The Budget Committee of the Rock Island County Board met on Thursday, September 12, 2013 in the conference room of the County Board Office. Chairperson Don Jacobs called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

Committee Members Present: Jacobs, Banaszek, Vyncke, Ballard, Moreno, Westpfahl, Maranda and Terry

Others Present: John Massa,

Motion by Westpfahl, second by Vyncke to approve the minutes of the September 5th meeting.

Highway
Salary issues have been corrected. Expenses were increased for Maximus cost allocation to Liability Fund and he would like to have the revenue increased to match that. We need to keep the Highway Fund growing in order to maintain and preserve our roadways.

GF increase by $33,563 and Liability increase by $106,906 - requesting to increase the tax levy to cover the additional expenses. New Highway Levy would be $1,259,069 if approve the additional tax revenue. Total tax increase would then be 12.62%. This amounts to maybe a $30 annual increase in property taxes for the average taxpayer.

Westpfahl stated that you are elected to do a job, not elected to get re-elected. Need to do the job. We have to explain what the County does and what we have been living on. We have a $26 million GF budget with over half of that going to the Sheriff. We have been spending down our cash balances and now we have nothing left.

We have over $180 million in TIF’s.

Motion by Maranda, second by Shelton to approve the Highway Department levy. Carried.

IMRF
$3.3

Motion by Westpfahl second by Moreno. Carried.

Liability to $2,150,000

Motion by Moreno, second by Westpfahl to approve Liability Insurance levy at $2,150,000. Carried with Terry voting no.
It is either this or reducing employees. Terry asked if it was really that black & white - raise taxes? VanDaele stated that some of the funds are only revenue is taxes. Terry wondered about furlough days, reductions in salaries or exploring other ways to increase revenue.

Terry asked about furlough days - closing certain departments a day or so of the week. Stulir added that it has to be done as a union as a whole. Chairman Banaszek stated that this has been addressed several times recently, even met with the Elected Officials and Department heads earlier today on this and met with the Union President just prior to this meeting. Shelton added that the offices have been very cooperative with the cuts and reducing their budgets. Doing it for the right thing but at the end of the day, end up at the same place, what have you gained? In the last years, Board Members have refused per diem and mileage to save the budget. We are in no better shape. Jacobs added that the $6 million in property taxes was a lot in 1983, but the state hasn’t allowed that to change. We are strapped by what the state will allow.

Joining the meeting was Sheriff Boyd, Captain Bustos, Captain Marlier, Captain Fisher, Captain VenHuizen, Kelly Fisher, Jeannette Hunter,

Sheriff - total budget 14,186,982. = expenses w/o salaries - looked at revenue and expenses - looked at Cook County revenue add $75,000 to $250,000. He is comfortable with that. Vehicle change 336,200 = decrease by 76,200 to 260,000

Contracts jail - reduce Aramark 43,000 - reduce RX by 150,000

$14,914,105

Grand total 334,200 feels they are doable reductions coupled with the revenue increases.

Appreciate the effort, but it doesn’t do us any good.

In December, we will have used all our tax money and will be $500,000 in the hole. Will have to borrow immediately in January and then when taxes are received in June will have to pay back and immediately re-borrow. In the GF, all but 2 are statutory offices. Appreciate the effort. Asking 10% from everyone, hope they will all come up with it.

From the start of budget to now, the budget is reduced about $750,000 for the Sheriff. Board realizes that they have done everything and are appreciative.

GF deficit is $1,782,445. With the Sheriff reductions, it is still over $1.4m in the hole.
Vyncke asked about the contracts for outlying areas. Long term contracts until about 2016. Have been good partners over the years with all the municipalities. Will take a hit with raising property taxes of 15.22% in other funds this year to try and cover the costs in the General Fund. Will try and finance the jail projects with Inmate Welfare, but the project must somehow tie into the inmates.

Kelly added that elected officials pay for various items out of their document funds such as employees to help the county out, they don’t have to do that. Other than salaries, her budget is about $3000 in supplies, so her 10% would be $300.

Sheriff Boyd added that the DOC’s re-writing guidelines and the one issue has been the Inmate Welfare Fund. Need to be sure that the expenses will somehow benefit the inmates.

How to get to the $1.8 deficit. Layoffs no one wants to talk about. Have heard discussions about furlough days. Will have to look across the board and see what it will take. Will hit union and non-union.

Find out the max furlough days - get together and see what it will take. Would prefer a furlough over a layoff. Have reduced staff over the years, sacrifices with health insurance, looking at many areas and still not getting where we need to be. If departments can’t come up with the 10%, we will have to look at furloughs.

Captain Fisher stated that the Cook County deal is a great revenue boost for the County. Of the 27 currently in the jail, there are 11 murderers. Walking a very fine line looking out for the staff, and he would hate to put his staff in danger. Had a legitimate escape attempt recently even at lower population. Still dealing with people who want to hurt them and to get out of jail. They need 110,000 man hours and are operating at about 105,000 man hours currently due to training and being people down.

Chairman Banaszek stated that if a department can meet the 10% reduction as requested, then have to look at it another way. Furlough days or something. Ballard understands corrections and how critical public safety is, is very cautious about furloughs at the jail or on the streets.

Discussion on how the 10% was arrived. If every department reduced by 10% across the board, including salaries, then would meet the gap. Ballard stated that it will have to be non-essential positions.

Motion by Vyncke to approve the reductions presented by the Sheriff. Second by Shelton. Carried.

Go with the 10% reduction - will still have to borrow. Anything we borrow, have to pay interest on.
Wiped out $481,000 from the Maximus HCC to GF, would have made them even worse but would have helped the GF.

1/4 cent sales tax for law enforcement would be beneficial and may pass, but with the schools putting on a full cent sales tax referendum it would most likely go down.

Figure out what we need - here's your pot of money - you make the decision on how to spend it. Don't know of any other fair way to do it. Don't know how many more layoffs we could handle and still provide services.

Figure out the maximum number of furlough days and then a formula of how much we need. Stulir stated that when we sit down, will want everyone to have furlough, union/non-union all. C/O's would look at furlough when staffing would allow. Webber added that it needs to be across the board. Every employee, average salary.

Total salaries are $16,739,214 in the General Fund.

There are so many issues from many different years that have caused this problem. Low levies, high union contract settlements, failure to increase property taxes a little at a time.

Set another meeting for next week.

Encourage to take when have 3 payrolls to help us with making payroll - Ewert stated. Fisher agreed - has to be everyone. Stulir will get with Banaszek next week to see how many furloughs would be needed or if layoffs are needed.

Kinney agreed, it should be for all.

Wed 09-19 at 5p

Adjourn at 644pm.
Shelly Chapman