

WILLIAMS RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
June 13th, 2023

Called to Order at 09:12

Roll Call:

Board Members Present

Position 1 – Heather Glass
Position 2 – David Applegate
Position 3 – Claudia Pratt
Position 4 – Bill Ertel
Position 5 – Brian Barton

Budget Committee Members Present

Position 1 – John Kester - Absent
Position 2 – Dorothy Butz
Position 3 – Lyndsey Hayes
Position 4 – Mike Connor
Position 5 – Wendy Giordano - Absent

Williams Staff Present

Administrative Assistant – Jennifer Vetter
Fire Chief Rick Vetter
Lieutenant Oskar Sundell

Public Presence:

None

Nomination of Budget Committee Chair:

Mike Connor, the initial Budget Committee Chairperson, will continue to hold this position.

Presentation of Budget Message:

Chief Rick Vetter presented to the Budget Committee Members and the Board of Directors that the department has received grant funds that require the committee members to be reassembled. Budget Committee Chairperson Mike Connor allowed Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter to explain the differences.

Line Budget Sheets Discussions:

LB-20

Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter explained that the LB-20 is unchanged except for the Grants Line Item has changed to accommodate the addition of \$1million in grant dollars. Board Chairperson Claudia Pratt inquired how that number was come to. Board Chairperson Claudia Pratt came up with a number that was much lower (no number was stated) and cannot find her notes to know what number she used. The meeting continued on.

LB-30

This sheet was not reviewed in depth as the requirement summaries would be generating questions that could be resolved by referring directly to the LB-31. Increases were seen in Personal Services, Material Services, and Capital Outlay with Contingency and Ending Fund Balances affected as well. Budget Committee Chairperson Mike Connor inquired how the Contingency and Ending Fund Balances were affected. Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter explained that those items are changed due to the grants that last over several years and thus those funds are left to be allocated in those areas since they are for future use and to be consumed in future year requirements. Board Chairperson Claudia Pratt stated that her question is still unanswered as to how we are over \$1million in grant monies. Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter explained that we have accounted for the monies we know we are receiving and monies that we are looking to possibly acquire. It was asked if that gap is appropriate and decided that it was no different than the monies asked for in previous years to accommodate the possibilities of incoming grants during the fiscal year.

Board Member Bill Ertel inquired about Personal Services going up \$230k. We will look at the LB-31 to give the detail. Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter explained that all of the grants received have touched or affected many of the line items on the LB-31. Board Member Bill Ertel asked if all the grants have been approved by the Board. Chief Vetter stated that the Board is made aware of the grants being sought each board meeting via a 'Grant Snapshot' that is supplied in the Board Packet by Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter. Board Chairperson Claudia Pratt clarified that Board Member Bill Ertel was looking to find out if the department has sought board approval after accepting the grants. Board Secretary Heather Glass stated that a workshop can be held to go over some of these questions. Budget Chairperson Claudia Pratt suggested that the budget reflects the potential that grants are going to be accepted, Budget Member Dorothy Butz asked, "why would you not?". Board Chairperson Claudia Pratt stated that it is a process of financial responsibility.

LB-31

Board Member Bill Ertel inquired on Building Maintenance budget line. He stated that there is more people and equipment. Is \$7,500 enough for expansion? Fire Chief Rick Vetter stated that the line item for Building Maintenance is the everyday maintenance and the Capital Outlay item for Building Improvements covers those concerns.

Board Member Bill Ertel inquired why Fire Equipment Supplies going up \$100k. Budget Chairperson Claudia Pratt asked if we are buying another apparatus. Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter replied that the equipment costs are items that are going to go on an apparatus, tools or safety upgrades, chipper accompaniments, and much of this is grant driven. The \$100k added on is grant money. Board Chairperson Claudia Pratt mentioned that it would be great to know if it is grant or district money.

Fire Prevention line item is funded by grant money. Board Chairperson Claudia Pratt asked if this money is shared with Applegate Fire. Fire Chief Rick Vetter stated that the money was awarded to Williams Fire and the manpower will be addressed in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The equipment and expenditures belong to Williams and the MOU will address the worker's comp, employment, and equipment share.

Each line item in Materials and Services was gone over to establish if the line items are grant monies, department monies, or mixed monies for expenditures. The Training Officer's position is in the

budget to keep the position with the department. The Training line item was discussed to explain that the grant monies placed into that category will be used for that purpose.

Board Member Bill Ertel inquired if all the grant monies will be a burden for Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter. Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter explained that some of the grants accommodate an administration expense. Board Member Bill Ertel explained that grant monies come with some extra burden where someone having to manage, create reports, or some type of action.

Reviewing Personal Services, each line item was reviewed to discuss which are department funded and which are grant funded. In discussion of the SAFER Recruitment and Retention Officer, that position ends in November. One of the Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) Grants covers a Fire Prevention Officer and Firefighter for three years. Another OSFM Grant covers seasonal hires and one more OSFM Grant is specific to Community Wildfire Risk Reduction (CWRR) and will fund two positions. Seasonal/Temporary hires will not receive benefits and the 3-year positions will qualify for benefits, which the grant has provided funds to allocate for such. The Benefits line item reflects the additional allocated funds. Lines 16, 17, and 18 on LB-31 are partially funded by the department and partially funded by grants. The insurance package was increased to accommodate for the qualifying positions with grant money funding the increase. Board Chairperson Claudia Pratt asked if the hiring will take place from within. Chief Vetter stated he doesn't know yet regarding the other grants although the seasonal hires were employed from the volunteers within the organization.

LB-30

No more questions arose regarding the LB-30.

No other comments.

- A motion to accept the 2023-2024 budget as presented with the added grant monies and to approve taxes for the 2023-2024 fiscal year at the base rate of \$1.0552 and levy rate of \$0.65 per \$1,000 of assessed value for operating expenses was made by Brian Barton and seconded by Claudia Pratt.

Discussion: Board Member Bill Ertel stated that this is a big jump for the fire department and is not impressed that the fire district will be putting out any more fires. Chief Vetter disagrees and explains that the State Fire Marshal's Office and Rogue Valley Fire Chiefs to get behind having more resources such as Williams with immediate out the door responses so we do not lose our communities to wildfire. Chief Vetter states that this is a good thing, Board Secretary Heather Glass agrees as she recognizes Paradise, CA and would like to have more grants. Board Chairperson Claudia Pratt calls this 'preventative medicine'. Board Member Bill Ertel says that statistically he does not believe we will have more fires than in the past. Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter reminded the Budget Committee and Board that we are unable to obtain more funding without the grants due to a measure passing in the 90's limiting property tax increases. Board Member Bill Ertel states he is hesitant in voting for two more unicorns and a rainbow with false expectations.

- The motion passed with 3 ayes from each member of the Budget Committee and received 4 ayes from 5 members of the Board of Directors with one abstain.

- ✚ Dorothy Butz – Aye
- ✚ Lyndsay Hayes – Aye
- ✚ Mike Connor – Aye
- ✚ Heather Glass – Aye
- ✚ David Applegate – Aye
- ✚ Claudia Pratt – Aye
- ✚ Bill Ertel – Abstain
- ✚ Brian Barton – Aye

Other Discussion:

All grants, except one (The Chaney Foundation written by Chief Wolfard) was written from within the department by Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter, Lieutenant Oskar Sundell, or Captain Nicco Holt.

Motion to Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 09:55.

Attachments: Budget Committee Meeting Agenda and Budget Sheets.

Respectfully Submitted:

Claudia Pratt, Board Chairperson