

MAY 27, 2009

EVENING SESSION

6:00 P.M.

LINCOLN COUNTY SERVICE CENTER – 801 N. SALES STREET – MERRILL WI 54452
 COUNTY BOARD ROOM

The Lincoln County Board of Supervisors met at the Lincoln County Service Center County Board Room at 801 N. Sales Street – City of Merrill, in session assembled pursuant to law. The special meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Lussow. Pledge of Allegiance was given by the Board. Roll was called by the Clerk and the following answered present: Anderson, Bailey, Berndt, Bloomer, Caylor, Eisenman, Fox, Krueger, Lee, Lussow, Meyer, Mittelsteadt, Rankin, Rusch, Saal, Simon, Weaver, Woller, and Zeitz (19). Supervisor Loka was excused. Supervisor Alber arrived at 6:25 p.m.

BUDGET PRESENTATION – JOHN MULDER AND ART LERSCH

The Lincoln County Board met to listen to a budget/organizational structure presentation by John Mulder, Administrative Coordinator and Art Lersch, UW-Extension Community Resource Development Educator.

Current County Board Goals that were set at the April 28, 2008 County Board Meeting were discussed.

Factors Currently Impacting Lincoln County were discussed – see list below.

- 18 to 24 months delayed effect (appears this is a paradigm shifting economic crisis)
- 2% cap on levy increases (possibly 3% levy)
- Impact of state budget (\$6.7 billion state deficit) Proposed reductions in shared revenues, other state funding too early to tell impact on county
- General revenue reduction (foreclosures, property values)
- Global economy (Can't control oil prices, housing market, etc.)
- ADRC and Family care

Discussion was held on the Administrative Coordinator's recommendations on reductions for the budget.

Supervisors also engaged in a facilitated conversation about what budget options should be explored in the coming months. The following questions were used to prompt the discussion.

- Which items on the proposed lists [contained in the presentation] have the most possibility of making the organization more responsive to its customers?**
- What other options including possible revenue sources not on the lists merit exploration?**

It is suggested that all county government stakeholders involved in the budget development process work together to prioritize the items identified by supervisors (below) as well as those mentioned in the presentation. Some prioritization can and should be done at the committee level, perhaps beginning with the Administrative and Legislative Committee. Other items could, however, conceivably be explored by department heads and employees without being asked to do so by the County Board or any of its committees. In many cases, supervisors may welcome additional information that will help them make better budget related decisions.

Prioritization is necessary because the organization does not have the capacity to explore let alone implement every item on the lists simultaneously. Those doing the prioritizing may want to think about evaluating the items based on a set of criteria such as organizational capacity, the potential long – term impact (outcomes) of completing the task, and how urgent it is that a particular item be addressed. Those responsible for prioritizing should always be mindful of the county's mission.

Directly below are the items mentioned by supervisors. If an idea on the County supervisor's list was mentioned multiple times, that number is in parentheses following it. Items are arranged from most to least mentioned. Ties are not listed in any particular order.

- Explore all items listed in the budget presentation (those recommended by the Administrative Coordinator and identified as priorities by the Administrative & Legislative Committee) and supervisors' ideas. (5)
- ("Sharing the pain"). Every county employee to be furloughed without pay for one day a month resulting in a potential estimated savings of \$600,000 a year. Sharing the pain is better than someone losing their job. Could this be done on a rotation basis? We may have to increase the number of days off as needed. (4)
- How can we generate revenue? (energy related; biofuels, wind). Conduct feasibility studies. (3)
- Explore garnering more revenue from forestry and solid waste operations. (2)
- Look at county employees paying more toward health insurance premium costs. (2)
- We should engage in Performance Based Budgeting. Preserve the departments, but look at services based on need, want, efficiency, effectiveness, and essential versus non-essential. (2)
- County Board meeting per diems; reduced or eliminated. (2)
- Sheriff Department needs to explore opportunities to garner more collections.
- Highway department is working on developing a reserve system, etc. This needs to continue and should be implemented. Other departments as well?
- Eliminate county vehicles. Encourage county employees to deduct business mileage on their taxes when using their own vehicles.
- Corporation Council should take on legal work that was passed to Marathon County; additional legal work to obtain more revenue.
- Explore privatizing/other options related to providing ambulance service.
- Change some citations to ordinance violations to generate more revenue.
- Continue to eliminate positions through attrition.
- Look at Pine Crest. (Is having a county nursing home best for the county?, etc.).
- We need to look at the long-term. Perhaps the Administrative & Legislative Committee needs to take the lead in prioritizing the items that should be explored.
- We must reorganize the committee structure and have an interim Administrative Coordinator. (Note: There was one comment made against the committee structure proposal in the presentation. There was also a comment made against establishing stronger centralized administration).
- Carry out a one time sale of assets.
- Department heads need to continue trimming where they can.

- Determine which county assets (e.g. forests) are actually liabilities. Which cost us more to maintain than the revenue we garner? Conduct cost benefit analyses.
- Perhaps begin to use the reserves the county has (investment pool).
- Examine what we do for free. Perhaps charge for some of this to recoup the costs.
- Explore “in – house” fueling options for our vehicles. Can we save money by having are own fueling stations as opposed to purchasing fuel elsewhere?

Before creating the list above, County Board supervisors took part in a “warm up” discussion based on the following question.

How are the identified goals [as mentioned by supervisors in April, 2008] driven by a desire to proactively pursue the Board’s mission?

- Government exists for all citizens of the county. It provides for all. But, some services must be paid for by those who use them. If they are not, this places a burden on the county.
- Are taxpayer expectations about and for services too inflated?
- Should we be singling out townships? (Reference to John Mulder’s Highway Department proposal). Don’t we all pay for the services?
- Our mission is to provide fiscally responsible services.
- Examine services that we provide (ambulance service privatization).
- The goals (identified by supervisors) in this presentation were set before the severe economic downturn. We must prioritize.
- There are questions about who does what in government. There is a vacuum.

The next meeting will be the Regular County Board Meeting to be held on **Tuesday, June 16 2009 at 6:00 p.m.** at the Lincoln County Service Center – County Board Meeting Room, 801 N. Sales Street - Merrill

Motion made by Supervisor Krueger, seconded by Supervisor Caylor to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Motion carried – all ayes.

STATE OF WISCONSIN)

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COUNTY OF LINCOLN)

I, Robert D. Kunkel, County Clerk in and for said Lincoln County, Wisconsin do hereby certify that the within and foregoing is a true and correct copy of all proceedings by and before the Board of Supervisors at their special meeting, May 27, 2009.

Robert D. Kunkel, Lincoln County Clerk