

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
DEAN FRANCHUK, Chairman
NEAL MESSER, Vice-Chair
BERNIE MARSH
PAUL CLARYS
CORY WHITE



AUDITOR
KAREN RICHARD

DEPUTY AUDITOR
Lana Jahner

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE STARK COUNTY COMMISSION
September 19, 2023

Chairman Franchuk called the regular meeting of the Stark County Board of Commissioners to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioners Present: Dean Franchuk, Paul Clarys, Bernie Marsh, Neal Messer, and Cory White. Department Heads Present: Auditor Karen Richard, State's Attorney Amanda Engelstad, Sheriff Corey Lee, Road Superintendent Al Heiser, Human Resources Joetta Percy, Planner Steve Josephson, Emergency Manager Alaynea Decker, Recorder Kim Kasian, County Agent Kurt Froehlich, County Park Lisa Heiser (via phone), and Weed Department Travis Jepson.

RATIFY AGENDA

MOTION BY: Commissioner Messer **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Clarys

To ratify the agenda as presented

DISPOSITION: All voted aye. Motion Carried.

PUBLIC HEARING – BUDGET

Franchuk opened the 2024 Budget Public Hearing at 9:01 a.m.

Franchuk asked for comments from the public 3 times and there were no comments from the public.

Franchuk closed the Budget Public Hearing at 9:02 a.m.

2024 COUNTY BUDGET DISCUSSION

Planning: Josephson presented his budget, there are no changes from the previous year and the city did indicate they will be paying ½ time again.

Human Resources: Percy presented her budget and there are no changes from the prior year.

County Recorder: Kasian presented her budget, and the staff has changed as one employee went from part-time to full-time, with no other changes from the prior year.

Emergency Management: Decker advises the Deputy position is currently open and they are looking to fill it. Dues and training may need to be increased as dispatch is full staff and the new deputy may need additional training, she would like to see it at \$4,000.00.

E911: Decker presented her budget and is going to check with the city on the dispatch salaries and if that line needs an increase. Training should be increased by another \$500 due to dispatch being fully staffed. EMPG grant will no longer compensate the deputy's salary, only the director's salary will be reimbursed, this will be approximately a \$26,000 impact.

Weed: Jepson reviewed his budget and advised there is \$15,000.00 new under miscellaneous revenue which is the potential sale of the old spray truck. Spray crew salaries were budgeted in 2023 at \$105,000.00 and for 2024 budgeted at \$70,041.60. Equipment purchase should be at \$40,000.00, a new spray system is needed for the new truck purchased in 2023. Richard advises this budget will increase the reserve by approximately \$ 100,000.00.

County Agent: Froehlich presented his budget and the parent educator line for \$16,000.00 was added and an overtime line at \$4,500.00.

States Attorney: Engelstad presented her budget. Transcripts and Witness fees are hard to predict as it depends on the cases that come in. Evidence testing was added at \$10,000.00.

Victim Witness: Engelstad presented this budget, and it includes a significant raise for Kabel as she is running that department by herself now. Taxable travel and meals were added for \$6,000.00. Kabel addressed the commission and stated the final grant number is not announced yet, it should be here by the 25th. She submitted for \$138,000.00 and we usually get \$20,000.00 to \$30,000.00 less than that.

County Road and Bridge: Heiser presented his budget and listed projects coming up with the chip seal on Highway 10 being the biggest. No other big changes to the budget.

County Unorganized: Heiser presented his budget, and the graders and semis are the biggest items under equipment purchases, the graders are \$1.5 million, and the semis are \$286,000.00 and \$300,000.00 is in the budget if we need to replace something unexpectedly. The fuel budget has increased to \$510,000.00.

Highway Distribution: Heiser presented his budget, and he is good with what the commission comes up with on raises for the employees.

Public Safety: Lee presented his budget, and the salaries are performance-based and will be looked at on Thursday and adjusted accordingly. A second detective is being requested on this budget. K-9 supplies and animal impounds have been added. Minor increases in vehicles and vehicle expenses.

Auditor: Richard presented her budget, and she has increased the Deputy Auditor to \$75,500 and the travel has decreased by \$500.00.

Election: Richard presented her budget; she would like to increase the election worker salary from \$15 to \$17 per hour which increases the line to \$54,000 for the primary and general.

Maintenance: Dschaak presented his budget, and the only change is the social service building has decreased by \$30,000.00.

Tax Director: Richard presented the budget, and the department head and assistant lines were over the proposed amounts and there were no other changes.

Law Enforcement Maintenance: Clarys asked about Dispatch being under this budget. Richard states it has a different fund number, and she could bump that down outside this budget. Clarys states the \$72,000.00 in Capital Improvements may not be enough as this building is aging and there are also water problems that need to be addressed.

County Jail: Clarys asks if Sunrise Youth Bureau should be under this budget. Richard advises this is the county capital project levy, so she feels Sunrise can come out of there. Clarys also questioned if the JPA Paramedic – Billings should be under this budget. Richard responds that this line may go away as it is also included in our contract with Billings County, it would potentially go under the general fund ambulance service Belfield. Messer would like a recommendation on what budget Sunrise can fit under. Richard will check on it and advise the commission.

Information Technology: Decker presented the budget. Messer asked what the status of the equipment hardware replacement plan is. Marsh advises we are on a 4-year replacement plan. Clarys states there is a schedule coming and a contract will be coming, so those numbers are unknown. Richard states a line has been added for Software/Licensing for \$20,000.00.

Veterans Service: There are no changes from the previous year.

County Park: Heiser was available on the phone. Lakeview Park she is proposing to put up a small playset. In special funding, she is requesting to put up the shell of the community events building. There are some cameras needed out at the speedway. There is a need for a covered 4-H area which would eliminate the need to rent a tent. Currently in Phase 3 of the fairgrounds. Have added a county park intern, a non-benefited seasonal position, for \$18,000.00.

Capital Improvement: Richard advises this budget is open yet as she is not sure of what kind of projects may be coming up. The SWMCC payment was moved to the county capital projects budget in 2022.

Disaster Emergency: Richard advises not levying for this currently has a balance of \$535,559.57.

Governing Board: Franchuk advises no changes noted.

General Fund: Richard reviewed the expenses for the general fund. An open records request line was added to both the expense and revenue lines.

FEDERAL GRANT TRAINING/CONFERENCE FUND

Richard advises we should have approximately \$100,000.00 available and there are some department heads and staff who would like to do some training that is outside the normal budget. She proposes the department heads apply for these funds from the commission to attend these trainings/travel. The LATCF grant can be used for anything but lobbying and pensions.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Messer **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Marsh

To set up this fund to help our staff improve and go to training and conferences, to be approved by the full commission.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Messer - aye, Marsh - aye, White - aye, Clarys - aye, Chairman Franchuk - aye. Motion Carried.

Richard reviews the compensation for employees, in the proposed budgets there are lines for \$1.00 and \$1.25. She states they could fund either raise without going into a deficit.

For revenues, Richard advises she provided a Fund Balance Sheet so the commission could see where some of the accounts are sitting. The biggest increase in revenue is interest income. She also suggests they review the state aid distribution percentages and decide if the commission would like to make any changes.

Messer would like to see proposed revenue through the end of the year and requests we take a break.

Break 10:32 a.m. to 10:53 a.m.

Franchuk calls the meeting back to order.

Messer suggests we agree on the compensation portion of the budget and have Richard redo the budget numbers and come back and meet in a week.

Marsh asks for the yearly difference between a \$1.00 raise and a \$1.25 raise. Messer responds with approximately \$32,000.00. Clarys asked for the difference between the \$1.25 raise and the proposed Department head raise line. Richard responds with \$7,000.00 and that would be the amount that department heads asked for over the \$1.25. Messer suggests we set the employee salaries and then discuss those proposed department head salaries separately.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Marsh **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Messer

To set the raise at \$1.25 per hour for employees and then discuss department heads separately.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Marsh - aye, Messer - aye, Clarys - aye, White - aye, Chairman Franchuk - aye. Motion Carried.

The next meeting will be held next Tuesday (August 26, 2023) at 8:30 a.m.

Commissioner Messer made a **MOTION** to adjourn at 11:00 a.m., Commissioner White **SECONDED**, Adjourned.



Karen Richard, Auditor



Dean Franchuk, Chairman

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OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE STARK COUNTY COMMISSION
September 26, 2023

Chairman Franchuk called the special meeting of the Stark County Board of Commissioners to order at 8:30 a.m. Commissioners Present: Dean Franchuk, Paul Clarys, Bernie Marsh, Neal Messer, and Cory White. Department Heads Present: Auditor Karen Richard, State's Attorney Amanda Engelstad, Sheriff Corey Lee, Road Superintendent Al Heiser, Human Resources Joetta Percy, Planner Steve Josephson, Emergency Manager Alaynea Decker, and Veteran's Service Jessica McClellan.

RATIFY AGENDA

MOTION BY: Commissioner Messer **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner White

To ratify the agenda as presented

DISPOSITION: All voted aye. Motion Carried.

2024 COUNTY BUDGET DISCUSSION

Richard reviewed the budget changes made since the last meeting. The 2024 contribution sheet was also reviewed and the lines in green are organizations we have not received requests from. Franchuk states Roosevelt Custer is the same as last year on the contributions sheet - \$33,670.00. Richard asked about DCS Imagination Library if the commission would like to go with the same amount. The commission would like to see requests from these organizations. Messer asks why this isn't in our library mill, is this something separate and distinct? Richard thought it was the mobile unit and she would do some checking on it. Richard asks about USpire and if the commission wants to continue that contribution as they had asked to be part of the regular contributions, but she hasn't received anything for this year. Messer is in favor of continuing if they had asked to be part of the regular contributions. Richard asked about the Stark County Historical Society, and they were working on some projects but believe they have finished those projects and have not come forward this year. Richard will check to see if she can get an update from the historical society. Per Richard, the Belfield Billings Ambulance \$230,000.00 could be decreased as it was \$170,000 last year and depends on how busy the ambulance is.

GENERAL REVENUE FUND AND EXPENDITURES

Governing Board: The only change was the cell phone line was lowered.

Human Resources: no change from the last meeting.

Auditor: Richard states she spread the \$1.25 raise between her staff based on where she felt they belonged, but the Deputy Auditor change would need to be approved by the commission.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Messer **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Clarys

To fund the Deputy Auditor position at \$77,000.00.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Messer - aye, Clarys - aye, Marsh - aye, White - aye, Chairman Franchuk - aye. Motion Carried.

Planner: no change from the last meeting.

States Attorney: Richard states the commission will need to decide on the proposed department head's salary. Messer believes the proposed budget reflects the market.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Messer **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner White

To fund the State's Attorney salary and the 1st Assistant salary at \$140,759.00.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Messer - aye, White - aye, Marsh - aye, Clarys - aye, Chairman Franchuk - aye. Motion Carried.

Messer questioned how new staff hires play into the wage increase, are they automatically triggered to get the full amount or are they prorated? Clarys states if you have a late hire, it seems maybe they haven't earned it yet, but we still want to be fair. White thinks we should keep it in the same cycle and then prorate it.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Messer **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner White

To set the raise for the new position at the State's Attorney's office funded at 50% of the \$1.25 (\$1,300 annually).

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Messer - aye, White - aye, Marsh - aye, Clarys - aye, Chairman Franchuk - aye. Motion Carried.

Recorder: no changes from the last meeting.

Tax Director: no changes from the last meeting.

Custodian: Messer states the recommendation from the department head for Assistant Fiedler is outside of the \$1.25.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Messer **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Marsh

To fund Assistant Fiedler's salary at \$68,000.00, \$34,000 for the Courthouse, and \$34,000 for the Social Service Building.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Messer - aye, Marsh – aye, White - aye, Clarys - aye, Chairman Franchuk – aye. Motion Carried.

Elections: no changes from the last meeting.

Public Safety: Lee states that 4 of the Sargent salaries are not correct on the current budget, those salaries need to change but those numbers don't affect the total of the budget. The salaries have been adjusted based on performance. If the 2nd detective is approved, then the on-call pay corporal detective line won't be needed. A corporal will be promoted on each shift and there will be an extra \$2,000 raise for each of those. Messer asked about the back-to-blue payment. Lee advised it will be a lump sum for each officer, approximately \$1,500 per licensed officer, it will come in a bulk payment, and we are looking to disperse it per the evaluations. Richard asked about Lee's salary and if that needs to be set as it is above the \$1.25 raise. Messer states if we approve the bulk sum, do we allow the department head to set all salaries, including his? Lee states he doesn't set his pay outside of his administration raises. Dickinson is the 5th biggest city in ND and there are 16 other Sheriffs in the state that make more than he does. Marsh is good at leaving that salary as it was presented.

Disaster Emergency Service: Decker states training should be increased by \$500.00. She also states that an assistant was hired at \$44,408.00. Dispatchers got moved from the LEC budget and would like to set that at \$175,000.00. Clarys says he spoke with Decker regarding wages yesterday and she was hired in September.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Clarys **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner White

To fund Decker's salary at \$61,664.00, reflecting a \$1.00 raise from her initial hire.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Clarys - aye, White – aye, Marsh - aye, Messer - aye, Chairman Franchuk – aye. Motion Carried.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Clarys **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Marsh

To fund Assistant Banyai at \$45,500.00, reflecting a \$0.50 raise from the initial hire.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Clarys - aye, Marsh – aye, White - aye, Messer - aye, Chairman Franchuk – aye. Motion Carried.

911: Decker states the training should be at \$5,500.00 and there is another training below and to bring that up to \$3,500.00 and put the assistant at the \$0.75 raise and move the dispatchers to \$175,000.00.

Information technology: Decker proposes changing the Computer and Hardware update line from \$130,000 to \$30,000 and then using \$70,000 in Arpa funds. Clarys states that \$130,000 has been paired down and won't all be needed. Clarys discusses the IT contract line and that is not yet an accurate number and they are currently working on what that may be, they would like to see a full-time dedicated person for our IT. He also states they currently don't plan on funding the IT coordinator line.

County Park: Richard states the County Intern was added and the special projects will need to be funded. Messer doesn't believe that special projects need to be in the budget. Richard states those are proposed under the special projects fund, the commission would need to individually approve those. Clarys asked where the funding for the bathrooms would come from. Richard advises that is under the special projects account. Messer doesn't believe those special projects should be on the budget, as it could be construed as approved. They should be on a wish list as we aren't approving \$8.7 million in special projects today. Clarys agrees. Richard states she can put it on a separate sheet. Clarys questioned the intern. Heiser states previously a road employee was doing work at the fairgrounds, but it would be cheaper to have an intern that isn't benefited.

County Road and Bridge: Heiser states the equipment lease should be at \$250,000.00 and is showing at \$150,000.00. Richard will check on that.

County Road Unorganized: Richard discusses the revenue coming in vs. expenditures and this budget will be upside down. The graders and equipment are at \$2.1 million, how are we funding those graders? Heiser states we had talked about some Arpa funds. Richard suggests we could pay for 2 blades from Arpa funding and get that used up in 2024. Messer states when we opened the bids, we asked and Heiser

said there should be funds left over. Heiser responds there should be funds left over. Messer thinks we need to take a look at the 3 road funds and provide some consistency on how we fund the roads. Messer asks if we have an estimate of what will be left at the end of 2023 that we can roll into 2024. Heiser believes there should be sufficient funds to roll, as of June there was \$3.3 million in County Road and Bridge and County Unorganized was \$4.4 million.

Highway Distribution: Heiser reports they are still down 2 staff, but those positions are in the total number for salary.

Capital Improvement: no changes since the last meeting.

Jail: Richard states Sunrise Youth will be moved to the general and JPA Paramedic for Billings County is already in the contribution amount and can be removed.

Emergency Budget: no changes since the last meeting.

Veterans Services: no changes since the last meeting.

County Agent: Clarys states Schulz was moved up above the \$1.25 as the new hire was brought in higher than they initially expected putting her close to the long-standing employee.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Clarys **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Messer

To fund the salary for Schulz at \$31,200.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Clarys - aye, Messer – aye, Marsh - aye, White - aye, Chairman Franchuk – aye. Motion Carried.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Clarys **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Messer

To fund the salary for Thompson at \$28,080.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Clarys - aye, Messer – aye, Marsh - aye, White - aye, Chairman Franchuk – aye. Motion Carried.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Clarys **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Messer

To fund the salary for the County Agent at \$43,319.00 and the FCW Agent at \$26,141.00.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Clarys - aye, Messer – aye, Marsh - aye, White - aye, Chairman Franchuk – aye. Motion Carried.

Weed:

MOTION BY: Commissioner Clarys **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Messer

To fund assistant Thompson at \$28,080.00.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Clarys - aye, Messer – aye, Marsh - aye, White - aye, Chairman Franchuk – aye. Motion Carried.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Clarys **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner White

To fund the salary of Travis Jepson at \$74,715.00.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Clarys - aye, White – aye, Marsh - aye, Messer - aye, Chairman Franchuk – aye. Motion Carried.

Victim Witness:

MOTION BY: Commissioner Messer **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Clarys

To fund the salary for Victim Witness Kabel at \$70,000.00.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Messer - aye, Clarys – aye, Marsh - aye, White - aye, Chairman Franchuk – aye. Motion Carried.

Governing Board: Richard asks about the salary of the governing board and if they want to leave those as proposed.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Clarys **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Messer

To set the total expense for the governing board is \$150,757.50, which is the same as 2023.

DISCUSSION: Messer would like to see 4%, which would be 2% for last year and 2 % for this year.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Clarys - aye, Messer – nay, Marsh - nay, White - aye, Chairman Franchuk – nay. Motion Carried.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Messer **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Marsh

To fund the Governing Board at \$28,500.00.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Messer - aye, Marsh – aye, White - aye, Clarys - nay, Chairman Franchuk – aye. Motion Carried.

PARK BOARD RESTROOM FUNDING

Richard states they need to formally accept the restroom bid.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Messer **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Marsh

To approve the Kolling bid for \$405,000.00 and approve the 1st addendum change order for \$11,000.00 for the concealed edge and the funds to come out of the Special Projects Fund.

DISPOSITION: Roll call: Commissioners: Messer - aye, Marsh – aye, White - aye, Clarys - aye, Chairman Franchuk – aye. Motion Carried.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Messer **SECONDED BY:** Commissioner White

To approve the Chair to sign the contract.

DISPOSITION: All voted aye. Motion Carried.

Commissioner Messer made a **MOTION** to adjourn at 9:52 a.m. Commissioner Clarys **SECONDED**, Adjourned.


Karen Richard, Auditor


Dean Franchuk, Chairman