

March 7, 2006

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

A Finance Committee meeting was held Tuesday, March 7, 2006 at 2:30 p.m. in the County Administration Building, Quorum Court Meeting Room, 215 East Central, Bentonville.

Committee Members Present: Allen, Moore, Sheridan, Stephenson, Wolf, Wozniak

Others Present: JP Burton Schindler, JP David Hill, County Attorney Ed Gartin, Richard McComas, Michele Anderson, Travis Harp, Deanna Ratcliffe, Kathy Bannister

Media: Joe Askins – Morning News, Jennifer Turner – Benton County Daily Record

JP Tim Summers called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None

### **Robin Green/Petie Cobb – Request for Temporary Help**

Prosecuting Attorney Robin Green and Juvenile Probation Director Petie Cobb explained that both of their office staffs will be affected by an extended illness in one family, and they wanted to notify the Quorum Court that they may need additional funds for Temporary Services. Robin Green said the situation was compounded for her office because they have lost two other employees recently, and even if she hires someone right away, it will take them a year to be brought up to speed. She said they will be sending transcripts offsite until they have the staff to handle them. Comptroller Richard McComas recommended putting a Temporary Services line item in each of the two offices' budgets, and allow them to spend up to a certain cap, and then see if additional money is needed at the end of the year. Petie Cobb said she thought her office would need approximately \$3,800, and Robin Green stated she thought her office would need \$5,000. JP Stephenson made motion to forward to the Committee of Thirteen the request for a line item to be added to the budgets of the Prosecuting Attorney's office and the Juvenile Probation office, seconded by JP Wolf. Richard McComas stated that it would not need to go to the Quorum Court if the Committee of Thirteen approved it. Motion passed by unanimous vote. Prosecuting Attorney Robin Green stated that she was happy to report that her office is completely caught up on processing the hot checks that have come into her office. JP Sheridan asked if it was true that Wal-Mart had stopped processing hot checks through the Benton County office. Robin Green stated that was true, and she expects a 10% reduction in fees that will be collected through hot checks.

### **1. County Attorney/Grants Administrator Report**

County Attorney Ed Gartin stated that he had no report. Grants Administrator Kathy Bannister stated that several grants are in the application process and several will need resolutions to be

passed by the end of the month. She said the first one that she wants them to be aware of is an Assistance to the Firefighters Grant, for firefighter training throughout the county. She said this application has to be made through a fire department, and is a \$4,000 match which will come from the Training line item of the Avoca Fire Department's budget, so it will not require any action from the Court. She said the other applications will all require resolutions and include approximately \$80,000 in Courthouse Restorations through the Historical Preservation Society, assistance to the Benton County Historical Preservation Commission for training, and a \$50,000 Juvenile Justice Grant which Petie Cobb is checking on. She said she plans to have the Resolutions ready for the March 14, 2006 Committee of Thirteen meeting.

## **2. Amending Ordinance O-2006-04**

Comptroller Richard McComas stated that they inadvertently put the wrong Fund number on the Maysville Community grant appropriation ordinance, and they will need to adopt another ordinance to correct it. JP Sheridan made motion to forward the request to the March 14, 2006 Committee of Thirteen meeting, seconded by JP Stephenson. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

## **3. McGoodwin, Williams, & Yates Invoices – JP Kurt Moore**

JP Moore stated that in October the Long Range Planning Committee had heard a presentation from a representative of McGoodwin, Williams, and Yates concerning building options for a possible new Road Department Maintenance Facility. He said that in order to gather more information, they had agreed to hire the architect to do some preliminary site and engineering work. He said that the item was supposed to be forwarded to the Finance Committee for approval in November, and he does not know how it happened that it did not get on the agenda. Assistant County Administrator Travis Harp stated that he followed the instructions of the Long Range Planning Committee and contracted the work, and they have two invoices, one for \$5,934.72 and another for \$5,045.53 which includes a topographical survey and cost analysis. JP Allen stated that they did not need a topographical survey before constructing a building, and he is concerned that the money was spent without getting an estimate. County Attorney Ed Gartin stated that the Quorum Court did not necessarily have to approve payment, if an officer of the county contracted the work and there is money in the budget it should just be paid. He said if there is not enough money in the budget, then they will have to appropriate additional money. Comptroller Richard McComas stated that the work occurred during 2005, and there is money in other line items in the Road Department Budget from 2005, so they will just need Committee of Thirteen approval to include it in the final clean-up ordinance. JP Stephenson stated that there is no doubt that the County should pay the architect, but he would hope that everyone on the Quorum Court understands that they cannot just spend county money without the Quorum Court's approval. JP Sheridan stated he agreed that the expenditure was not properly authorized, but the County does need to pay it, so he made motion to include payment in the final 2005 Clean Up ordinance and to forward the request to the March 14, 2006 Committee of Thirteen meeting, seconded by JP Wolf. JP Summers stated that in 11 years he did not remember this ever happening before. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

## **4. Sales Tax Report**

Comptroller Richard McComas stated that January was the first \$1 million sales tax month. He said it was from December sales and represented an 11.21% increase over the same time last

year, which brings the year to date increase to 10.78%. He said that it was right on target of what they had anticipated.

#### **5. Jail Collections**

Comptroller Richard McComas stated that they have received \$76,000 for the month, which is \$23,000 less than projected. He said they were still \$12,000 over for the year.

#### **6. Recap of Rental and Storage Property**

Michele Anderson went over a report on storage costs which showed each Department's storage rental costs for 2006, and highlighted which ones come out of County General.

#### **7. Monthly Expenditures**

Michele Anderson gave a report on monthly expenditures, and noted that most departments were at the percentage of their budgets that they should be at this time of year. She said that several Departments are slightly over due to some capital expenditures.

#### **8. Other Business**

JP Summers asked how much is currently in the Road Department escrow fund. Comptroller Richard McComas stated that it was at \$1.3 million, Capital Projects was at \$1.5 million, and \$1.4 million of that is dedicated to the War Eagle Bridge.

Assistant County Administrator Travis Harp stated that county fire departments have made approximately 150 runs in the past month, and feel like the fires on the west side of the county are due to arson. He said the Maysville Fire Department has expended their fuel budget for the year, and they have asked State Representative Darryl Pace to seek assistance from the Governor for some additional funds.

JP Summers announced that the next Finance Committee meeting would be April 4, 2006 at 2:30 p.m.

After motion and second the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.