

Administrative Services Committee Meeting

Douglas County, Nebraska

Tuesday, April 24, 2018

The meeting convened at 2:04 P.M. in Room 903 of the Omaha-Douglas Civic Center, 1819 Farnam Street, Omaha, NE 68183. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is located on the wall near the entrance of the room. A notice of the meeting was published in the April 17, 2018, issue of *The Daily Record*. County Commissioner Jim Cavanaugh chairs the committee. Others present at the meeting included Joe Lorenz, Marcos San Martin, Leia Baez, and Diane Carlson, Administration; John Solano, Garage; Tom McDonald, Engineer's office; Paul Johnson and Hameidah Alsafwani, Emergency Management; Brian Kruse, Justine Kessler and Ty Stephenson, Election Commission; Jeff Stevens, Nebraska Tax Payers for Freedom; and Constance Mierendorf, Douglas County Clerk/Comptroller's office.

A video recording of the meeting is available on the Douglas County Website:

<http://commissioners.douglascounty-ne.gov/board-meetings/videos>

Engineer

- Commissioner Cavanaugh opened the meeting saying that all of the departments presenting had met the target Joe Lorenz had set for them. He said he had comparison numbers from last year and would probably ask questions based on those numbers. Of interest in these presentations are the goals of the departments as well.
- Tom McDonald presented the Engineer's budget. \$243,212.07 is the budget for funding from the general fund. This is 5.47% below target. (See Attachment A)
- Projected expenditures are \$38,284,813 with a \$2,016,467 surplus they are required to maintain for the AAA bond rating.
- Projected available revenue is \$40,301,280 including roads and bridges.
- The source of that revenue is fuel tax money from highway allocation.
- Joe Lorenz said there is a transfer from the Engineer's fund to offset the General Fund, so net-net there is no effect on the General Fund.
- Cavanaugh asked about the \$2 million special purpose money.
- Joe Lorenz said it stays in a separate roads fund that is carried over and cannot be used for anything else.

Purchasing

- John Solano presented the budget for Purchasing. (See Attachment B)
- Several goals are in process including implementing a barcode based inventory system at the warehouse and hiring an assistant warehouse supervisor who has some experience with that system.

- Purchasing is conducting a cost-benefit analysis of an online bidding platform.
- The print shop is migrating from mainframe to the Oracle platform for its billing system.
- Purchasing overall is on target for its budget.
- The department is working with the County Clerk's office to refine the County Fixed Assets process.
- Revenues are the same for the past 3 years; however, to date, revenues are up approximately \$200,000 ahead of last year. Mr. Lorenz said he would follow up with Eric Carlson about the increase.

Garage

- John Solano, Fleet Supervisor, said the Garage has several goals it is implementing including revising the Douglas County Fleet Management Policy. (See Attachment C)
- The Garage has been effective in managing the cost of the fleet using the cost per mile (CPM) model. The Douglas County Garage CPM is \$.38/mile while the national average is \$.60/mile.
- Mr. Solano said he was able to achieve this low rate by soliciting multiple vendors, updating bids, and looking for the lowest rates on fuel.
- The maintenance facility just had replacement of all of its bay doors approved by the Board. The doors were installed in 1978.
- Upgrading and installing diagnostic software has helped the department keep maintenance in-house and reduced the need to send vehicles to dealerships for repair.
- The next major project at the Garage will be the replacement of the roof. The building was built in 1913 and the roof is 29-30 years old.
- The F.T.E. at the Garage has remained steady at 11. 9 of the employees are members of the Teamsters. 1 belongs to I.B.E.W.
- Revenue for the Garage is approximately \$350,000. This comes from the maintenance the Garage performs for outside entities like the Omaha Housing Authority and Eastern Nebraska Human Services.
- The fees for maintenance have been incrementally increased from \$41.50/hour 3 years ago to \$91/hour as of January. This is still considerably lower than the private commercial rate.
- The Garage generally ends the year with a surplus. Mr. Solano said it is important to maintain that surplus in the event we have a severe winter.
- The general equipment budget remains the same from year to year: \$513,000 for new vehicles and equipment. 95% of those purchases are done on state contract at prices lower than other dealers.
- Five years ago, the average age of the fleet's vehicles was 14 years; today the average age of the fleet is 7 years.
- The Garage supports all County vehicles for maintenance and repair.

- Joe Lorenz said John Solano has been doing a great job at the Garage. He has brought the Garage into the 21st Century, introduced new technology, and lowered the cost per mile and average age of the fleet. This is a trouble free department.

Election Commission

- Brian Kruse, Election Commissioner, introduced Justine Kessler, Elections Manager, and Ty Stephenson, Accounting Coordinator. He discussed his mission, goals and objectives. (See Attachment D)
- In order to provide voters with the best possible voting experience, the Election Commission sent letters to 3,000 voters in the area of 168th Street, Blondo to Maple. This area is under heavy construction that might impede voters from getting to the polls. The letters offered them vote by mail and early voting options to make the voting as convenient as possible.
- The Commission recently underwent an audit by Mike Dwornicki. Mr. Kruse said Mr. Dwornicki found no major errors or omissions and had a few good suggestions, which his office has implemented.
- The Election Commission recovers costs from special elections, which is approximately \$300,000 for the upcoming year. The State and Federal governments do not reimburse the County for their elections; however, OPPD, MUD, and school boards do reimburse. Last year there were 4 special elections, which would be revenue neutral.
- Commissioner Cavanaugh asked about the FTE at the Commission and noted that it had remained steady at 13.
- Mr. Kruse said that in the year 2000, there were 269,000 registered voters; as of April 1, 2018, there are approximately 350,000 registered voters. In 2016, 1/3 of those voters did early voting (88,000 of 243,000 total voters). He expects early voting to continue to rise.
- Mr. Kruse hires temporary workers for elections.
- He also noted that voting by mail continues to grow. It is very labor intensive. For example, during the 2016 presidential election, workers handled 275,000 pieces of paper related to early voting. This trend seems to be continuing and Mr. Kruse may have to add one position before the next presidential election.
- All special elections last year were done by mail. This boosted participation considerably. There was a 35-40% return on ballots. If these elections had been in-person voting, the return would have been from 10-20%. Mr. Kruse said more voices were heard through the vote by mail process.
- Washington and Oregon are totally vote by mail states and other states are seeing rising trends in voting by mail.
- Mr. Kruse said his budget ebbs and flows with the election cycles. Douglas County has 237 precincts and 220 polling places. As of April 1, there are 347,240 registered voters in the County. This is down slightly from the presidential election.

- The Election Commission updates the voter rolls weekly. They work with data from Health and Human Services to remove people who have died and also work with a cross-state program that monitors people who have moved.
- Commissioner Cavanaugh asked how Douglas County could increase voter registration.
- Mr. Kruse said the Election Commission works with groups that register voters like the League of Women Voters, Black Lives Matter and both political parties. The Commission assists them with voter registration but does not engage in a voter registration campaign itself. 83% of eligible voters are registered in Douglas County.
- Commissioner Cavanaugh said he wanted Mr. Kruse to return at a later date for a facilities presentation.

Emergency Management

- Paul Johnson, Emergency Management Director, said he is looking forward to moving to the West Maple campus.
- He is meeting with Jeff McGill from Public Properties on Friday to discuss interior design details.
- Commissioner Cavanaugh invited Mr. Johnson to do a walk-through of the new facility in the near future.
- Mr. Johnson introduced Hameidah Alsafwani who has been interning at Emergency Management this past year. She is graduating from UNO in Emergency Management in May.

The meeting adjourned at 2:57 P.M.