

NEBRASKA TAXPAYERS FOR FREEDOM WORKSHEET:

SPEECH TO DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD ON FY2017-2018 BUDGET, 6-20-17.

6/20/2017 10:00am Item VII.1.2
From DOUG KAGAN (NTF)

Good morning. Doug Kagan representing NE Taxpayers for Freedom. I have distributed to you our issue paper and addendum regarding the upcoming budget. Again, we appreciate county commissioners, officials, and staff for closely cooperating with our group during the budget process. Now, I would like to mention a number of various suggestions for budget-cutting.

- Analyze all non-mandated services and eliminate or curtail these functions, e.g., law library, extension service. Lobby the Legislature to end unfunded state mandates on counties.
- Use private sector performance standards to evaluate cost and performance of county services.
- Install a monitoring process for use of all technology, e.g., cell phones, iPads, etc.
- Institute desk audits to analyze workloads for employees.
- No need for a public information officer; staff can be spokespersons.
- If intent on hiring one grant specialist, this specialist should replace dept. grant writers.
- Keep pay raises at or below the inflation rate.
- End all longevity, specialty, and other added pay like step increases, special time off, and tuition payments.
- Peg pension benefits to base pay only.
- Require employees to pay at least 9.5% of their salary into the pension system. State Patrol officers now pay 17%.
- Raise civilian employee retirement age to 60. Employees who retire earlier would earn drastically lower pension payments.
- Place higher priority on HMA recommendations that reduce health center expenses.
- End non-mandated long-term care services there funded by property taxes.
- Investigate if UNMC might have interest to manage the Health Center.
- Verify that clients and prisoners actually mentally ill when providing health services and incarceration.
- Offer services only in the English language.
- Continue to consolidate offices at 156th & West Maple Rd. to save money on leases.
- Utilize zero-based budgeting in all departments as recommended by the March, 2016 county strategy development update.
- Inheritance tax revenue scheduled to drop by \$1 million, a reason to use it only for its intended purpose.
- Merge the county fair with the Sarpy County Fair to offer a more rural flavor.

Several revenue enhancement recommendations:

- Begin an initiative to reform the non-profit statutes, so that counties can levy in lieu of taxes or a percentage of property taxes on non-profit entities.
- Hire junkyard dog collection agencies to retrieve owed fines, restitution, etc.
- Actively market services to adjacent government subdivisions.
- Determine that fees charged for county services pay for both time and cost expended.

Thank you.



NEBRASKA TAXPAYERS FOR FREEDOM ISSUE PAPER: REVIEW OF DOUGLAS COUNTY BUDGET FY 2017-2018

INTRODUCTION

The Douglas County budget review process for FY 17/18 utilizes budget targets that do not require the submission of detailed department budget data, so long as the department concurs with the budget target. If a higher budget is desired / anticipated, then the department must make the request before the Commissioners during a regular, public meeting. While this process creates the opportunity for greater public scrutiny of the departments that do not comply with the targets, less information has been available for the remaining, compliant departments. This process provides for more time being spent to solve "problem areas" of the budget, but does not provide for opportunity to discuss county spending priorities; the county spending priorities are defined by the preset targets.

NTF has offered many opinions regarding budget priorities and savings for several years. While we appreciate the openness of the board to hear our input, several items of concern have not been addressed.

1. Douglas County Health Center. Despite recommendations given by HMA, at a cost to the county of more than \$300,000, the level of property tax support necessary for health center operations has not diminished. Privatization should be reconsidered at the earliest opportunity.
2. Extension. A program not originally intended to serve the urban areas of our nation, it is an unfortunate example of how government has been allowed to grow unchecked.
3. Nebraska Medical facility contributions. Douglas County residents support the state government and university like Nebraskans in any other county. If the commissioners choose to spend a portion of the Inheritance Tax on a state facility, rather than county operations, then equivalent, tangible benefits to the county government should be realized.

CLOSING THE \$811,732 BUDGET GAP

Option 1: Across the board budget cuts. The portion of the budget that is supported by property taxes is \$282,471,491. Applying weighted reductions (per the budget targets) to the various departments would require a budget reduction of less than 0.3%.

Option 2: Selected across the board budget cuts. A similar approach to Option 1, but exclude debt obligations and more critical departments (such as Corrections, Attorney, Emergency Management, Public Defender, and Sheriff) that have a more severe impact on public safety and protection of constitutional rights. This option would require a budget reduction of less than 0.5% for the remaining departments.

Option 3: Examine the increase of user costs for departments that perform services for a fee; for example, Health Department inspections / re-inspections.

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**NEBRASKA TAXPAYERS FOR FREEDOM ISSUE PAPER:
SUGGESTIONS FOR THE DOUGLAS COUNTY FY 2017-2018 BUDGET.**

BACKGROUND. The FY 2017-2018 Douglas County budget shows a projected deficit of \$811,732. See attachment for NTF suggestions for general options to close this gap. Assessed property valuation increase estimated at 3%. No property tax increase planned. Total budget is 2.2%, or \$8.4 million, below the FY 2016-2017 budget. General Fund budget is \$6.4 million more (3.3%), which is higher than we would like. However, we understand that criminal justice and incarceration costs have risen because of the increase in crime and that Obama Care has skewed upward health care costs. Property tax revenue would rise by only 3%, vehicles fees by only 3%. Total revenues would increase by 1.9%, expenses by only 1.8%.

GENERAL. Analyze all non-mandated services and eliminate or curtail these functions, e.g., law library, extension service. Lobby the Legislature to reform the non-profit statutes, so that counties can levy in lieu of taxes from nonprofits and so that state statutes restrict application of this status. Lobby the Legislature to end unfunded state mandates on counties and to allow counties to pass additional categories of ordinances. Install a monitoring process for use of all technology, e.g., cell phones, iPads, etc. Institute desk audits to analyze workloads for employees. Utilize zero-based budgeting in all departments as recommended by the March, 2016 county strategy development update. Inheritance tax revenue scheduled to drop by \$1 million, a reason to NOT siphon off this revenue to a new UNMC venture.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE. Budget increase totals 2.3%, but 10% for commissioners.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Take additional bids on risk insurance policies.
- Examine use of interlocal agreements to purchase workers compensation insurance.
- No need for a public information officer; staff can be spokespersons.
- If intent on hiring one grant specialist, this specialist should replace dept. grant writers.
- Base county commissioner salaries on increase in urban consumer price index.
- Instead of investing county savings into specific areas, lower the tax rate.
- End professional service fee for United Way.

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION. To pay for rate increases for Board of Equalization valuation referees, the cost would rise from \$35,000- \$50,000. These raises would pay referees more than those in Sarpy and Lancaster Counties. Board of Equalization budget would increase by 10%.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Solicit widely referees for a 15% pay increase for a guaranteed amount of work, with guarantee to raise it a bit annually for continued work.
- Place current valuation challenge information on BOE website before June 1, so that challengers can begin their homework sooner.
- Continue town hall meetings to inform property owners how to challenge their valuations.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION. Number of employees the same. Expenses would decrease slightly. Budget request is slightly lower.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Allow city human relations department to handle employee discrimination complaints.
- Eliminate several employee classes.
- Contract long-term for more reasonable attorney fees.

CLERK OF THE DISTRICT COURT. Wants higher budget, about \$67,000 (2%), to hire 2 new employees for the Juvenile Court. But why does this dept. need 2 additional employees, if expenses in juvenile court drop by 40%? Payment kiosk streamlines payment for child support, etc. Revenues scheduled to rise by a few thousand dollars. Much less spent on purchases and equipment. Personal services and total expenditures drop in several categories.

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NTF Recommendations:

Verify that fees pay for court costs. If not, raise fees.
Solicit long-term contracts for cheaper legal services.

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH. Budget request slightly above target.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Internal auditor should monitor and oversee incoming revenue and insurance, as state legislature passed a bill to allow Medicaid to seek additional patient reimbursement. Verifying entitlements of potential clients will save the county money and hopefully pay for fiscal liaison/auditor.
- Obtain as much personal payment amount as possible.
- Use private company to spray for bedbugs and lice.
- County should concentrate on the CMH providing only necessary core services instead of competing with services from private hospitals. County should eliminate services duplicative of private services in community.
- Lobby the state legislature to rebate funds.

CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT. A growing number of mentally ill inmates. 26 new employees requested because of increasing inmate population. More units open because of same trend. 2 fewer temporary employees. Additional revenues expected from program fees, grants, the City of Omaha, and immigration service. Projected revenue budget an outstanding \$1.63 million higher. This dept. cut expenses for personal services, purchases, and equipment. Positive program to reduce recidivism. Total budget is slightly lower.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Allow DOT Com to handle IT systems.
- Purchase equipment cheaper by implementing interlocal agreements.
- Overtime represents 4% of personnel expenditures but should total a smaller percentage of the personnel budget. Institute 10- hour shifts or use part-time employees and better control this expense by stricter union contracts.
- Increase supervisor to employee ratios.
- Lobby the legislature to require the state to fund jailing and adjudication and prosecution costs for those accused of committing a state crime. State still owed county \$20 million in 2016.
- Press the state government to pay for agreed to services.
- Lobby the legislature to allow counties to require inmates to pay for a portion of their incarceration and medical costs.
- Change state law, so that county jail inmates can work on public projects like maintaining bike trails, picking up trash along the public right of way, and working at the Humane Society.
- Press congressional delegation to require federal government to pay all costs for incarcerating illegal aliens and retrieve them immediately.
- End or decrease several services for inmates, e.g., inmate education and re-active behavior, unless county can statistically prove that such programs curtail recidivism.
- Verify that inmates actually mentally ill.
- Privatize additional services.

COUNTY ATTORNEY. County Attorney request is 4.5% over target set by county commissioners. Crime rate continues to increase, making more demands on this department. Department revenues projected to rise.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Operating expenses trending up, reflecting increased juvenile justice expenses. Lobby the legislature to alter laws, so that fewer children unnecessarily taken from their homes for alleged abuse, neglect, and truancy, to cut juvenile costs.
- Lobby legislature to lower or eliminate filing fees.
- Lobby legislature to make parents more financially responsible for processing their criminal children through the judicial process.
- Lobby legislature to make criminals financially responsible for their processing, if they have accessible funds.
- Hire junkyard dog collection agencies to retrieve owed fines, restitution, etc.
- Consolidate city and county attorney offices.
- Discontinue hiring interns.
- Take testimony from expert witnesses long-distance.

COUNTY CLERK/COMPTROLLER. Positive points include continuing to improve use of Oracle computer processes and training. Employee count the same. Expenses are lower; revenues are higher.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Enter interlocal agreements to purchase supplies and equipment.
- Eliminate membership dues in professional organizations.
- Every county department should learn to utilize the same computer system, e.g., Oracle, to communicate better.

COUNTY COURT. Number of annual cases has risen by less than 1%. Number of employees same. Additional funding required for court-appointed attorneys and certified interpreters. Budget request is 1.5% higher.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Lobby state and federal governments to end requirement to pay for interpreters.

COUNTY ENGINEER. Continues to emphasize repairing and replacing substandard bridges. Personnel costs rising by 3%, total General Fund request up 14%.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Auction all surplus parts and equipment.
- Lease instead of purchasing equipment.
- Costs for asphalt, pavement markings, and road paint have increased, so expand inter-local agreements with adjacent government subdivisions and the state.
- Professional fees are projected to increase, another reason to outsource some services.
- Begin outsourcing all routine road maintenance, paving, and construction projects possible.
- Flatten the organization structure. As foremen retire or leave the department, reduce their numbers.
- Purchase GNC-powered vehicles if feasible.
- Use jail inmate labor if permitted.

COUNTY FAIR. No funding for County Fair will save \$50,000 taxpayer dollars. Seeks to be self-sufficient. Anticipates obtaining additional private sponsors. Prides itself as the only urban county fair in NE and only HS scholarship rodeo.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Operate this board with private sponsors only.
- Merge this fair with the Sarpy County Fair to offer a more rural flavor.

COUNTY TREASURER. Positive points include allowing more citizens to conduct transactions online, thereby allowing redeployment of staff. Requested budget up 2%. Revenues projected to increase by \$1.6 million.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Organizing an investment system to maximize revenue and consolidating vendors for cheaper services are procedures that all depts. should utilize. This dept. serves as a good fiscal model for other depts.
- Integrate the Dealer Customer Service operations into the Branch operations.
- The percentage of transactions processed online continues to increase; accordingly, the Treasurer should continue to reduce his staff.
- Eliminate county cars used by the Treasurer's office and pay mileage to employees at the IRS prescribed rate. Alternatively, put a few cars into a "pool" inventory for approved county business.
- Curtail travel to meetings, training, workshops, etc.
- End memberships with dues in government organizations and continuing education obligations.
- End newspaper subscriptions.
- Lobby state government for permission to keep more money as reimbursement for collecting vehicle and other taxes.
- Lobby to renew licenses plates every 7-10 years to reduce mailing costs and price of plates.

DISTRICT COURT. Cases have increased by 37%, criminal filings up by 607. Budget request is \$8,660 less than last fiscal year, category expenses that dropped outweighing category expenses within dept. that rose. General Funds funding for the court itself would drop, along with professional fees. There was no request for cost of living salary increases, but

the dept. wants the County Board to approve 4% pay hikes in January, 2018, equal to the percentage the last 3 fiscal years. Court administration total expenditures and payroll costs would rise. The longevity pay scale is still in effect, again increasing in amount. Membership dues in organizations would rise. Law library expenses would rise

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NTF Recommendations:

Curtail travel costs.

Curtail membership dues in organizations.

End longevity pay.

Keep pay raises at or below the inflation rate.

Bid and contract out catered jury lunch costs and other District Court food service requirements.

Bid wider on professional fees.

Use a competitive bid process to solicit additional court-appointed private attorneys to ensure caseloads are managed at lower overall cost. Implement an attorney rotation wheel in the same manner as suggested for Juvenile Court.

Offer unpaid internships to law students to reduce legal research costs.

Lobby the Legislature to significantly reduce or eliminate court-filing fees paid to the state for criminal charges.

Lobby the Legislature or Congress to end the requirement for court interpreters.

Require those convicted of crimes to pay a larger portion of court costs.

The law library is redundant, as Creighton Law Library and UNO Criss Library provide either exactly the same services or more than those provided by the Douglas County Law Library. Creighton offers Westlaw Patron, Lexis/Nexus, and Gale Legal Forms access, and Criss offers Westlaw Patron. The law library does not provide for public use of Lexis/Nexus.

Fees charged the public for photocopies and prepared documents are astronomically higher than those charged at other local law libraries.

DOT.COMM. FY 2017-18 budget 5.88% higher but 1.10% lower than estimated. Operating increases of 3.35%. Salaries and benefits constituted largest reason for budget increase. Also, hikes in overtime and professional services. Revenues would rise by 5.88%, 5.99% from the county General Fund.

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NTF Recommendations:

Widen bidding for contracted professional services to save money.

Proper and timely cost assignment of data processing expense to each county department to better allocate time and lower expense.

Cease translating information into foreign languages.

Actively market services to adjacent government subdivisions.

If outside entities that use county contracts through DOT Comm do not pay their bills, refuse them service.

Eliminate high employee turnover to save on training costs.

Reconfigure working hours to curtail overtime expenses.

ELECTION COMMISSIONER. Annual expenses would drop by a large degree next fiscal year, and General Fund request would drop by \$43,633.

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NTF Recommendations:

Votes cast by mail is a trend likely to increase. Accordingly, there should be a continuing reduction in Election Commission employees.

Utilizing all-mail election process would save 25%-30% of costs and require less election preparation time.

DOT Comm expenses have skyrocketed, so consider using outside service.

Print more ballots with candidate names in the same sequence to save printing costs.

Save printing costs by not splitting precincts among government subdivisions.

Consider moving this office to West Maple Campus for better parking facilities and additional space.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS. Employee fringe benefits are 4.1%, or \$400,000 over target set by county commissioners. Retiree medical costs have reached \$100,000. Employee medical insurance costs would rise by \$1.5 million. Pension costs would soar 6%, Social Security and Medicare 2%, insurance costs by 4.3%, and life insurance costs by 20%. Salary adjustments are rising by over 160%! The county has reduced employee numbers requiring compensation, but cost per employee increases because of labor contracts.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Negotiate tougher on union employee salaries and benefits like insurance and dependents insurance.
- Discontinue retiree health insurance coverage, saving about \$2.25 million in 2017.
- Encourage additional employees to select health savings accounts as an alternative.
- Demand that unions renegotiate contracts or face layoffs. The salary adjustment fund is increasing from \$1.75 million to \$2 million to cover these contracts.
- Stop 3%-4% pay raises and keep raises within cost of living increases.
- End all longevity, specialty, and other added pay like step increases, special time off, and tuition payments.
- Cross-train employees within and among departments. Solve problem of retirement of key employees and succession planning by cross-training.
- Use accrued vacation time or lose it. Eliminate accrued vacation time upon retirement.
- Peg pension benefits to base pay only.
- Require employees to pay at least 9.5% of their salary into the pension system. State Patrol officers now pay 17%.
- Raise retirement age to 60. Employees who retire earlier would earn drastically lower pension payments.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES/LANDFILL. Number of employees static. Expenses dropping slightly, fee and grant revenues expected to rise.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Merge department services with the city permits and inspection division.
- Consolidate waste management with city.
- Tradeoff with the city on snow removal or contract snow removal with the city.
- Unnecessary to add local food production to department plan.
- Determine effectiveness of Millard Schools outreach program and usage of more social media to publicize department activities and events.
- Use jail inmates instead of temporary/seasonal employees for outside work.
- Recycle tires for profit.

EXTENSION SERVICE. Douglas and Sarpy Counties share funding for this service, and UN-L provides \$1.5 million for 20 employees.

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NTF Recommendations:

- This agency serves useful but not necessary services, like community gardens, garden centers in schools and daycares, teaching school classes, bed bug information, multilingual programs, career success, healthy lifestyles for kids, alcohol awareness, and nutrition education.
- Supplementing the missions of other bureaucracies means duplication of services and efforts. Eliminate this non-mandated service, funded by property taxes.
- Other agencies can help farmers set up acreages and care for their livestock and serve others currently assisted by various extension activities.
- Support for Sudanese immigrant families should be the responsibility of the individual church denominations that helped these people emigrate here.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE. One fewer employee.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Refuse service for persistent no-show clients.
- End job training and job fairs, as other agencies provide these services.
- Clients can take their vehicles to the Omaha Public Schools shop for free repairs.
- Dept. used our recommendation to utilize E-applications to save dollars.

GIS DEPARTMENT. Number of employees the same. Expenses would rise slightly as would revenues. Payroll expenditures would drop but non-payroll expenditures rise, over target. City of Omaha revenue cancels the increase over target. General Fund request lower than previous year.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Begin interlocal agreements with other taxing authorities to order printing supplies in bulk.

HEALTH CENTER. Expenses expected below target. Budget request is 3.4% higher.

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NTF Recommendations:

Identify support services costs with specific departments, where applicable.

Set goals for financial performance in each department and the overall facility.

Property taxes must still fund \$11.6 million 3 year average deficit, evidencing need to cut costs and continue HMA suggestions.

Added revenue projects compete with private companies and facilities and would add to staff and equipment.

Place higher priority on HMA recommendations that reduce expenses. Adding prospective services for outpatient therapy, community pharmacy services, and hospice, dialysis, and infusion services compete with the private sector.

End non-mandated long-term care services funded by property taxes.

Disengage matching funds requirement for Region 6 money.

Holding health center reductions to a minimum while trying to boost revenues risks revenues not materializing. (We doubt that dept. managers have the skills to implement major HMA-suggested changes).

Establish benchmark dates for completion of health center reforms, review their progress, and utilize Gant Charts in this process.

Involve local, private sector advisors in addition to Health Center administrators and employees in this process.

Set a milestone date for a comprehensive review and reconsideration of privatization regarding the HMA recommendations for the DCHC and CMHC.

See if UNMC might have interest to manage the Health Center.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT. Salaries and fringe benefits have both increased and dropped in several sub-depts. General Fund request is only slightly more.

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NTF Recommendations:

The Health Department and other departments have appropriations remaining at the end of the fiscal year, suggesting zero-based budgeting.

Double late fees charged restaurants and bars that fail to pay for annual permit fees on time.

Department fees should cover costs and time involved and become indexed for inflation.

Obtain legislative statutory authority if necessary to increase fees.

Charge county entities full price for services rendered and require them to account for these costs in their respective budgets.

Obtain IT services from private sector, as Dot. Comm costs appear too expensive.

End other than English language and cultural services.

Use metrics to gauge success of treatment options.

JUVENILE ASSESSMENT CENTER. Generally seeks to divert youth from juvenile criminal processing. Budget request is 9% higher. Payroll costs would rise by 5%, operating costs by 47%. Personnel numbers the same. Incoming grant monies less.

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NTF Recommendations:

Offer services only in the English language. Require non-English speakers to hire their own interpreters.

Refer illegal aliens to federal immigration service.

Send No Show candidates immediately back to court system.

Accelerate grant search.

Because grant funding is decreasing, do not expand programs.

Charge administrative fee on grants distributed to contractors.

Analyze where grant distributions are cutting juvenile delinquency the most.

Institute tracking mechanism to note what percentage of kids successfully complete dept. programs and programs provided by community organizations.

JUVENILE JUSTICE COLLECTIVE. A newer county department, costs rising by 7.3%. County contributes 20% of budget from public and private grants. Other funds come from legislative appropriations.

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NTF Recommendations:

Federal and state grants are decreasing, so lobby for additional private grants.
90% success rate in diversion program should continue.
Merge this entity with the Juvenile Assessment Center Dept.

911 COMMUNICATIONS. 911 Communications request is 3.6%, \$200,640, over target set by county commissioners. Need for additional employees and equipment for new space at west campus accounts for budget hike. More employees because of expansion of dept. and services. Number of cell phone calls has increased while landline calls decrease, but total number has increased. Expenses expected to rise by 1%, revenues by 4%.

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NTF Recommendations:

Lease office equipment instead of purchasing.
Solicit interlocal agreements to purchase equipment.
Lower or eliminate the sharply rising cost for public education brochures.
Lessen the number of seminars attended by employees or send fewer employees.
Solicit interlocal regionalization agreements with other counties.
County must decide between a hub and spoke or a combined center model, and which jurisdiction will be in charge.
The county board speedily should proceed to develop a concise plan with objectives, benchmarks, proposed management structure, estimated costs and cost-sharing, and plan for a regional inter-local agreement.
The Public Service Commission lacks the technical knowledge to lead on this issue.
Wait to see what new technology arises, such as NG911, and what the legislature seeks to accomplish with 911 revisions.

PUBLIC DEFENDER. Public Defender request is 6.4% over target set by county commissioners, or \$240,208, a 5% total request hike. Caseloads have increased in several categories but dropped in other categories. Crime rate has caused total caseloads to rise 16% in 2 years. Proposed salary increases range up to 10%, far above the cost of living increase. However, the dept. chief now says that he has cut the proposed salary increase number by 50%. Revenues projected to drop.

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NTF Recommendations:

Rein in salary increases.
Decrease number of cell phones used.
Allow memberships in organizations to lapse.
Decrease number of seminars attended by employees and number of employees who attend.
Purchase used and surplus furniture and office equipment.
Curtail professional fees by taking bids.
Work more diligently to find experts to testify at more reasonable costs.
Rely more on county crime lab.
Pressure the immigration service to remove illegal aliens quickly.
Interpreters may be legally required but not an immigration attorney who would increase personnel costs.
Ask bar association to provide attorneys pro bono.
Verify that clients actually mentally ill.
Do not increase expenditures dependent upon grants, which may end.

PUBLIC PROPERTIES. Number of employees the same. Expenses and revenues both expected to decrease slightly, though General Fund request increases. Continues to implement energy saving program. Developed a long-term plan for catching up with overdue building maintenance items.

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NTF Recommendations:

Obtain longer guarantees on capital improvements like roofs.
Abandon the 1101 Pacific Street building and relocate offices.
Terminate extension service to save on building maintenance.
Consolidate offices at 156th & West Maple Rd. to save money on leases.
Require juvenile offenders to clean their own facilities and handle office cleaning duties.
Outsource maintenance, painters, and carpenters.
Privatize employee pool.
Renegotiate utility expenses.

Infuse additional funding into this dept. only if similar funding not in proposed bond issue to pay for needed maintenance and renovation.

SHERIFF DEPARTMENT. Sheriff Dept. request is 3.8% over target set by county commissioners. Positive points are that this department cut much of the overage from its budget already, e.g., office equipment, lab equipment, and supplies. Also, incoming revenues are scheduled to increase more than the budget increase for expenditures. Electronic records management is proceeding apace, as is progress toward full accreditation. Adding another cyber-crimes investigator to handle online criminal activity is a plus.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Delete recruiting advertising; other recruiting mechanisms are sufficient.
- Hire private security firms for civic center security and courthouse entrance security.
- Outsource civilian jobs.
- Alter shift arrangements to reduce overtime and call in pay.
- Freeze and leave vacant positions.
- Require uniformed officers to pay a portion of their uniform costs.
- The crime lab has increased outside revenue over the last few years. The department should continue to actively market its services to other jurisdictions.
- Require local school districts to pay entire salary and benefits for school resource officers (deputies).
- Host SWAT team training sessions.
- Split patrol territory with Omaha Police Dept.
- Increase fines.
- Auction all seized assets.
- Lobby congress and legislature to change statutes, so that dept. can use confiscated money and property for additional expenditures and prohibit feds from taking back confiscated monies.
- Quicken accreditation to remove it from annual budget.
- Join an interlocal pool to purchase office supplies.

YOUTH CENTER. This dept. implemented a multi-disciplinary treatment team and mental health professionals to help youth. Admissions continue to drop. Personnel numbers the same. General Fund request is up 9%. More revenue accrued from pay phones, U.S. Marshal Office, and Sarpy County referrals.

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NTF Recommendations:

- Video /Skype court appearances save time and money, particularly for detention hearings. Expanding this technique could significantly reduce detainee stays at the youth center.
- The department should not increase staff and should prepare to reduce headcount through attrition and retirements, as admissions dropping.
- Recognizing the volume of incarceration is decreasing, department costs for laundry, meals, and food items indicates good cost control but consider more competitive privatization nonetheless.
- Expand private sector donations for furniture, food, clothing, office and cleaning supplies, etc.
- Costs for professional psychological services dropped because of a new company contract. These cost reductions point out the benefit of competitive bidding.
- Find out how stable are grants and what dept. must do to continue applying for them.
- Explore more ways for incarcerated juveniles to pay for their incarceration.

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