

Richland County

Finance & Personnel Standing Committee

July 13th, 2022

The Richland County Finance and Personnel Standing Committee convened on Wednesday, July 13th 2022, at the Phoenix Center at 100 S Orange Street, in person, via videoconference and teleconference.

Committee members present included County Board Supervisors Marty Brewer, Steve Carrow, Shaun Murphy-Lopez, David Turk, Steve Williamson, Marc Couey, Gary Manning and Melissa Luck – by WebEx.

Also present was Administrator Clinton Langreck, County Board Members Linda Gentes, Kerry Severson, Ingrid Glasbrenner, Don Seep, Assistant to the Administrator Cheryl Dull taking minutes, several department heads, county employees and general public. Barb Scott and Jason Marshall were present from MIS running the teleconferencing.

Not present: Timothy Gottschall

1. **Call to Order:** Committee Chair Brewer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Proof of Notification:** Chair Brewer verified that the meeting had been properly noticed. Copies of the agenda were sent by email to all Committee members, County Board members, WRCO, County department heads, Richland Observer, Valley Sentinel and a copy was posted on the Courthouse Bulletin Board.
3. **Agenda Approval:** Chair Brewer asked for approval of the agenda. Moved by Supervisor Murphy-Lopez to approve the agenda, second by Supervisor Williamson. All voting aye, motion carried.
4. **Previous meeting minutes – July 5th** – Hearing no additions or corrections Chair Brewer declared the minutes approved as presented.
5. **Discussion and possible action on items of Administrative Reports, Resolutions, and Recommendations regarding county-wide budgeting and services:**

Chair Brewer explained the process for developing a budget and the procedure for the evenings proceedings. He asked the committee members for comments prior to opening the floor up to the public comment.

Supervisor Manning – He represents Fair, Recycling & Park Standing Committee. He thanked everyone in attendance tonight and feels that everyone will have to work together to work this out.

Supervisor Carrow – He represents Public Works Standing Committee. He stated this is an unusually difficult budget and he doesn't feel he has enough information at this time to make a decision tonight.

Supervisor Turk – He represents Land & Zoning Standing Committee. This has been coming on for a long time and the County Board has been kicking the can down the road. We have reached the point that we cannot continue to do that and he appreciates everyone's input. The state has continued to cut funds and that is not changing, so we must make some tough decisions to continue.

Supervisor Couey – He represents the Education Standing Committee. He is following the same suit as everyone else. This has been going on awhile and it can't continue. The school districts do referendums on an ongoing basis and they pass.

Supervisor Williamson – He represents Pine Valley & Child Support Standing Committee. He agrees with everyone else's comments tonight and we need to look at the referendum information that is provided to us. He has been on the board for a while and it is not getting easier, but we will continue do the best we can.

Supervisor Luck – She represents Public Safety Standing Committee. She agrees with all other comments. We have not yet discussed increasing our revenues. She does not feel the presented resolutions are a bad thing as she feels it gives the committees the opportunity to dig into this and help with these decisions.

Supervisor Murphy-Lopez – He is the County Board Vice Chair. He is uncomfortable voting for these resolutions tonight because he feels there needs to be more preparation. The finance worksheet provides dollar amounts that he doesn't feel match up with the amounts that need to be cut and that the worksheets are built on assumptions. We, as County Board, feel we are falling behind in providing raises. We need wage comparable and staffing comparable with other counties. We need budgets by department because we don't know what expenditures nor revenue are and we don't know how much comes out of levy for each department. He needs this information before he can move forward.

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6. Public Comment:

Cecile Even – PV has been self-sustaining so why are we cutting back on them. HHS's services deal with health issues and children. As for ADRC, we all aging. With age we change and with that, comes challenges, which is needed. She feels public health & Symons are important.

Bruce Roessler – Richland Economic Development. He gave a back ground on the creation of the board and what they have to offer. They take the financial problems seriously. They request that the county continue to fund Richland Economic Development. They feel Jason is doing a great job and would like it to continue.

Mike Breininger – Richland Economic Development. After being cut previously they were able to build it back when Jasen Glasbrenner was hired. Jasen was able to bring back the CDBG funds and cutting Richland Economic Development would be a cut to the county as a whole. The Richland Economic Development board will work with the county to find funds

Linda Gentes – On Monday of this week the committee meet with Chancellor Evetovich. Chancellor will work with the county to continue and will be adding Physicians Assistant, nursing, chiropractic and Physical Therapy in 2023. The committee asks for 1 more year to get these programs in place.

Carla Doudna - Fair and Recycling Coordinator. Why is the recycling being put into the resolution as they do not get levy funds? There is only 11 months to get this plan in place. She feels there is potential at the fairgrounds but needs more time to work on this. She would like until 1/1/25. Events at the fair are dictated by mother nature.

Bob Bellman – He asked what is the fund balance today? Derek can't answer without looking at information he doesn't have with him today. Brewer stated we like to keep 3 months on hand. He asked what dept. are over budget right now? This is important to know. He is unclear about the tower and ambulance. Doesn't understand why they are removing fair, selling property or even going after small options. He asked committee to postpone acting tonight.

Melissa Brennan – She went over her family history and that they go to Symons often. She reviewed swimming benefits to people including swimming lessons.

Jacob Lundgren – He has been a resident for 19 years and is a veterans. Speaking on reduction of Veterans assistant. The Veterans office services 1200 veterans and more with family members which is about 1/3 of the county. One person cannot be in the office all the time to help those people.

Bill Lobek – 22 vets per day commit suicide, these 22 have probably not seen a Veterans service worker. He feels a PTS veteran will not go into HHS for assistance as they may feel it is a hand out. If you keep this up the county will be a ghost town.

Stacy Kleist – She is a tax payer and Clerk of Court. Budgets of large departments affects her small office. She has one of the smallest staffed in the state. She supports a staffing comparison with other counties. She urges members of the community to ask questions.

Tricia Clements – Director for HHS. She wants to address the Economic Support unit. In 2012 the state mandated that counties be part of a consortium. When the consortiums were created, it was cheaper to do it in Richland County than any other county.

Yvonne Chapman - At the last meeting the County Administrator proposed a 4M investment but yet you do dramatic cuts? You're going to raise wages and then cut budget? She asked that the county put these massive cuts in a referendum.

Michael Compton - He is the Assist Provost for UW Campus. He reviewed the history of schools and teachers in Richland county including the creation of the campus. The campus remains an important point of access to education in Richland County. They are establishing new programs at the campus, they will not be ready for the next year but are working to get them up and running for 2024.

Tracy Gobin - Symon Recreational Complex Director. It is not just a benefit to be physical activity but also helps with stress and getting people out to socialize. Not only are they people coming to Symons, when they come to town they shop and spend money in businesses while in town.

Karen Knock – Veterans Service Officer. In 7 years they have cut \$25,000 out of her budget. They cannot cut her Assistant position because it affects the veteran's assistance. They county is giving her a raise she does

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not want and would rather have her assistant instead a raise she didn't ask for.

Paul Tichenor – When he was 65 he learned to swim. He and his companion swim 5 days a week. The new outdoor pool is only open 3 months out of a year. He asks that you reconsider what you are doing to support Symons.

Christine Richards - Physician and Chief of Staff at Richland Hospital. She proposes, when looking at the services, the hospital could have someone from their staff come meet with the committee to help with services. The services you are talking about cutting affect staff recruitment. Last year they lost 4 physicians. Working collaboratively could get or keep services that will help them too.

Dominic Anderson – Veterans need the help that is owed to them. Have you done an economic study on how what you are doing will affect small businesses? As for Symons, I hope you would refund the amount of money that was donated.

Eric Siemandel – He is on the Fair, Recycling and Parks committee as citizen member. Has the committee looked at cutting all departments by a percentage? How much will taxes go up on property value of \$100,000? Has anyone looked at what the fair brings in as revenue?

Clay Porter – Sheriff. He did a press release last week concerning a standoff in the county. Everyone was safe in the end with 1 person going to jail. This was done safely due to training that will be reduced with this budget cut. We need the training to continue to keep the officers and public safe.

Mia Hillebrand – She thinks she is the youngest here. She gave her life history in Richland County and plans to come back. The decisions you make will affect people that are going to school than plan to come back to this community.

Yvonne Chatman – Questioned if grants would have to be repaid to the DNR or other places? Have you looked at what it would cost to sell lands if you have to pay the grants back?

Emily Dolan is on line – How creative are we being when we are looking at the budget cuts? The school district has looked at fee programs and a wellness plan that cut the health insurance costs. The school district is looking at a program that will help transition students to the campus. By the school district increasing their fund balance they have reduced the need to take out short term debt. Thanks Supervisor Luck for mentioning increasing revenue.

Brian McGraw – Chair of Joint Ambulance committee. They have submitted an alternate ambulance resolution asking for an extended deadline as it would work best for the contract negotiation they are working on with municipalities.

5. Discussion and possible action on items of Administrative Reports, Resolutions, and Recommendations regarding county-wide budgeting and services cont.: Chair Brewer stated the committee has reviewed the resolutions and he plans them to move forward tonight.

1st Resolution is Symons. Chair Brewer reviewed the resolution and asked for a motion. Moved by Supervisor Murphy-Lopez to postpone actions on resolutions until more information is received concerning wages & staffing comparison with other counties and expenses and revenues by department and how much comes from levy, 2nd by Carrow. Administrator Langreck stated he has reach out to Carlson Dettman to get salary comparisons and staffing comparisons. Supervisor Murphy-Lopez and Supervisor Luck are working on mandated vs. non mandated services. Moved by Supervisor Williamson to amend the motion to add information on mandated vs. non mandated services, 2nd by Supervisor Manning. All voting aye, motion carried on the amendment.

Supervisor Murphy-Lopez request a roll call vote on the motion to postpone. Carrow – aye, Murphy-Lopez – aye, Brewer – no, Luck – aye, Manning – aye, Turk – no, Williamson – aye, Couey – aye. Motion carried 6-2.

Supervisor Carrow has a list of questions he would like answered before he makes a decision.

Supervisor Luck stated she and Supervisor Murphy-Lopez are working on finding out what services are mandate and what are non-mandated.

Don Seep feels this has been rushed. The only thing the committee should be doing to night is to pass the resolutions to the county board by which passes the task to the standing committees to start working on this. That is all the resolutions are doing, so the Committees can come back with a plan. He feels there should be a

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referendum put out to the people to decide if they want to pay for the services the county feels they can't afford.

7. **Discussion and possible action on developing a referendum question:** Administrator Langreck reviewed the development and recommendation for the administrator or an ad hoc committee to develop an operation referendum. Decision points include purpose, duration, amount, community education plan, proposed time-line, penalties, and finally his concerns. Administrator Langreck reviewed the proposed resolution. Moved by Supervisor Couey to forward the resolution to the County Board to create an ad hoc committee, second by Supervisor Manning.

Moved by Supervisor Murphy-Lopez to amend the resolution that after Finance and Personnel makes their decision about dollar amounts each standing committee to include as part of the operating referendum, then those standing committees make recommendation on what should go on the operating referendum. Discussion followed concerning the process of a referendum. Amendment failed with no 2nd.

Vote called for the original motion. All voting aye, motion carried.

8. **Discussion and possible action on 2023 budget guidance:** Administrator Langreck asked to have the budget guidance letter as presented move forward for the 2023 budget. He reviewed the guidance including the 4 designed phases. Moved by Supervisor Turk to move this forward to prepare the budget, second by Supervisor Manning. Supervisor Murphy-Lopez questioned the guidance that is in the plan and is not ready to proceed with what is presented. Supervisor Carrow is concerned that departments may have to rework their budget if the committee makes changes. Supervisor Murphy-Lopez asked for a roll call vote. Murphy-Lopez – no, Brewer – aye, Luck – aye, Manning – aye, Turk – aye, Williamson – aye, Couey – no. Motion carried 6-2.
9. **Future agenda items:** None
10. **Adjournment:** Next meeting will be Wednesday, July 27 @ 1:00 pm location TBD. Moved by Supervisor Couey to adjourn at 9:16 p.m., seconded by Chair Brewer. All voting aye, motion carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by

Cheryl Dull

Richland County Assistant to the Administrator

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