

Commissioners Minutes

July 18, 2023 – 1:38 p.m. to 3:28 p.m.

**FY2024 BUDGET REVIEW/WORKSHOPS FOR PUBLIC DEFENDER DEPARTMENT, COUNTY AGENT,
AND TRIAL COURT ADMINISTRATOR**

Commissioners Brad Holton, Zach Brooks and Leslie Van Beek

COO Greg Rast

Clerk Chris Yamamoto

Controller Zach Wagoner

Auditing Supervisor Sarah Winslow

Public Defender Aaron Bazzoli

County Agent Tasha Howard

Acting Trial Court Administrator Benita Miller

Deputy TCA Laura Kiehl

Chief Marshal James West

Jury Commissioner Christina Jeffs

HR Director Kate Rice arrived at 2:25 p.m.

ADJ Davis VanderVelde arrived at 2:28 p.m.

Other interested employees and persons

Deputy Clerk Monica Reeves



**FY2024 BUDGET REVIEW/WORKSHOPS FOR PUBLIC DEFENDER DEPARTMENT, COUNTY AGENT,
AND TRIAL COURT ADMINISTRATOR**

The Board met today at 1:33 p.m. for an FY2024 budget review/workshop for the following departments: Public Defender Department; County Agent; and Trial Court Administrator. Present were: Commissioners Brad Holton, Zach Brooks and Leslie Van Beek, COO Greg Rast, Clerk Chris Yamamoto, Controller Zach Wagoner, Auditing Supervisor Sarah Winslow, Public Defender Aaron Bazzoli, County Agent Tasha Howard, Acting Trial Court Administrator Benita Miller, Deputy TCA Laura Kiehl, Chief Marshal James West, Jury Commissioner Christina Jeffs, other interested persons, and Deputy Clerk Monica Reeves. HR Director Kate Rice arrived at 2:25 p.m. ADJ Davis VanderVelde arrived at 2:28 p.m. The workshops were as follows:

Public Defender Budget:

COO Rast provided PD Bazzoli with the questions noted below and today's workshop centered on the following discussion topics:

Revenues

1. How much will Canyon County be receiving from the PDC? Revenue numbers were at \$0.00 at last meeting and remain \$0.00. Mr. Bazzoli said the number is \$3,482,372. Controller Wagoner

said we need to separate the two sources of cash; we have the PDC grant money and a share of sales tax money. This year's PDC grant was \$1.1M, and in addition to that for a full fiscal year there should be \$4.6M from sales tax provided by the state. There is also repayment revenue that's averaged \$200,000 a year.

A Budget – Personnel (52 FTE)

1. Is there an update from the PDC on the funding of a new Attorney? Mr. Bazzoli doesn't believe he will receive funding from the PDC for a new attorney. If they do not fund a new attorney he will not seek one through the County.

2. Mentioned in budget letter – (2) Staff going from DPD I to DPD II – Is that accounted for in the salaries and benefits? Mr. Bazzoli has communicated with HR and the Controller about this. In a year from now his employees will become state employees and will join into different pay bands that the state uses.

B Budget – Expenses

548512 – Legal Research Fees – Please verify amount of request for FY 24 on legal research fees. Notes show \$43,000. Power Plan shows \$3,625. Mr. Bazzoli said the \$3,625 amount is in error. He is in the process of renegotiating the contract to reduce the cost and wants to keep it at \$43,000 for one more year.

548012 – Interpreter Fees – (FY2023 actuals \$2,866) (FY2023 budget \$2,000) – How do you use interpreter fees? In court or direct client communications? Mr. Bazzoli explained how the PD office uses interpreters outside the courtrooms.

577100 – Computer Equipment – Prefer to keep expense to keep equipment up to date through 2025 - 2029. \$35,000 is currently budgeted for 13 standard desktop computers, 9 laptops, and printer copiers.

General Questions

1. Any other suggested changes to the FY2024 budget in regards to revenue or expense adjustments?

a. Who schedules interpreters? Is it first available or is there negotiation on price/availability?
b. Is there an interpreter pool resource?

c. Is there an update in vacation payout? Who is responsible: state or county? Mr. Bazzoli said last year the amount was \$250,000 and he estimates this year's amount would be close to that. There was discussion about how this will be handled when employees transfer to the state. Controller Wagoner said the hours were accumulated while they were County employees and he said there was a circumstance a few years ago where jail nursing transitioned to a private contract and the County paid out vacation balances, and so it's likely the County will be on the hook some

way financially for that liability. Commissioner Holton said the employees should be encouraged to not wait until the last year to do it because there are tax implications. Mr. Bazzoli said employees will be encouraged to use their vacation time. It's likely their sick time will go away when transferred to the state, and he has addressed this issue with the Governor's Office because it doesn't seem fair to the employees.

d. Is there an update on value per square foot on occupied space? Check with the Facilities Director on this topic.

The Public Defender's budget workshop concluded at 1:58 p.m.

County Agent Budget:

COO Rast provided Ms. Howard with the questions noted below and today's workshop centered on the following discussion topics:

Revenues

1. No Questions

A Budget – Personnel (3 FTE)

1. Requesting 3% Salary Compensation. Ms. Howard said it's a general metric given by the University of Idaho and although the three positions are County positions that's what's recommended by her supervisor when calculating salaries. Commissioner Holton said the County has not yet calculated salary compensation but it will be coming. Ms. Howard reviewed the pay levels for her staff.

B Budget – Expenses

1.554401 Building Supplies and Materials – \$11,500 – Move to Facilities
o Convert Grid and LED Lighting – \$7,500
o Divider Wall to separate conference room – \$4,000

2. 545502 Mileage – **Discussion** – \$17,700 (Consolidate or Not/Fleet) The mileage reimbursement is for 6 potential positions. Commissioner Brooks asked if there is a legal reason Ms. Howard and her staff have to use their personal vehicles rather than a fleet vehicle. Ms. Howard said it's her understanding there are legal issues because there are only 3 County employees, the rest are supervised by the U of I. Perhaps she could look at other jurisdictions and see how they handle it. They received a grant so they could reduce the 4-H mileage by \$1,500 for this fiscal year. There was discussion regarding staff travel, and how the MOU between the County and the U of I is coming up for renewal and the travel language could be reviewed.

General Questions

1. Any other suggested changes to the FY2024 budget in regards to revenue or expense adjustments? Controller Wagoner said there was a request for an increase in the County

Agent's contract line of \$25,000, and he asked if there is Board support or direction for that? Ms. Howard said the increase mostly comes in the mileage because they are losing the ARPA funding from the grant which is the same reason she is asking for a part-time assistant position to be funded in the County Agent's contract. Commissioner Brooks is okay with leaving it in there for now, but he would like further discussion about it.

The County Agent's budget workshop concluded at 2:14 p.m. (The Board took a brief recess at 2:15 p.m. and resumed at 2:26 p.m.)

Trial Court Administrator Budget:

COO Rast provided Acting TCA Benita Miller and ADJ VanderVelde with the questions noted below and today's workshop centered on the following discussion topics:

Revenues

1. Verify receipt of \$142,800 for Interpreter fees

Fee structure: \$ 90,000 Canyon County
\$ 15,000 Owyhee
\$ 20,000 Payette
\$ 8,904 Washington
\$ 8,904 Gem
\$ 142,800

Interpreter fees are for all six counties in the Third Judicial District. Acting TCA Miller said they receive quarterly payments totaling \$142,800 which are deposited with the County Treasurer. Commissioner Brooks asked about the expenditure amount of \$1,749 which seems low. Controller Wagoner said the expenses for contract interpreters are in the district court fund. In addition to that Canyon County has a fulltime employee that provides interpreting services and coordination so that is not a contract payment, it's an FTE and is included in the salaries and benefits of regular employees. It's not broken out on its own specific individual line item. Commissioner Van Beek said interpreters are in a number of budgets across the County and she asked why it's not being managed by one person with eyes on scheduling and budgeting. Controller Wagoner said it's very centralized with one person coordinating the majority of the interpreting activity for Canyon County. The cost to Canyon County for court interpreting is \$200,000, and we receive \$90,000 in revenue. Property tax makes up the difference of \$110k. There's a new wrinkle that started with FY2023, the state upped the dollar amount they are providing and now we are paying for interpreting services for these other counties within the judicial district. There are new line items for interpreting services for other counties in the judicial district. Acting TCA Miller said previous to this fiscal year they have always paid out of the revenue received from the Supreme Court for the five other counties. She said TCA Jamie Robb assigned TCA staff to do the outside counties

because they pay a TCA fee in Canyon County as part of revenue stream and that would be a portion of our services. The Board and COO Rast had follow-up questions for the Controller.

A Budget – Personnel

1. 413075 Compensation Program – \$106,867 (Remove Until HR Recommendation) Acting TCA Miller requested this amount not be removed until the TCA receives the recommendation from the HR Director.

2. Staff Attorney (PCN was funded but may or may not be needed)

3. 413080 New/Reclassified Positions – Itemize \$87,852

(Pulled from Clerk's FY2024 Request Letter)

a. Jury Commissioner – \$10,068 Increase

b. Chief Marshal – \$15,500 Increase

c. Staff Attorney – \$11,099 Increase

d. Jury Clerk Full Time – Mid-point – \$51,979

e. PT Court Assistance Office Admin Assistant – \$22,105 (Is this in 413050 Part Time) Will remove and have ARPA funded position cover.

4. Are these proposed wages passed through HR Compensation and the Controller? Acting TCA Miller said the proposed salary increases had not been reviewed by HR and Controller prior to the budget hearing, but they are looking into it and will provide a recommendation. She recommends they not be renewed until she has the recommendation from HR and Controller. We need to look at the ranges. They have submitted a job description for the chief deputy marshal position because the salary range for the chief is the same as the deputies he supervises. Commissioner Van Beek said given the supervisory and responsibility for courthouse security she is in favor of a review of the salary. There was further discussion regarding salaries for the marshals. There was also discussion regarding the request for new positions. The TCA is removing the request for a part-time court assistance office administrative assistant position and will have the ARPA funded position serve the family court services and court assistance office, and act as a resource for people facing eviction. In other judicial districts the position with the ARPA funding is referred to as a court navigator position and they assist people throughout the judicial system in addition to those eviction cases. Regarding staff attorney request, Judge Vander Velde the position will fill multiple roles and will assist with projects of the ADJ, such as policies, and a number of things that are on the backburner because they have not had the resources to deal with; and it will be a vital resource to the senior judges and will help the magistrate judges as well. Controller Wagoner said the new staff attorney was funded in the FY2023 budget and the position is now filled the position is included in the FY2024 numbers. There is a request for an assistant jury commissioner position.

B Budget – Expenses

1. 542201 Cellular Phone – Adjust from \$6,900 (Recommended: \$11,000). There are 7 FT Marshals, 10 PT Marshals. Suggest each Marshall carry a county phone.

17 marshals) x \$50/phone = \$10,200

Acting TCA Miller said it includes \$225 per month to Verizon for 3 employees who have a County issued cell phone, and an on-call cell phone for the magistrate judges who are on call on the weekend. It includes stipends for employees, cell phones for chief judicial marshal and the lead judicial marshal. Commissioner Van Beek asked what it would look like for all 17 marshals to be equipped with a County cell phone. The cost would be \$10,200. She wants the courthouse secure with coverage. Commissioner Holton wants to be sure the marshals get a cell phone, and he asked Ms. Miller to follow-up and let the Board know what that looks like.

2. 545501 Meals – \$13,500 – Why has this doubled?

a. (FY2023 YTD \$13,059) / (Budget \$7,500)

b. FY2022 Actual \$8,178

c. FY2021 Actual \$4,097

Laura Kiehl said the jury commissioner is tracking data that wasn't previously tracked and they are on track to nearly double last year's number. The number of violent crimes has increased as are the number and length of trials and the necessity to feed jurors. They are asking the Board to partner on a policy for spending and having a separate line item so they can track jury meals more closely. They also want a revenue line item that shows the jury fees that are being donated back to the County. The TCA office would like a policy for meal funds where they set in place a standard policy for how, when, and why they are feeding staff when meetings are called. Because the meals line item is combined it is demonstrating meals for juries as well as any outside meals through the TCA. Controller Wagoner said the audit supervisor has already created that line item and he asked how they would like it split. Ms. Kiehl said the request for Jury meals is \$7,500 and the remaining \$6,000 for TCA meals with a policy on how funds are being spent. Controller Wagoner said the County has an IRS-approved accountable plan that addresses that, and the Audit office can review that with the TCA. ADJ Vander Velde said one of the intents is to create a policy with respect to the jurors' meals too so that there is clarity on what those comprise.

3. 545502 Mileage - \$535 - Zero out, Move to Fleet (Discussion: Is this County Business) Acting TCA Miller said mileage is for the treatment court coordinator. Controller Wagoner said the treatment court fund does not receive any property tax dollars or sales tax dollars, it's funding through participant fees and state monies. We don't want to have the County paying the mileage for the treatment court employees, it needs to be housed in the treatment court fund.

4. 552220 Other Law Books – \$0.00 – Why zero with actuals previously expensed in prior years. \$4,200 should be added for law books. It should not be zero, it should be \$4,200.

5. 554446 Protective Gear – FY2023 YTD \$16,337 / Budget \$15,000 – FY2024 \$3,269

a. Why reduced? They hired 4 marshals in FY23 so there were new blazers and radios. All positions are filled. Requested \$4,500 budget. They hired new marshals: 2 blazers each marshal, new radios, guns. It was a onetime large cost as they built the force up. TCA wants to increase from \$3,269 to \$4,500.

General Questions

1. Any other suggested changes to the FY2024 budget in regards to revenue or expense adjustments?

a. Can the Interpreter Coordinator schedule for all interpreter needs in the County?

b. Please provide update on funds received for eviction court. Is there a need for this position in the TCA's office? Still the plan to move from Part Time to Full Time via ARPA subrecipient funding approvals between the State/BOCC.

If so, what would they would be doing?

c. Is there state funding for judges' robes? No.

d. Why are new blazers needed for Marshals?

These questions were answered previously. The TCA proposes to return to a payment priority schedule for treatment courts where participants pay their fees directly through the Clerk's Office to take some of the burden of fee collection off the coordinators directly. Controller Wagoner would like to give this more thought before a change is made. The Board will take this under advisement.

The meeting concluded at 3:28 p.m. An audio recording is on file in the Commissioners' Office.