

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2015

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING HELD**

**STATE OF MINNESOTA)
COUNTY OF DODGE)**

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
MANTORVILLE, MN**

2015-17 C.O.W.

The Dodge County Commissioners met in Committee of the Whole September 8, 2015, in the Commissioner's Room at the Dodge County Government Services Building, Mantorville, MN, at 9:00 a.m. CDT. Chair John Allen opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. CDT.

Meeting Convened

The Chair acknowledged those present:

Those Present

Members present:	John Allen	District #1
	Tim Tjosaas	District #2
	Rodney Peterson	District #3
	David Erickson	District #4
	Steven Gray	District #5
Members absent:	None	
Also present:	Jim Elmquist	County Administrator
	Becky Lubahn	Deputy Clerk

County Administrator Jim Elmquist met with the Board to discuss the preliminary Dodge County 2016 draft Budget which was included in the Board packet. Mr. Elmquist pointed out this number had been reduced to indicate a 6.4% increase over the 2015, budget however he and the Finance Director have met with the Department Heads and further reduced the increase to 5.2%. At this point, changes that have been made are: a reduction of the health insurance impact to 7%, some modifications to the Sheriff's budget, and a revised Highway budget from the County Engineer. The two departmental revisions were submitted in the Board packet for further explanation.

2016 Budget
Discussion

Secondly, there was a Special MnPrairie Budget meeting on Thursday night in Owatonna where there was discussion about adjustments to their 2016 budget proposal. Since this budget is a formula based budget, any reductions will be percentage based for Dodge County which is similar to the DFO arrangement. At this point, the County Administrator could not give the Board an indication of what changes may be made at this meeting but what he wanted the Board to be aware of is that due to the timing of this meeting, any potential revisions were not a part of this Board packet.

Mr. Elmquist reminded the Board they will have two further budget discussions – one at the conclusion of the Fairview meeting and another to preliminarily certify the levy on September 22, 2015. This preliminary certification is a “no increase levy” number where the county can only reduce its levy from this date to the final certification in December.

The County Administrator reported the 5.2% budget increase includes increases to COLA, health insurance and the county's MnPrairie contribution. Mr. Elmquist stated this is the lowest they can go with a budget increase for 2016, unless something changes in December.

Commissioner Gray requested they talk about the DFO budget as shown on page 28 of the proposed budget.

2016 Budget
Discussion -
Continued

Commissioner Erickson commented it is considerably easier to deal with DFO for budgeting purposes than in previous years. Dodge, Fillmore and Olmsted County staff have worked together to come to an agreement regarding how much each county should contribute to the DFO program.

It was noted the proposed DFO increase for 2016 is 4%.

Commissioner Gray pointed out the 4% increase for DFO is under the budget increase average for 2016.

Commissioner Erickson reported DFO is partially grant funded and wondered what happens when the grants run out.

Mr. Elmquist informed the Board that any increase DFO receives, Dodge County will be responsible for 9.5% of that cost.

Commissioner Erickson commented the agreement with DFO is working; it's much better than it used to be since the Administrators sat down and worked out a formula which seems to be working.

Commissioner Peterson discussed the MnPrairie funding formula.

The County Administrator reported the MnPrairie formula may need to be reviewed every 2-3 years.

Finance Director Lisa Kramer handed out a new draft budget with the proposed 5.2% increase over last year's budget.

Mr. Elmquist informed the Board the Sheriff's Office made significant reductions in their budget request for 2016 and that he and Ms. Kramer were very pleased with the proposed reductions.

Ms. Kramer reported the new draft budget includes a Sergeant position which the Sheriff's Office left in the budget because they felt for a number of reasons that it was better to have Sergeant position at the security checkpoint rather than a Deputy. The cost difference between the two positions was discussed.

It was clarified the security checkpoint position would be an 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. position.

Commissioner Allen thanked all of the department heads for the work they did to lower the proposed budget increase to 5.2%. Mr. Allen stated hopefully they can live with this number.

Mr. Allen discussed his concerns with the Emergency Management budget increase.

The County Administrator pointed out part of the increase in the Emergency Management budget was due to the Code Red expenses being moved from the Sheriff's budget to the Emergency Management budget. The other notable increase was in the Minor Equipment line item.

2016 Budget
Discussion -
Continued

Mr. Elmquist informed the Board Jane Hardwick will present the MnPrairie 2016 budget request after the Fairview Care Center meeting on Tuesday, September 15, 2015.

Commissioner Allen thanked the Finance Director and County Administrator for the budget information.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:28 a.m. CDT.

Meeting Adjourned

ATTEST:

**JOHN ALLEN
CHAIR, COUNTY BOARD**

**BECKY LUBAHN
DEPUTY CLERK**

DATED: