

Muscatine County Board of Supervisors  
Monday, January 16, 2024

The Muscatine County Board of Supervisors met in special session at 9:00 A.M. with Chick, Kirchner, Mather, Sauer and Sorensen present. Chairperson Sorensen presiding.

On a motion by Sauer, second by Mather, the agenda was approved as presented. Ayes: All.

Unity Public Health Director Jen Craft reviewed the FY24/25 budget requests stating she started as Director on January 2, 2024 and previously served as manager of Eastern Iowa Region Crisis system. Craft presented a handout and reviewed the past year's services the department provided. Craft provided a budget request justification report and stated any budget increases will be designated for salary increases. The report included county budget reports to show the cost per citizen with Muscatine County as \$6.61 per citizen for FY24/25 which is an 18-cent increase. Mather asked why the Emergency Prep & Response Grant is no longer the large grant funding received from year 2021-23. Stephanie Otskey, Public Health Project Manager, stated the grant was during COVID-19 relief funding and is no longer available.

County Conservation Director Katie Hammond reviewed the FY24/25 budget request justification list stating salaries for seasonal employees is being increased to pay more and retain good help or hire help who want to go into conservation as a field. Maintenance repair has an increase to repair older buildings. Hammond stated a big project to run the city sewer and water to Deep Lakes Park and the proposed maintenance building for Deep Lakes Park is another priority project. Hammond stated the Saulsbury lodge and buildings have recently had new roofs put on with insurance funding and stated the lodge needs new carpet and windows however it is utilized and rented regularly. Saulsbury campground has been upgraded the electric to 50-amp service. Chick asked about the proposed project to construct a maintenance building at Deep Lakes Park. Hammond stated a parcel of land was recently purchased adjacent to the park and the Conservation Board is discussing if the house should be torn down to potentially build on the property. Chick asked about the proposed shelter request for Deep Lakes Park. Hammond stated it is proposed to be by the beach area. Hammond stated she is requesting Huffcutt pit toilets (pre-fab unit with the plumbing built into the walls) which are easier to clean and harder for vandalism to occur. The pit toilets are requested for Saulsbury Chicken Creek area to replace an old bathroom with old wood slats. Hammond stated the patrol vehicles requests listed are to replace 2017 and 2018 vehicles. Administrative Director Nancy Schreiber asked for an explanation on two externs listed under recreational supplies in the amount of \$2,000. Hammond stated the externs are teachers from the school district who work the summer through the district which will cost \$2,000, compared to seasonal summer help that would cost \$8,000. Hammond stated former Conservation Director Curt Weiss was law enforcement and Hammond is not. Hammond is proposing a change to Ryne Brimeyer's position to supervise and be responsible for law enforcement employees that are completing their requirements. This supervisory change may create a compensation increase for Brimeyer. Hammond reviewed the Deep Lake Cabins increase in reservations and the revenue increases it generates. Sauer requested a list of annual cabin reservations for review. Sorensen asked for the status of the Deep Lakes Park sewer and water project. Hammond stated County Attorney Jim Barry has sent agreements to the City of Muscatine and Muscatine Power and Water with no response at this time. Hammond has contacted the engineering firm to request a timeline.

Medical Examiner Tom Summitt reviewed the FY24/25 budget request for an increase for training and meals/lodging for a new examiner. Summitt stated there are no significant changes with other budget items. Summitt reported there were 339 deaths in 2023 and there have been 21 deaths since January 1, 2024.

County Sheriff Quinn Riess reviewed the FY24/25 budget request stating there are increases for the patrol budget for education and training (patrol and jail budget), motor vehicle and equipment, motor vehicle set up expense, guns and ammunition. Riess stated the communications equipment budget increase is for a switch to a watch guard camera system. Riess stated the jail budget shows increases for salaries and the Accurate Controls Contract is a new line item to replace the Johnson Control system. Medical Contract budget is a significant decrease due to a change to a mental health contract that is not been signed. Riess stated they receive reimbursement from the Mental Health region for services and stated they currently have one full-time nurse and one contracted nurse. Medical supplies, Utilities and Food Provisions are increases due to industry increases. Riess stated Waste Disposal Services stayed the same as the department has transitioned to Oveson Refuse & Recycling LLC with has made for a substantial reduction in costs and the company is easier to deal with. Dues & Memberships has increased as the Iowa State Sheriff & Deputies Association has opened up membership to include correctional staff and reserve officers. Chick asked if the Riess expects a law enforcement shooting range property to be secured this next year and if commissary funds will always be available to maintain a new facility over the next few years. Riess stated no, as he cannot guarantee the entire commissary funds will always be available for a facility as he has other projects or expenses that arise. Riess stated the Jail Diversion program will be on hold starting February 8, 2024 due to an employee who oversees the program will be on maternity leave. Riess stated federal indictments numbers have decreased which is a concern for revenue.

Riess presented the ARPA Muscatine County Drug Task Force Post Completion report (for which \$75,000 was allocated in October 2022 for a five-year stainability). The statistics for calendar year 2023 for the Muscatine County Drug Task force which Detective Sheridan Billhorn is the head of the force: 50 arrests for both drug possession and drug trafficking, issued and served 30 search warrants, identified nine drug trafficking organizations, worked with other counties with warrants. Riess reported the force confiscated the following: 620 grams of cocaine, 1200 grams of methamphetamine, 70 grams of marijuana, 500 fentanyl pills, 14 fire arms and \$5400 in currency. Riess stated he is concerned with the growing number of fentanyl pill overdose cases in our area. Riess stated the Drug Task Force took part in 183 operations and assisted other counties on local, state and federal levels.

The Board recess at 10:40 A.M. and reconvened at 10:49 A.M.

Community Services Director Felicia Toppert reviewed the FY24/25 budget request stating there are no significant changes. Toppert stated the General Assistance budget for MCSA Rent Payments have been lowered by \$3,0000 but the MCSA Shelter Base Rate has been increased \$3,000 due to citizens being shelter repeaters and some shelter stays also go over the 90 days allowed. Toppert stated for out of county citizens the shelter only allows for a seven day stay unless MCSA uses federal money or they can move them to another shelter. Toppert stated she

has not increased her budget in food and rent as there are federal dollars to supplement but those funds are waning. Toppert stated she will be reviewing the current rent payments budget and other resources available with the new Community Services Director Jessica Bopes. Schreiber stated the salary increases are mostly due to the additional social worker who was just hired and currently there are two Directors until Toppert's retirement. Toppert reviewed Veteran's Affairs budget request with no significant changes except for required training, food and travel expenses for Veteran's Affairs Director Eric Sanders. Toppert complimented Sanders work with veterans and how his work has been heavily integrated into the entire department for the purpose of veterans who are trust clients, fiduciary side and military pensions for conservators. Toppert stated she has taken out service management from the mental health administration budget as the service management is defined by the regional CEO's who determine what is required. Toppert stated the Community Services department does not have the time to provide the required services but Toppert can make referrals to the care coordinators. Toppert stated she may propose of MCSA to take the shelter contract and apply the money toward the permanent supported housing project which will lower the amount of beds in the shelter. Toppert thanked the Board for letting her retire from her dream job of working as the Director. Administrative Services Director Nancy Schreiber thanked Toppert for her work with stabilizing the department and that she has expressed her willingness to be available for questions after retirement.

Administrative Services Director Nancy Schreiber reviewed the Administration/Board of Supervisors FY24/25 budget request stating the increase for salaries is primarily the adjustment for regrading Budget Administrator Kala Naber's position recently.

Budget Administrator Kala Naber reviewed the Court Services FY24/25 budget requests stating there is a large increase in Juvenile Detention budget due to state law requiring the county pay for detention stays. Naber stated DHS budget has decreased their budget item for telephone service and a decrease is shown for DHS reimbursements.

Budget Administrator Kala Naber reviewed the Non-Departmental FY24/25 budget requests stating estimated increases for MUSCOM are due to moving to ISICS contract fees. Schreiber stated liability insurance and the public officers bond shows a significant increase as the ICAP agent has notified all counties to expect a 40% increase.

Budget Administrator Kala Naber reviewed the Capital Projects/LATCF/ARPA - FY24/25 budget requests reviewed the Capital Project plan report with the Board. Naber stated the LATCF balance of \$55,000 needs to be obligated by December 2024 and expended by 2026. Naber stated ARPA funds for the Auditor's office remodel are being proposed to be reallocated to the indoor sports complex and the courthouse roof replacement project.

The Board recess at 12:52 P.M. and reconvened at 12:56 P.M.

The Board reviewed the General Fund summaries, General Supplemental Fund report and levy rate options presented by Naber.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:56 P.M.

ATTEST:

---

Tibe Vander Linden  
County Auditor

---

Jeff Sorensen, Chairperson  
Board of Supervisors