone hub learning center. They will build them and then learn to fly them, as he explained, including being educated on the science involved there. Mr. Cervantes continued that our 4-H continues to grow; nearly 80 people were in attendance at a Livestock Committee meeting last night. The Ambassador Program is back, and they’re also hosting a Shooting Sports Certification program. He also cited the 4-H Camp for our local County youth has a possibility of going forward, as there may be a facility for that in Snake River; there is definitely some interest being generated for that. Another program is on Food Literacy, teaching the youth in our communities about food systems, the role of agriculture, etc. in preparation for a long-term investment strategy to improve the health of our County by developing a local food system. He explained this is where the intern wage request comes in to assist with the

activity, programs, and outreach. The request under Contracts is to hire someone to help him with the GIS mapping. Director Frances voiced her concern about there being an adequate fund balance for all that is being requested; while there would be a \$68,000 increase in the budget, there would actually be only a small amount of revenues. She is apprehensive about how many of these projects would be sustainable, which would in turn allow them to be ongoing and productive. During the discussion, the question arose of how many of these activities would require one-time expenses, and how many would be able to continue, to be ongoing? Mr. Cervantes responded that nearly all of them, once they are up and running, would be sustainable, they just require funds to initiate them. As to the interns, he added that expense would be just for this year, and then the positions could be revisited. The Board requested that he prioritize the most important programs, showing which ones would be one-time expenses and which would require ongoing costs, as well as the figures on these to be available.

- Senior Center – Finance Director Elizabeth Frances cited the worksheets for this budget, noting the color codes she used, and showing how the revenues/expenditures are balanced. She expects a good amount from the Net Proceeds of Minerals coming in this year. Senior Center Program Administrator Lori Romero advised that there were no real changes to this budget; her fax line was eliminated since it wasn't being used, and that dropped their phone charges in half. The copy machine line item was increased, however, as theirs is very old. They lease their machine from OPI, and they like their services, which includes maintenance. Chairman Richard Howe advised her of the possibility of bulk copiers being ordered, and encouraged her to discuss this with Director Frances. She continued that the grants are maintaining status quo; she is working on one for equipment for the Homebound. They also have 3 trucks and are looking to replace 1 of those. On behalf of the drivers, Director Romero advised they have no benefits or paid holidays, and requested that the next time the union contracts are negotiated to please put something in there "so we can show them how much they are valued," such as for paid holidays. The Board agreed that could be discussed in the future.

- Economic Development – Director Frances noted that while it appears to be a request for an increase in Salary/Wages, this is actually for a half-time position in the Treasurer's office; she is recognizing that expense would be more appropriate to be in this budget instead. WPC Treasurer Catherine Bakaric advised she's not asking for increases, just some Travel to SNPLMA which is required, plus mandatory CDBG training, so she can continue applying for those grants as well. Copy Machine Maintenance is being increased, due to many copies being required for grant applications for the EDC portion of the office. Also, it should be a color copier, as many SNPLMA photos are in color. She recommended sending her old machine to the Aquatic Center for them to use, if she is able to acquire a color copier.

- Natural Resources – Director Frances advised that we will require an additional number of hours in order to update a Water Resource Plan; it is being included now since it falls during this fiscal year. However, Commissioner Gary Perea clarified that they will begin working on the Water Resource Plan this year as soon as it's approved to go forward, so those monies could be reduced out of the next fiscal year instead. She continued that Contract Services is budgeted for \$125,000, based on the Great Basin Water Network and continued support for Water Attorney Simeon Herskovits on the SNWA pipeline. However, she noted the requests for more funds in that line item are continuing to increase. Historically, she added, we've always spent more than what has been budgeted for in prior years; \$125,000 is a better figure to keep in there due to that fact. Also, the water rights leases have been dedicated to Natural Resources. In relation to this, she advised that putting in some Travel/-Training for our Deputy District Attorney would allow him to attend meetings pertaining to the wild horses, sage grouse, etc., in order to enhance his work with the Natural Resource component. During the discussion it was noted that while there's a Travel line item, nothing has been provided for extra outside of 2 meetings which she cited to the Board. District Attorney Mike Wheable advised that if there are more meetings the Commission would want Deputy D.A. Pyle to attend, the Board can address the budget at that time. He did note that we're getting to a place where we will want a full-time, Natural Resource person in the County in the near future, someone who could protect our interests in the mining industry, for example. He added that Deputy District Attorney Bryan Pyle is salaried. After further discussion, the Board agreed that increasing the Travel expense is good, and if it is utilized, fine, or if not, at least the money is in there.

9:45-10:15 Communities

Finance Director Elizabeth Frances advised that we need to consider the matter of abatement with all of our smaller communities. She asked if we would continue to take recommendations from their town councils, and would they help fund a portion of the abatements? District Attorney Mike Wheable asked if the abatement fund could be broken down, distributed to the town councils, and they could utilize it themselves in budgeting for those? She suggested that they might feel better about being able to have some of those funds under their own budgets. Commissioner Gary Perea felt it would be better left as is, as there could be some liability involved. D.A. Wheable suggested a letter be sent to the towns asking them to prioritize the abatement requests, and then send them back to his office. Commissioner Perea would want to see the revenue projections first. Commissioner Shane Bybee felt that if the abatement fund was split, the towns could let it build up for years, whereas the County Commission could get it done in a more timely manner. It was noted there is \$30,000 currently in that fund. It was also reported that the Justice Court had a successful prosecution via the Abatement Ordinance for the first time yesterday.

- Ruth Town – Director Frances advised she’s scheduled to meet with Ruth Town Council on March 16<sup>th</sup>. She carried their budget from last year forward into the current year; it is unknown at this time what they will be changing. Changes she made were to the Master Insurance Policy Allocation, and that their Capital Outlay will be going down due to the interfund loan they are paying on, as she noted. The revenues showing are solid as the CTX has been plugged in, she added.

- Lund Town – Director Frances advised she will update the Board with preliminary projections of the CTX, etc., as they come in. Commissioner Carol McKenzie advised the Lund Town Council likes to save their money if something doesn’t need to be done right away; however, “they are getting better at it, though.” They do have regular meetings and they do review their budget, but they are historically frugal with their funds. They are requesting \$50 be added to the Miscellaneous line item to take care of special events, especially during the Christmas holidays. Also, she advised two ladies purchase the gifts for the events but sometimes they don’t get a complete list and they run out of money. Now they do it differently, turning in the receipts after the Christmas Party, for example. Commissioner McKenzie advised that for long term needs, they are looking to the Lund Grade School, but that will require some parleying with the School District. She noted the paperwork has been turned into the State to get the Lund Grade School put on the Historical Register, and they’re waiting to hear back from them. Commissioner Steve Stork felt that the School District should abate their own properties when they are abandoned; he cited the old schools still standing here in the City of Ely. Director Frances advised the School District is maintaining the Grade School; they pay for the heat and they’re also pleased to have someone using it in order to keep the building active. The other long term need would be capital improvement on their roads, per Director Frances. Commissioner Shane Bybee talked with Public Works Director Bill Calderwood, and the repaving of 1<sup>st</sup> West was on the priority RTC list; however, that got passed over for the Murry Street project. Once monies are available, he added, they are planning to repave that street, for the Board’s information.

- McGill Town – Director Frances met with the McGill Town Council and this is the budget they are recommending; she noted there aren’t many changes over last year. They do need to have an adequate power increase of 6%, per Mt. Wheeler Power, and she brought that up to cover that amount; they will also monitor that figure over the year. Streetlight Repair/Maintenance was broken out of the regular Maintenance budget line item as well, she noted. She updated the public safety for capital outlay; that was an interfund loan for their new fire truck, and this will be coded properly into interest revenue; as the principal goes up, the interest goes down. In reply to a query from the Board Director Frances advised that the Kinnear Library has \$100,000 committed to that project and as time permits, Public Works crews continue to work on it. Also, there was a concern about backflow in their park; this was budgeted for last year, and she will confirm that with Director Calderwood. She added that the communities are covering their own expenses for their parks.

At 10:13 a.m., Chairman Richard Howe recessed the Commission meeting for a break. The meeting was reconvened at 10:21 a.m.

10:15-12:00 Miscellaneous Budgets, Revenues, Payroll and Balancing

- Cooperative Agreements – Finance Director Elizabeth Frances advised the only cooperative agreement budgeted for is Animal Control; per the City of Ely, this is increased by 1-1/2% each year. While she's seen the City cutting positions, a full-time Animal Control Officer is required under this agreement.

- Other Miscellaneous Expenses – Director Frances advised that the Health Insurance for retirees was reduced by \$5,000 based on the fact that we are removing people from the policy; folks are taking Medicare supplements, etc. She advised allocations have been made to different budgets, except for the general internet and County phone system. Commissioner Steve Stork felt we need to allocate the internet and phone system to the different entities; the Road Dept., Fire District, central services such as Social Services and the Ag. Extension, etc. He said the General Fund should not be subsidizing those. Director Frances agreed with this, and explained how the allocations would be done by the allocation formula. She will return with those figures and indicate how it will impact those various funds. As for the County Administration, she included this in the County Manager; at this point, she clarified, we just need to know if that position would be going forward or not, but this is being included for the Board's consideration. She cited the Department Heads have provided input on that, which is included in the backup materials in the Budget Book. The cost for the County Manager was estimated to be \$153,000 plus benefits. Commissioner Gary Perea noted the next step would be to provide an Assistant for that position, and with that new addition he didn't think a County Manager would be feasible. She proceeded through each of the other items on the list of Miscellaneous Expenses.

- Transfers – Based on the preliminary estimates from the Nv. Dept. of Taxation, Director Frances indicated those ad valorem figures will change. 80% of the Net Proceeds of Minerals amounts to \$1.3 million; she moved those funds over to the SB74 fund. Transfers noted were \$350,000 to the Airport; \$40,000 for the Task Force; \$10,000 to the Victim/Witness Services to cover their office rental/phone charges; and \$2,500 to the Justice Court House Arrest Program. She emphasized those figures are preliminary at this point.

- Contingency – Director Frances indicated that we don't spend out of this fund, we just budget for the possible needs the same as for last year, \$153,000.

- Intergovernmental Budgets - She explained other than collecting monies per NRS, the money goes in and then is allocated out again. The different agencies allocate out to several different funds, such as Domestic Violence, the City of Ely, School District, China Springs, etc. She did note that per NRS our China Springs commitment was increased quite a bit this fiscal year, compared to other funds. She added that we will have to lower our ad valorem tax rate in order to meet this commitment.

- General Fund Revenue – Money in/out also applies to the State Indigent and Hospital District funds, she noted. The final figures won't be available until March 25<sup>th</sup>.

- Payroll – This is broken down into Departments/Positions/Hours Budgeted for/Rates of pay, etc., which she explained briefly. She will be getting the Payroll estimates out shortly.

- New Additions Summary – Also, new positions/employees/temporary/full-time/part-time/seasonal, etc. requests were also broken down as she continued to explain.

- Financial Strategic Planning Committee Recommendations – Nothing to report at this time.

- Preliminary Discussions to Balance the Budget – These will continue during the Commission meetings.

DISCUSSION/ACTION/DIRECTION TO THE FINANCE DIRECTOR REGARDING ITEMS HEARD DURING THE BUDGET WORKSHOP

Director Frances indicated she will be providing the Payroll estimates to the Board, as well as the County Manager/Grant Manager cost estimates. She did note that the Grant Manager position included \$73,687 including the fringe benefits. She will prepare the revenue estimates and anything else the Board might like to see by next week's Commission meeting. Commissioner Stork also wants to see the Fire District figures and the allocations to various funds for the internet and phone services, as he requested earlier. The Maintenance services are charged to the Aquatic Center based on their hours of work; she noted much of those services are allocated out for the Ag. District 13 for the summer, etc., and they should be charged to the different departments using those services. It's unknown if allocating out would even be the best method for this, she noted. Commissioner Shane Bybee noting that many of our County facilities are aging, and we have tight

budgets. Having a strong Maintenance Dept. is important; he doesn't want our facilities to "go to pot because the Departments might not want to spend the money for Maintenance to do things." He felt it's fine the way it sits; both Commissioners Stork and McKenzie agreed, in that something for just general upkeep is different from an everyday operation like it is for the pool. Commissioner Bybee did note that we probably should bill the Departments for truly operational costs, however.

**DISCUSSION/ACTION/APPROVAL TO AMEND THE CONTRACT WITH COACH USA AND WHITE PINE COUNTY FOR ELY BUS TO ADD A TWO-YEAR EXTENSION TO THE CURRENT CONTRACT**

Social Services Director Desiree Barnson advised this is a second amendment to this contract; she noted we are all up to par and in compliance. The extra rides being requested for Ely Bus were found to be acceptable; she had forwarded a copy of this to the District Attorney but hasn't received a reply to date. During the budget discussion earlier in today's meeting, District Attorney Mike Wheable advised he has reviewed this and found it to be acceptable. Chairman Richard Howe entertained a motion for approval; Commissioner Gary Perea made a motion to amend the contract with Coach USA and White Pine County for Ely Bus to add a two-year extension to the current contract. Commissioner Carol McKenzie seconded. Motion carried.

**DISCUSSION ONLY: RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There was nothing recommended above and beyond the general discussion by the Board.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 11:17 a.m., Chairman Richard Howe entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Steve Stork made the motion; Commissioner Carol McKenzie seconded. Motion carried.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
WHITE PINE COUNTY  
STATE OF NEVADA

BY:   
CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

  
WPC CLERK OF THE BOARD