

**OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF BLAINE COUNTY  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE APRIL 2023 SESSION**

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**Second Day**

**Monday, April 10, 2023**

Pursuant to Statutory Provisions, the Board of Blaine County Commissioners (BCC) met this day at 10:00 a.m. Present were Chairman Muffy Davis, Vice-Chair Angenie McCleary; County Administrator Mandy Pomeroy; County Administrative Services Director Kristy Heitzman, Administrative Assistant Morgan Baird, County Clerk Stephen McDougall Graham, and Deputy Clerk-Auditor-Recorder Joana Guerrero was present.

Some participants in this meeting were by web conference or teleconference.

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**INTERNAL DEPARTMENT ARPA FUNDING REQUESTS**

Present: County Facilities Manager Pat Boyle, IT Security/Network Engineer Jon Eaton, IT Enterprise Architect Ben Parker, Emergency Communications Director Robin Stellers.

The Blaine County Commissioners dedicated \$1,500,000 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for internal department request. The remaining ARPA balance for internal department request is \$31,377, the sum amount being requested today is \$55,788. As of April 5<sup>th</sup>, the contingency fund has \$487,550, not including future claims. County Clerk Stephen McDougall Graham advised the Blaine County Commissioners to consider other funding options for the requests.

**Emergency Communications – Emergency Communications Director Robin Stellers**

The HVAC system at the Picabo repeater site is constantly warning Stellers that the system is not running properly. The HVAC tech that rebuilt the HVAC motor last year recommended replacing the system. The HVAC system maintains the repeater site at an ideal temperature, extreme heat or cold could damage the operating system. Participating agencies contribute resources to the general fund but none of the agencies are responsible for the actual site.

County Clerk Stephen McDougall Graham questioned if this request and the previous request for \$350,000 to replace an E911 console and radio repeater have any connections.

The two requests are sperate, Stellers does not believe there will be any remaining funds from the previous request to accommodate this request.

**Facilities – Blaine County Facilities Manager Pat Boyle**

The south and north valley Road & Bridge facilities use oil furnaces as their main heating source. They use recycled oil mixed with diesel, however these furnaces are not designed to burn synthetic or gear oil. They are becoming an inconvenience, they are costly to operate, service and repair.

Boyle would like to replace the furnaces at the north valley shop with radiant propane heaters. The cost to replace the heaters is \$31,000. That includes the installation, electrical wiring, and additional funds for the Road & Bridge's propane costs. Eventually, Boyle would like to replace the oil furnaces at the south valley shop. The estimated cost to replace the furnaces is \$23,600.

Boyle advised the Blaine County Commissioners that the Emergency Communications request is crucial; his request could be postponed.

**IT – IT Enterprise Architect Ben Parker & IT Security/Network Engineer Jon Eaton**

The IT Department would like to replace the current training platform provided by ICRMP, the County's risk management and insurance agency. NINJO is a training program that targets both work and personal cyber security risks. The training program is \$4,788 for two hundred users.

IT Security/Network Engineer Jon Eaton is supportive of the Emergency Communications request to replace the HVAC system. The IT Department also advised the Blaine County Commissioners that their request could be postponed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT – NONE**

**DELIBERATIONS**

McCleary is supportive of approving all three requests but would like to use different funding sources. The Emergency Communications request should be funded with contingency funds and use the remaining internal ARPA funds for the Facilities Department request. The IT Department will use IT Department funds to for their request.

**McCleary moved, seconded by Davis, to approve a Facilities project to install three 30ft 125,000 BTU radiant propane tube heaters at the north valley Road & Ridge shop in the amount of \$31,000 to be paid from internal department ARPA funding. Motion passed 2/0.**

**McCleary moved, seconded by Davis, to approve Blaine County Emergency Communications funding request for an HVAC system for the Blaine County Picabo repeater site in the amount**

not to exceed \$20,000 to be spent from contingency funds. Motion passed 2/0.

## **BREAK**

### **FY 2024 BUDGET KICKOFF**

Present: Chief Budget Officer/County Clerk Stephen McDougall Graham, County Treasurer John David Davidson, County Assessor Jim Williams, County Coroner Russ Mikel, County Prosecuting Attorney Matt Fredback, County Administrator Mandy Pomeroy, Chief Deputy Clerk of the District Court Andrea Logan, Chief Deputy County Clerk Barbie Royal, Chief Deputy Sheriff Will Fruehling, Chief Deputy Assessor Melissa Fry, Sheriff Administrative Specialist Holly Carter, County Chief Probation Officer Teresa Espedal, County Administrative Services Director Kristy Heitzman, Administrative Assistant Morgan Baird, County Land Use and Building Services Director Tom Bergin, GIS Manager Sam Young, Noxious Weed Supervisor John Cenarrusa, Blaine County Prosecuting Attorney Doug Nelson, County Public Defender Administrative Assistant Esmeralda Palomera, Emergency Communications Director Robin Stellers, County Elections Supervisor Hayleigh Simpson, Human Resources Generalist Justin Highhouse, IT Security/Network Engineer Jon Eaton, IT Enterprise Architect Ben Parker, County Facilities Manager Pat Boyle, County Road and Bridge Manager Steve Thompson, Finance Analyst Ozzie Gripentrog, Former Blaine County Commissioner Larry Schoen.

The County recruited Finance Analyst Ozzie Gripentrog, to assist the Chief Budget Officer Stephen McDougall Graham, elected officials, and department heads with the FY24 budget. Gripentrog will provide the county with finance projections, evaluations, and recommendations.

In the past departments used CAI financial reports and excel spreadsheets to present their FY budget. This year departments will use ClearGov, a cloud-based budget management software. Departments will not be required to present their budget; budget questions will be addressed during deliberations.

Budget assumptions for FY24:

- Using the max allowable property tax revenue.
- Making the FY23 9% market increase on wages permanent.
- FY24 6% market increase in wages.
- A 15% increase to medical benefit costs.
- Capital improvement projects: Indian Creek Road and Colorado Bridge.

Gripentrog presented structural changes:

- Gripentrog prepared preliminary budgets for all departments using data from 2016 to date.
- Departments will receive shared revenue from property and sales tax, interest income.
- Department heads will be able to view their revenue, expenses, current salaries, and benefit costs. Gripentrog would like departments to be at net zero,
- It was proposed that department vacancies monies be transferred to its own line. When a department hires a new full-time employee, those monies will be transferred back to their department budget.

### **COMMENTS –**

- County Treasurer John David Davidson would like to present his budget, and department's update for the new Blaine County Commissioner and public.
  - McCleary asked how departments felt about not presenting? Pomeroy suggested scheduling individual meetings to introduce the new commissioner to department head and elected officials.
- County Assessor Jim Williams would like to present his budget and department update.
- County Chief Probation Officer Teresa Espedal supports streamlining the budget process and eliminating presentations.
- Sheriff Administrative Specialist Holly Carter questioned if the 15% increase was for all benefits or just medical?
  - The assumed 15% increase is for medical benefits only. As of now the 15% increase is only an estimate and the actual cost will not be available until mid-May.
- IT Security/Network Engineer Jon Eaton questioned how the IT Department would get to net-zero if the department does not generate any revenue, and costs fluctuate.

McDougall Graham stated that some departments will use different methods to calculate their budget.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT –**

Former Blaine County Commissioner Larry Schoen questioned the County's framework for decision making, outcome base budgeting, and strategic operatives.

- The County remapped the 5 Strategic Objectives, it is now the County's Impact and Priorities list. The Impacts and Priorities list: Housing, Community Well-being, Sustainability & Resiliency, Transportation.

Schoen questioned what formula is being utilized to calculate department budgets, and who decided what share of the general fund will be granted to what department.

- County Chief Budgeting Officer Stephen McDougall Graham clarified that department budgets are not changing. In the past departments were not aware of how much shared revenue was being utilized to support their department.

Schoen appreciates streamlining the budget process but does not agree with eliminating budget presentations. Doing 95% of the budget offline is not open or transparent.

- Davis replied that the County will have all the documents available online, and any budget changes will be presented.
- McCleary replied that budget deliberations will be open to the public.
- Davis explained that separating revenues does not change how money is being spent or awarded. This method better shows department operating costs and revenue.

**ADJOURN**

**At the hour of 2:13 p.m., with no more business before them, the County Commissioners adjourned.**

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved \_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen McDougall Graham Muffy Davis  
County Clerk Chairman