

Kitsap County Citizen's Budget Committee March 2, 2009

Attending: Steve Maxim, Chair; Members: Gary Nelson, Bob Lamb, John Ahl, Robert Meadows, Kitty Candelaria, Shannon Childs, Chris Tibbs, Rob Gelder; Nancy Buonanno Grennan, County Administrator; Stephanie Pinard, Administrative Services; Deanna Erstad, Commissioners Office.

Absent: Jim Sommerhauser, Monica Hunsaker

Steve called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm and said this meeting would be a study session to try to come up with the basic issues to submit to the Commissioners. He briefly reviewed the issues from the December work study meeting.

Discussion Points:

Robert said we need to shift from asking questions to writing up what we think. Two points of concern for him are:

- Veteran's Relief
- Cencom Tax

Robert said he will have his information together within a week.

Kitty talked about the need for veterans – funding for counseling and health issues. She questioned whether the Veterans' Relief fund can be used for that. She said that the veterans are not being directed as to where to go for services when they are discharged from the service. Steve asked if she could come up with more information on this. This fund was originally set up for indigent veterans. Kitty said that Public Health is going to ask for an emergency tax. Robert said he understands that the tax is to be used for new services not existing services. He said the Veterans Relief property tax has built the fund up so high that they are now trying to figure out how to spend it. John said this is the responsibility of the Veterans Administration – is this really a county issue?

Shannon's issues are:

- Harborside Condos
- Questioned the possibility of county going to cities to help cover the loss.

Nancy explained that the debt for the condos is not shared by the cities but the operating losses for KCCHA are covered by member agencies. The loss associated with Harborside will be absorbed by the county.

Bob's issues are:

- Salary raise for the Commissioners
- Money spent on the retreat
- Use of common sense

He will write up and have ready within 10 days.

Chris' issues:

- Poulsbo Court – what was the determining factor in closing the Silverdale court instead of the Poulsbo court? People need to realize that Port Orchard is the county seat. Why are we so determined to have a court in Poulsbo?
- Why does North Kitsap Commissioner have office space in Kingston?
- Coroner's Office – not being reimbursed for their services by cities, military, tribes?
- Why does county have a SWAT team when the Washington State Patrol has one also?
- Court Reporters – why so many?

John's issues:

- Consolidation of functions
- Reorganization in times of budget shortfalls
- Sheriff's "water fleet"
- Extend life of Sheriff vehicle fleet
- Transportation management
- Contract administration functions

- Parks & Recreation – revenue increase opportunities
- Look at closing certain parks
- Maybe the Commissioners should have a contingency plan for a 5-15% reduction in revenue.
- Can they go to voters to ask for a lid lift on property taxes?

Gary's issues:

- County offices “spend or lose it” mindset
- Need to take a look at how we spend our budget
- Soften your words – the way you word your issues when presenting to Commissioners. – Gary will look at the way Thurston County worded theirs and bring back to committee

Steve's issues:

- Feels the county infrastructure has become somewhat bloated over the last few years – need to ratchet back for these lean times to a more reasonable size of county government. Maybe cut total budget back to 300,000,000

Shannon said she doesn't know of another organization who hasn't drawn down their 2009 budgets 10-20%. Need to be proactive not reactive.

Bob asked when the money coming in from the federal government in form of grants etc gets cut – does the county supplement the programs?

Kitty said that when services get so cut down that we end up with more crime, mental illness, health issues.

She is also concerned about districts (health, fire etc) that have overlapping funds from federal and state that come to the county for funding. They are not good at disclosing these overlapping funds. Why is county still funding when they are getting funding from state and federal.

Issue of “foregone revenue” was assigned to Jim Sommerhauser.

Rob's and Steve brought up the issue of all the committees and advisory boards that require county staff coverage – do they really add value and justify the use of county staff time.

They also discussed the number of boards and committees the Commissioners serve on – can they assign someone else to attend – are these meetings diluting their time as Commissioners.

Shannon said the county also needs to address the long term effect icw incorporation and annexation.

Steve and Monica will put together the information from the issue papers and bring back to next meeting. The committee will then vote to submit the document to the BOCC

It was recommended that after the Commissioners have a chance to look at our recommendations we would like to have a follow-up meeting with them to see if we are on the right track.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.