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**BOARD OF ISLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MINUTES OF MEETING
DECEMBER 1, 2008 – REGULAR SESSION**

The Board of Island County Commissioners (including Diking Improvement District #4) met in Regular Session on December 1, 2008 beginning at 10:00 a.m. in the Board of County Commissioners Hearing Room (Room # 102B), Annex Building, 1 N.E. 6th Street, Coupeville, Washington. John Dean, Chairman and William L. McDowell, Member were present. Helen Price Johnson, Member, attended and participated via telephone. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC INPUT OR COMMENTS

Ren Strong and Melissa Mong spoke on behalf of Strong Sea Taxi. Mr. Strong congratulated Commissioner Price Johnson on the election and thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak. He is hopeful to “ease” the County’s budget for 2009 in terms of being a practical resource and suggested the Board contact Strong Sea Taxi with any questions concerning ferry service between Whidbey and Camano.

Chairman Dean commented that Mike Morton, the County’s Transportation Planner, is in the process of expediting the number of staff who travel between Coupeville and Camano. That information, when received, will be relayed to Captain Terek.

CONSENT AGENDA

By unanimous motion the Board approved the Consent Agenda as follows:

ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFERS, PAYROLL, VOUCHERS, PAYMENT OF BILLS

Vouchers (War) #s 300938-301124 \$236,085.58
Electronic Fund Transfers..... \$ 1,421.56
Payroll dated November 26, 2008

APPOINTMENTS/RE-APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Marine Resources Committee (MRC)

Appointment of Leonard Corin to serve on the Marine Resources Committee (MRC) representing Recreational Users. This term will run until December 31, 2011

HUMAN RESOURCES

Personnel Action Authorizations

| <u>Department</u> | <u>PAA #</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Position #</u> | <u>Action</u> | <u>Eff. Date</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Juvenile & Family C Services | 158/08 | CASA Admin Assi | 1908.01 | Replacement Positior (Amanda Smith) | 12-15-08 |

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PUBLIC HEALTH

Contract with WA State Department of Social and Health Services, Medicaid Administrative Match Continues Medicaid Administrative Match funding for eligible services through 2010. Contract No. 0963-53329; Contract Amount: Fee for Service (RM-HLTH-08-0260)

Amendment No. 12 to Contract with WA State Department of Health – Consolidated Contract Amendment continues funding for Child Death Review, Maternal & Child Health and Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response programs. Contract No. C14949; Contract Amount: \$1,701,777; Amendment Amount: \$175,454 (RM-HLTH-08-0250)

Memorandum of Understanding between the Island County Sheriff's Office and the Island County Health Department for nursing services. Continues jail nursing program for 2009. Contract No. HD/5-08; Contract Amount: \$55,000 (RM-HLTH-08-0252)

Memorandum of Understanding between the Island County Juvenile Court Services Department and the Island County Health Department for nursing services. Continues the Juvenile Detention Center nursing services program for 2009. Contract No. HD-14-08; Contract Amount: Not to exceed \$22,000 (RM-HLTH-08-0253)

Amendment No. 1 to Contract with Bess Windecker Nelson, PhD for Parent Educator Program. Fund additional consultation and staffing of "Mother's Circle" support groups and "P.I.C.E.L." group. Contract No. HD-46-07; Contract Amount: \$19,260; Amendment Amount: \$3,300 (RM-HLTH-05-0011)

REGULAR AGENDA

Planning & Community Development

APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE C-130-08 [PLG-17-08] IN THE MATTER OF PROPOSING REVISIONS TO THE ISLAND COUNTY WETLANDS ORDINANCE TO COMPLY WITH THE DECISION OF THE WESTERN WASHINGTON GROWTH MANAGEMENT HEARINGS BOARD

The Board is requested to take action, via Ordinance C-130-08 [PLG-17-08] In the Matter of Proposing Revisions to the Island County Wetlands Ordinance to Comply with the Decision of the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board, by sending to the Planning Commission for review certain amendments to the critical areas ordinance in response to the decision of the Growth Management Hearings Board. Mr. Tate explained that the Growth Management Hearings Board returned its decision asking the County to revisit three issues of the wetlands ordinance. Those issues must first go through Planning Commission review with a recommendation developed by the Planning Commission and forwarded to the Board of Commissioners for consideration.

Following a Planning Commission public hearing, scheduled for December 17, staff will bring a follow on ordinance to the Board for consideration of the Planning Commission's recommendation. Mr. Tate does not suspect that it will be that challenging of a series of issues for the Planning Commission to address, the issues are relatively minor. He is confident that the Planning Commission will be able to tackle the three issues in a single hearing. The Department will directly advise the appellants in the wetlands appeal, CARE and WEAN, of the public hearing and that the hearing will be held on Camano Island. General public notification will occur as well.

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Commissioner McDowell moved to forward Ordinance C-130-08 [PLG-17-08] In the Matter of Proposing Revisions to the Island County Wetlands Ordinance to Comply with the Decision of the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board to the Planning Commission for a public hearing on December 17, 2008.

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With respect to the last sentence in the first *ORDAINED* clause that reads: *The Planning Commission shall consider these proposed amendments and report back to the Board of County Commissioners by December 17, 2008*, Commissioner Price Johnson questioned whether *report back ... by December 17* should be amended, to be more accurate, since **the Department will not be able to report by December 17 since that is the day of the public hearing**.

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Mr. Tate said he believes that staff can meet that deadline by preparing the recommendation that the Planning Commission develops following the public hearing **the evening of December 17**. The Board however, will not receive the recommendation until December 18 after the office opens.

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It was moved by Commissioner McDowell to forward Ordinance C-130-08 [PLG-17-08] In the Matter of Proposing Revisions to the Island County Wetlands Ordinance to Comply with the Decision of the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board to the Planning Commission for a public hearing on December 17, 2008, seconded by Commissioner Price Johnson, unanimously carried. (GMA No. 10100)

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[Item 12 pulled from the Regular Agenda, Interlocal Cooperative Agreement with Town of Coupeville for Stormwater Quality Monitoring Services to be provided by Island County]

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PUBLIC HEARINGS

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HEARINGS HELD: BUDGET ADOPTION AND TAX LEVIES

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At 10:15 a.m. the Chairman opened public hearings to consider the following Resolution and three Ordinances related to adopting the 2009 Island County Budget:

Resolution C- 118 -08 Adopting the Island County Budget and Diking District No. 4 Budget for Fiscal Year 2009

Ordinance C- 119 -08 Increasing the Taxing District's Prior Year's Levy Amount for Collection in Fiscal Year 2009 for the County Current Expense Levy

Ordinance C- 120 -08 Increasing the Taxing District's Prior Year's Levy Amount for Collection in Fiscal Year 2009 for the County Road Levy

Ordinance C- 121 -08 Increasing the Taxing District's Prior Year's Levy Amount for Collection in Fiscal Year 2009 for the County Conservation Futures Levy

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Handouts provided:

- Island County's 2009 Budget Basics
- Staffing Levels (FTEs)
- Budget graphs for all funds and current expense fund

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Elaine Marlow, Budget Director, started by saying that the budget process began in July with the Board holding approximately 21 workshops.

The total 2009 budget for all funds is approximately \$67.7 million, representing an 8% decrease from 2008. Overall, the budget's major impacts in revenue loss are sales taxes, forecasted to be at the same level as 2008 instead of at a 5-10% growth which has happened in the past. Also, interest revenue projected to be \$400,000 less than 2008. Ms. Marlow remains concerned about that estimate as talked about with the Board at earlier budget workshops. Given the state of the financial markets she believes the Treasurer may be challenged to make that estimate.

The total estimate for salaries and benefits for 2009 is approximately \$30 million and the budget does not provide any estimates for cost of living allowances. There are two major union agreements that will expire at the end of the year; one is the Sheriff's Deputies Guild and the other the 1845-I contract representing the courthouse employees. Overall salaries and benefits were reduced 2% but due to revenue decreases in current expense, staffing levels in the current expense fund have decreased approximately 3 FTEs, resulting in a savings of over \$1 million dollars to the general fund. Many Department Heads and Elected Officials planned ahead so over 16 of those positions will be reduced by attrition from currently vacant positions.

The result of the Board establishing priorities was that less than one position was reduced in the Law and Justice group with the vast majority of staff reductions coming from Administrative, General, and Health services. New positions for 2009 occurred in the Human Services area as a result of the mental health sales taxes; approximately 6.4 positions in Human Services and an additional 1.1 position in the drug courts. Maintenance and operations decreased by about \$2 million resulting in an 8% decrease and capital projects decreased by approximately \$3 million.

Continuing Ms. Marlow said that the use of fund balance in 2008 decreased overall by approximately 33%, especially in County roads. Last year the use of fund balance was approximately \$2.3 million and in 2008 it will be about one-half million. The reason for the decrease is that a major capital project Camano Hill, was completed in 2008.

The general fund will use more fund balance for ongoing items than last year, approximately one-half million. Ms. Marlow, referring to the breakout by category in the handout, said it remains the same approximately from last year increasing by 1 or 2 percentiles.

Finance and administration is 13% of the budget this year; last year it was 15%. General Services about 10%; Law and Justice about 23%; Health and Human Services increased, again as a result of the mental health sales taxes from 8% last year to 12% this year. Public Works remains constant at 42% this year versus 43% last year.

The percentage for the general fund changed; 29% of the total budget is being spent on finance and administration versus 30% last year; General Services is 14% this year versus 16% last year; Health transfers 2% this year versus 3% last year (on-site and hydrogeology programs); and Law and Justice went up to 55% versus 51% last year.

Ms. Marlow said that at the November 26 budget workshop, the Board revised the preliminary budget. Some of the revisions were tentatively approved by all three Board members; some of the revisions only two Board members tentatively approved; there were also some items in the revised preliminary budget that were not discussed; and then some follow-up items. *[Tentative revisions in detail were provided by*

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e-mail dated November 30, 2008 at 5:42 p.m. from Ms. Marlow to the Board of Commissioners. The e-mail is referred to by Ms. Marlow and the Board when presenting motions.]

Revisions to the preliminary budget that all three Board members tentatively approved at earlier budget workshops and now formally considered by the Board are [Item Nos. 1-6 as detailed in the e-mail];

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Planning

- 1) Revise staff reductions by 1 Planner position (estimated cost increase \$60,000) in order to provide adequate staffing levels for the Fish & Wildlife Update, Agriculture BMPs, Affordable Housing Program, and Freeland Development Regulations. Use of available fund balance will be increased by \$60,000.

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Prosecuting Attorney

- 2) Revise proposed staff reduction to substitute laying off a clerical position rather than a deputy prosecutor. Because the savings from a clerical position is less than a deputy prosecutor position items 2 and 3 will be used to resolve the funding gap.
- 3) Use of Mental Health Sales Tax funds (\$13,000) to partially fund the deputy prosecutor position which is assigned to the Therapeutic Courts.
- 4) Move funding (approx. \$16,000) from the Sheriff's budget to the Prosecuting Attorney's budget. The Sheriff's Office will layoff a .4 FTE clerk position in the Civil Division and the funding will be used to partially fund a deputy prosecuting attorney.

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Contingency

- 5) A contingency amount (\$186,000) has been included for possible renegotiation of the Public Defender contract.

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Fuel expenditure line items

- 6) In light of falling fuel prices the Board asked the Ms. Marlow to review fuel lines to see if any of those amounts could be revised. Ms. Marlow recommends \$21,400 overall reduction in Current Expense (Sheriff \$15,000, Assessor \$1,000, Facilities \$3,400, Parks \$2,000).

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¶ Following are revisions to the preliminary budget that only two Commissioners have tentatively approved at earlier budget workshops. Ms. Marlow suggested

By unanimous motion the Board approved Item Nos. 1-6 as described in Ms. Marlow's e-mail

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Next Ms. Marlow said that all three Commissioners discussed two other revisions to the preliminary budget; however, only Chairman Dean and Commissioner Price Johnson were in favor of the revision [items 7-8 as detailed in the e-mail]. Ms. Marlow suggested the Board address each revision individually beginning with Item No. 7.

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Health

- 7) A revised fee increase is proposed to partially fund the on-site septic program. It would require new septic inspection fee when a house is sold and the actual amount of the fee increase has not yet been determined; however, Mr. Higman, Health Director, estimates it to be approx. \$65.

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Chairman Dean said the reason he supports the revision is because the option, as he understands it, is to not have an on-site septic program which he believes sets the County in a wrong direction. While the belief is not to increase or add fees, a fee being assessed at the time a house is sold is a way to obtain the necessary funds to keep the program running.

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Commissioner McDowell spoke in opposition to the revised fee. He said the fee is a new fee for the septic inspection program that was mandated two or three years ago by the State Board of Health. He believes that State programs will curtail due to budget constraints and so the County, in his opinion, could easily curtail for the same period of time the proposed fee until revenues improve. Once the economy improves, the fee could be paid through current expense funds. The Commissioner cannot agree to charge a new fee for such a program, especially in light of the fact that he considers the surface water quality monitoring program currently in place a better alternative. At a minimum a request should be made to the State to delay the mandated program until revenues improve.

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Commissioner Price Johnson said she understands the fee is not an inspection fee but a recording fee, something already mandated by the State, with a goal to keep the aquifers healthy. She believes the program to be a worthy goal and one we need to be sure to support in any possible way and the proposed fee seems to be the only alternative in the ones presented. In Commissioner Price Johnson's opinion there would be no need for additional funds for enforcement because the process would be handled through title company's transaction with assurance, therefore, of a steady source of funding. She respectfully disagreed that studying surface water would take care of the issues surrounded by the septic on-site program; only some of the pollutants may surface in the surface water program but many may not and would instead go to the shorelines.

Chairman Dean moved to approve the on-site septic program inspection fee when a house is sold. Item No. 7, seconded by Commissioner Price Johnson, motion carried by majority vote. Commissioner McDowell opposed the motion.

Ms. Marlow clarified that the action to establish the fee will be taken by the Board of Health if it chooses to do so.

The Board then addressed Item No. 8 in the e-mail.

Sheriff

8) Proposal by Sheriff Brown that in lieu of a 2 FTE in the total number of authorized deputy positions Sheriff Brown proposes replacing 3 fewer patrol vehicles in 2009, which means replacing only 7 patrol vehicles rather than 10.

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Ms. Marlow explained that the original proposal was to reduce the number of deputies in the Sheriff's office by 2 but Sheriff Brown suggested instead to replace 3 fewer patrol vehicles in 2009. Chairman Dean and Commissioner Price Johnson were in support of the proposal; Commissioner McDowell expressed concern.

Commissioner McDowell believes that not replacing the patrol vehicles is merely a temporary patch because the vehicles at some point will need to be replaced; the expense does not go away. It is his feeling that the budget needs to be reduced down to the dollar amount that can be lived with for the next 2-3 years and by letting go of 2 deputies as proposed, the budget would actually be reduced. If the budget is not reduced it will leave employees wondering next year who may be let go. Delaying the cost does not solve the problem.

Chairman Dean said he supported the idea reluctantly. He agrees with Commissioner McDowell in that the proposal is merely postponing the inevitable. He supports it, however, with the belief that Sheriff Brown knows what type of year he is facing and what even tougher decisions he will face at the end of 2009. The Sheriff believes he can buffer some of his loss next year with loss of staff through attrition.

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The Chairman's point of view is a willingness to go out on a limb and buy the Sheriff some time to go through the end of 2008 and 2009 and allow him an opportunity to honor some commitments he has made. Chairman Dean said the decision may not be the best financial choice but for morale and from a management standpoint, it is a trade-off for Chairman Dean so he supports it.

Commissioner Price Johnson moved approval of Item No. 8, seconded by Chairman Dean, with comment from Commissioner Price Johnson.

Commissioner Price Johnson said that Sheriff Brown made it clear that he did not see the proposal as postponing the inevitable as much as just being allowed to manage his department in the way he saw best to accommodate his needs.

It was moved and seconded to accept the proposal by Sheriff Brown, Item No. 8, in lieu of a reduction of 2 FTEs the Board will allow the Sheriff to replace 3 fewer patrol vehicles in 2009, replacing 7 rather than 10 vehicles, motion carried by majority vote. Commissioner McDowell opposed the motion.

Ms. Marlow said the following two items (Nos. 9 and 10) are included in the revised preliminary budget but the Board has not tentatively approved either. No action at this time is required by the Board unless any member chooses to revise the numbers which they did not.

Overhead allocation transfers

9) The total amount of overhead allocation transfers shown as revenue into Current Expense has been reduced by approximately \$48,000. The annual amount is less because some of the staffing reductions are partially funded as overhead transfers from other major funds. Adjustments have also been made to the funds that are charged overhead costs.

Use of fund balance in Current Expense

10) The preliminary budget for Current Expense budgeted \$258,000 use of fund balance. The revised preliminary budget uses approximately \$516,000. The difference is \$258,000 net increase, as follows:

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| 1.0 FTE Planner | \$ 60,000 | (see Item No. 1) |
| Fuel expenditures | (21,000) | (see Item No. 6) |
| Overhead Alloc. Transfers | 48,000 | (see Item No. 9) |
| Contingency Public Defense | 186,000 | (see Item No. 5) |
| Various minor revisions | (15,000) | |
| Total | \$258,000 | |

Ms. Marlow suggested the Board open the public hearing to include at the same time the property tax levies because what happens with the property tax levies will affect the final budget when adopted. Currently the ordinances under consideration for an increase in the property tax levies propose a 1% increase; however, banked capacity is available if the Board chooses to modify those proposed ordinances.

At the last budget workshop the Board discussed the availability of banked capacity and its effect on the levy rate. Current expense has approximately \$66,000 available in banked capacity. If the Board chooses to use all of the banked capacity it would amount to, for a home with an assessed value of approximately

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- First, concerning overhead allocation transfers, Ms. Marlow was able to factor in all the reductions in force and changes in fuel line items, etc., reducing the total amount of overhead allocation transfers by approximately \$48,000. She also made adjustments to funds that are charged to overhead costs.¶ ... [92]
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\$300,000, less than \$2.00 annually, County road fund has \$372,000 in banked capacity; that levy rate on home with an assessed value of \$300,000 would amount to less than \$10 annually.

Chairman Dean opened the floor to public comment concerning:

Resolution C- 118 -08 Adopting the Island County Budget and Diking District No. 4 Budget for Fiscal Year 2009

Ordinance C- 119 -08 Increasing the Taxing District's Prior Year's Levy Amount for Collection in Fiscal Year 2009 for the County Current Expense Levy

Ordinance C- 120 -08 Increasing the Taxing District's Prior Year's Levy Amount for Collection in Fiscal Year 2009 for the County Road Levy

Ordinance C- 121 -08 Increasing the Taxing District's Prior Year's Levy Amount for Collection in Fiscal Year 2009 for the County Conservation Futures Levy

Richard Bryan, 760 Labrador Lane, Coupeville, said he has two objectives concerning the budget: (1) to understand the 2009 revenue problem and why terminating 31 FTEs is the best solution; and (2) to understand the progress made in the 2008 and 2009 spending plans for three specific endeavors. Those endeavors being the enhanced mental health and substance abuse programs for which the sales tax was raised 1/10th of 1% in 2008; the tourism building activity which could be increasingly important as other revenue potentially declines; and IT enhancement to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of Island County operations.

Mr. Bryan addressed the following questions to the Budget Director:

Cost Budgeted for Gasoline

The cost of gasoline will be approximately \$2.80 per gallon, the County's cost. Gas was originally in the budget at \$3.20 or \$3.40 per gallon based on a \$4.00 price to the average consumer.

Reserve Capacity

The budget does not propose using any of the County's \$2.2 million emergency reserves the Board set aside in the case of a major event that would impact the County. At the end of the year Ms. Marlow forecasts there will be approximately \$3 million in available fund balance.

Before the composition of the Board changed there was tentative approval to replace computer systems in the Assessor and Treasurer offices along with a permitting system. Those three systems would allow the County to improve services to the public and hopefully keep down the necessity for future County employees. That would then leave approximately \$2 million available to get the County through the next two years and possibly through a portion of 2011. If expenditures are reduced early that means less growth in salaries, wages, and benefits which is the highest growth area. Ms. Marlow clarified that the most significant decrease in revenue has occurred in the County general fund and it is the County general fund that will have \$3 million in reserves at the end of 2008. The County will spend probably close to \$2 million on new computer systems (hardware and software) for the Assessor, Treasurer, and Planning Departments, leaving \$2 million available to fund operations in current expense; a little less than 2% of the proposed budget.

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Budgets 2008-2009

The total budget for 2008 was not quite \$74 million; the total budget for 2009 is \$67.7 million. Ms. Marlow said the 2009 budget is down 8% from the 2008 budget of \$73.9 million. Revenue is down \$ million overall in the budget from \$73.9 million to roughly \$71.9 million.

Most of the revenue in the budget is set at the same level as where Ms. Marlow thought 2008 would end up. There are some increases in grant funding that have yet to be pulled out so all significant areas at this time cannot be identified. The main revenue sources for the County are property taxes, sales taxes, charges for fees and services, state and local funding, and federal funding.

Revenue

Concerning the decline in sales tax revenue Ms. Marlow said she has not looked at that across all funds there is tax revenue in the 100 plus funds. What she has looked at is the general fund and for the general fund sales tax revenue is down approximately \$1 million from last year's budget and for 2009 is budgeted at the same number as 2008 actual. She forecasted in 2008 a 5% increase. The reality of actual was a 10% decrease which is a 15% net swing. Ms. Marlow will not decrease it another 10% but instead will hold it constant at what she estimates the County will collect for 2008.

The resolutions before the Board are for a 1% increase in property taxes in 2009. Property taxes do factor in the value of new construction so overall for the County general fund the amount would be approximately \$200,000 in property taxes; 1% plus new construction. Ms. Marlow believes new construction amounts to approximately a 2% increase.

It was agreed that Ms. Marlow and Mr. Bryan would meet outside of the public hearing to allow Ms. Marlow an opportunity to gather the numbers Mr. Bryan is asking for concerning the percentages of how the major revenue categories changed between the two budgets and where she believes she will end up at the end of the year.

The one item of concern to Ms. Marlow is interest revenue. Current interest rate is 1.7%. The state pool rate is down to similar levels seen in 2002-2003 where the interest rates were at 1 and 2%. In those years the County collected \$700-\$800 in interest revenue on its investments. The County's Treasurer has done a very good job of laddering her investments but that being said, as those investments mature, Ms. Marlow does not believe the Treasurer will have the opportunity to invest in investments that currently earn 3-4%; it may instead be 1-2%. Ms. Marlow said when that happens interest revenue decreases. The general fund, where the bulk of salaries, wages, and benefits happen to be, is very vulnerable to the decrease in interest revenue. As an example, if off by one-half million dollars, the average cost for an employee is about \$50,000 in the general fund. If we lose one-half million dollars of interest revenue then either we would need to reduce staffing levels, use fund balance, or a combination of the two. Ms. Marlow believes that staffing levels are already low and the public will experience some reduction in services. If interest revenue drops then that drop will become problematic to continue even some of the basic services provided by the general fund.

Staffing Levels, Reduction in FTEs

The staffing level in 2008 was 447; at the end of 2009 it will be 421. There will be approximately a decrease of 31 FTEs but that is off-set by an increase in the Human Services Department of a little over 26 FTEs, a net swing of 26. Ms. Marlow said Department Heads were pro-active in not filling positions as they became vacant. Additionally, the Board looked at a number of options on how to reduce the salaries and wages budget. One idea discussed was an across the board reduction of hours. The challenge with that was, as important needs became known, it would be difficult for the County to ramp up staffing if

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certain areas if everyone's hours were reduced across the board. As an example, in the Assessor's office the Board approved in 2007 an additional position to tackle the segregations backlog. If the Board in a similar situation had reduced hours across the board, how would one shift funding easily to address the emerging need?

Another problem addressed, that came to light, was if the Board hesitated to reduce the Law and Justice group to keep the courts functioning, keep deputies on the road, and keep deputy prosecutors handling cases, that decision would mean an even larger impact on the rest of the departments funded in current expense, an almost 25% reduction in hours. From a managerial standpoint, such a decision would be very difficult. Another issue would be that it would be difficult for those who remained to handle such a large reduction in their salaries.

Alternatives to Reducing Staff

Commissioner McDowell addressed the question saying there are very few alternatives once the numbers are down because remaining is only maintenance and operations, salaries, wages, and benefits; in other words, overhead costs. Some non-mandated programs could be cut, i.e., parks, closing of senior centers and Extension Services/WSU programs. Public health items involving nursing are fee supported so when those programs go away so does the revenue, as do those portions of the budget that are fee supported outside of public health. At the local level there are not many programs to cut.

Ms. Marlow said there are counties in Eastern Washington, the smaller counties, that are virtually bankrupt and the state has stepped in with a small amount of funding just to keep them operating. They have tried in some of the smaller counties to consolidate functions with regional health authorities, regional jails, etc. but funding at the county level from the state has been limited.

Mr. Bryan remarked that he is uncomfortable with letting taxpayers off easy while letting go of people who have worked with the County for a long time.

Commissioner McDowell commented that raising taxes at the local level is limited. The 1% increase allowed by law equates to \$67,000 and that is not a huge amount of money compared to the real revenue of sales tax.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Programs

The amount spent on the programs in 2008 is significantly less because the programs did not immediately begin; the hiring process had to occur, the establishing of job descriptions, etc. In round numbers the amount spent in 2008 was \$200,000 or less of what may be \$500,000 to \$600,000 in ultimate revenue. Money was spent on the programs because that expense included people who were hired during the year to begin providing services. The money may be carried over.

Commissioner McDowell said that Ms. Henderson and Mr. Merringer provided the Board with a scope of work for the programs, objectives approved by the Board, and a report is due back to the Board in early 2009 on what has been accomplished. A new department was created as a result of the sales tax and it will take time to get it completely up and running. This year the counselors for the schools should be hired, the inmate program should begin, and may or may not starting in 2008 will be funding for people in the community who do not have resources to obtain mental health help.

Ms. Marlow remarked that Ms. Henderson indicated that she will hire coordinators who will develop guidelines and policies. The other portion of the sales tax deals with therapeutic courts, the drug courts and they both are indeed on line. There is a juvenile, adult, and family treatment court with a portion of

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deputy prosecutor being funded for that. There will be one coordinator who oversees the programs plus another person who works with the clients who participate. Ms. Henderson and Mr. Merringer will submit an annual report to the Board, which will be available to the public and presented to the Board at a public meeting.

It was suggested that Mr. Bryan speak with Jackie Henderson or Mike Merringer about the specific and measurable objectives for 2008 for the programs.

Tourism

Chairman Dean said the tourism industry is healthy considering the economic downturn. The last report from the B&B operators at a most recent tourism meeting is that the numbers are not down, that people are coming in. The Chairman does not know what the budget is for tourism but all indicators show that tourism is one of the healthier sectors of the economy here.

Mr. Bryan wondered if any thought has been given to try to enhance tourism programs with a view toward more revenue from tourism equals less revenue from taxpayers.

Commissioner McDowell said the County funds the Economic Development Council which has a program in terms of economic development vis-à-vis tourism.

Chairman Dean commented that he attends the meetings monthly of the Joint Tourism Board. Its objective is multiple advertising of programs, a new website, marketing nationally, and trying to bring people in from all over. The Tourism Board has stepped up its effort tremendously over the last two years.

It was suggested that Mr. Bryan contact the Joint Tourism Committee Chairman, Chet Ross, at the Freeland Chamber, for objectives and statistics.

In response to various questions from Mr. Bryan on the phases, components, cost, and timeframe to implement the IT plan(s) Ms. Marlow reported:

The major line item continues to be the implementation of the new financial, accounting, and HR systems. The number is again budgeted at \$350,000 but might be a little less or a little more, depending on timing. Ms. Marlow anticipates going live in February with the financial side of the system then rolling into the HR and payroll systems thereafter. Once again, the systems will help off-set some of the staffing reductions. That phase should be done by the beginning of 2009 as well.

There are ongoing initiatives which the past Board approved moving forward and she has heard no indication from the current composition of the Board that those initiatives will change. The Assessor and Treasurer are actively investigating an Assessor/Treasurer system replacement. Currently there is an in-house system that is almost 10 years old that needs replacing and timing is good because many counties are going through the same process with their Assessor/Treasurer systems. A major vendor is no longer in business which warrants the need for replacement. A high recommendation from both the State Auditors and Moss Adams is to obtain an automated permitting system so that is also being pursued.

Ms. Marlow did not budget anything for the Planning system or the Assessor/Treasurer system, there are no cost estimates. If Ms. Marlow were to do a very preliminary cost estimate for those, she would say the cost would be about \$1 million for both systems and the Board has set aside \$1 million of available funds.

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balance to pursue those two new programs. Conceivably those systems could be in the planning stages in 2009 given the limited resources with actual implementation beginning sometime in 2010.

Becky Spraitzer, 37353 SR 20, Oak Harbor, asked about Keith Dearborn's salary or wages and where the money comes from in the budget.

Chairman Dean said Mr. Dearborn's contract concludes at the end of the year but the Board has not yet had a discussion about the contract. The Chairman, however, had a discussion with Mr. Dearborn and Mr. Dearborn is under the impression that his contract will not be renewed in the future and part of that is his choice. It is Mr. Dearborn's belief that his existing contract is up at the end of the year.

Ms. Marlow said money was not budgeted for Mr. Dearborn in 2009 because the Board had not come to a consensus on how Mr. Dearborn's contract would be handled.

Ms. Spraitzer said she believes that the Prosecuting Attorney's office has done an outstanding job and in her experience with Mr. Dearborn, concerning the APZ matter, he did not add any value to the County position. She recommends he not be re-hired.

Angie Homola, 2362 Happy Lane, Oak Harbor. At a prior budget meeting involving staff and the public a question arose about whether it was possible for some people to voluntarily reduce their hours to 3 versus a full-time work week. It was also asked if it was possible for some people to forego their medical benefits. Ms. Homola was under the impression that the union would need to be consulted about those questions and wondered if that consultation has taken place, are there any available options to reduce hours.

Ms. Marlow said there are some employees who wanted to reduce their hours; however, from a management standpoint, it is important that the County look at its services as a whole and how to continue services to the public. There were a few isolated cases where people were thinking about reducing their hours and where possible, that has been factored into the overall plan.

Concerning banked capacity Ms. Homola asked if the decision is not to take the 1% budget increase could 2% be taken next year.

Ms. Marlow explained that the banked capacity remains available for the Board's use in both County road and County current expense. If the current Board does not approve using banked capacity, it will be their next year for next year's Board to make a decision on.

Ms. Homola believes it a bad habit to not take the banked capacity in a smaller percentage when available versus a larger percentage the next year because the larger percentage would seem like a bigger hit to the public. With a decline in sales tax and a decline in new construction she recommends banked capacity be pursued.

Ms. Homola also commented on the importance of continuing to bring in tourism dollars.

She then voiced a concern about the funding base in the Planning Department being dependent on growth to provide services for things such as critical areas or wildlife programs, programs she believes should always be in place. Some programs are needed and should not be reliant on new growth and she is hoping the County can find ways to find a stable base of funding for those programs.

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Ms. Homola talked about the positions lost to attrition, specifically, the position of hydrogeologist previously occupied by Doug Kelly who had an amazing base of knowledge and who was renowned in what he did. Mr. Kelly found a job elsewhere for better pay. She is hopeful the position will be restored. She also believes that employees should be used in place of consultants, in order not to lose the institutional knowledge. Thought should be given to bringing people back into key positions.

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Commissioner McDowell commented that fees collected from building permits or planning fees must be used within those confines. If the fees are not going to be used for planning purposes, for example Freeland or Fish and Wildlife, the fees would just sit with the department unused. Ultimately, with unused fees, the cost of a permit may be reduced. Planning and building fees cannot be used elsewhere in the County.

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Margaret Hurd, 116 NE Baron Drive, Apt C103, Oak Harbor. After reading Ordinance C-121-08 Ms. Hurd asked how much of the levy remains and wondered why the increase is necessary if the goal is to keep everything the same.

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Ms. Marlow said that Ordinance C-121-08 is for the County conservation futures levy. By statute conservation futures dollars are used to preserve open space, as an example, the agricultural easement that are partially funded using conservation futures dollars as a match to some state grants to keep open space in Coupeville around OLF field. Another example would be at Useless Bay where approximately 40 acres of agriculture land on south Whidbey was preserved, meaning it cannot be developed. Conservation futures has also been used to purchase waterfront and keep open space available to the public. It is a regular levy and by law the levy can be increased one percent, which is not quite \$6.20 plus the value of last year's levy rate for new construction.

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The ordinance language, and what is confusing to Ms. Hurd, seems to indicate in her opinion that the objective is to keep things the same. Ms. Marlow explained that the language, continue to preserve open space, refers to continuing preservation efforts and in doing so that would mean using a conservation futures levy to acquire open space or acquire easements on land, agricultural easements, or conservation easements that provide open space and valuable habitat for species.

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There being no further public comment, Chairman Dean closed the public comment portion of the hearing.

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Chairman Dean moved to use banked capacity for County Current Expense of \$65,979. Motion failed for lack of a second.

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Commissioner McDowell moved to take banked capacity for County Road in the amount of 1-1/2% approximately \$105,000, because \$100,000 was taken from current expense for the Sheriff's deputies. Given the continued increase in cost of the oiling and paving program and cost of steel and concrete Commissioner McDowell does not believe it a good idea to tap the road fund for \$100,000 here and there without trying to replace it.

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Commissioner Price Johnson is unwilling to increase property taxes more than the 1% already included in the budget.

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The motion was made by Commissioner McDowell to use banked capacity in the amount of \$105,000 seconded by Chairman Dean. motion carried by majority vote. Commissioner Price Johnson opposed the motion.

The Board by unanimous motion approved for adoption the following Resolution and three Ordinance related to adopting the 2009 Island County budget:

Ordinance C-119-08 Increasing the Taxing District's Prior Year's Levy Amount for Collection in Fiscal Year 2009 for the County Current Expense Levy. The ordinance proposes a 1% increase plus the value of new construction. The 1% increase amounts to \$69,976 which is lower than the inflationary rate of 4.5%

Ordinance C-120-08 Increasing the Taxing District's Prior Year's Levy Amount for Collection in Fiscal Year 2009 for the County Road Levy. As the Board approved by majority vote, the ordinance would be modified to include the use of \$105,000 in banked capacity in addition to the \$70,690 representing a 1% increase.

Ordinance C- 121 -08 Increasing the Taxing District's Prior Year's Levy Amount for Collection in Fiscal Year 2009 for the County Conservation Futures Levy. The ordinance authorizes a 1% increase which amounts to \$6,193 plus the value of new construction.

Resolution C- 118 -08 Adopting the Island County Budget and Diking District No. 4 Budget for Fiscal Year 2009. The County road budget will be modified to include the \$105,000 in banked capacity. While he voted for the budget Commissioner McDowell continues to object to creating a new fee for septage inspections during this difficult fiscal time; he believes there to be a better alternative. He also does not agree with the pass on personnel cuts in the Sheriff's department. Commissioner Price Johnson object to raising property taxes above 1%.

Ms. Marlow thanked all Elected Officials, Department Heads, and employees for their participation in very tough budget process. She can honestly say that she could not have done the budget without everyone's help.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

By unanimous motion the Board approved Resolution No. C-131-08 In the Matter of Proclaiming December 7th of Each Year as Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.

The Board recessed at 12:05 p.m., reconvening in Regular Session at 4:30 p.m. to host a public forum following adoption of the budget.

At 4:30 p.m. Chairman Dean reconvened the Regular Session of the Board of County Commissioners to conduct a public forum following adoption of the 2009 budget (Commissioner Price Johnson did not attend). Camano participants attended via video-conferencing.

Handouts provided:

- Island County's 2009 Budget Basics
- Staffing Levels (FTEs)
- Budget graphs for all funds and current expense fund

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**BOARD OF ISLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MINUTES OF MEETING
DECEMBER 1, 2008 – REGULAR SESSION**

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Chairman Dean began the forum by saying that the budget hearings took place as scheduled earlier in the day and following those hearings, the Board adopted the budget. He turned the forum over to Ms. Marlow to recap the proceedings.

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Ms. Marlow said at the morning meeting the Board of County Commissioners adopted the budget for 2009. The total amount of the County budget for 2009 for all funds is \$67.7 million, 8% less than the 2008 budget and a reduction of approximately \$6.3 million.

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The biggest decreases occurred in the general fund, the fund that basically supports Law and Justice administrative services, and quite a few general services to the public. Revenue is forecasted to decrease in sales taxes by approximately \$1.1 million from the 2008 budget. That does not include the newly adopted mental health therapeutic court sales tax. Another big drop in revenue will be in interest revenue forecasted to be about \$400,000 less than 2008. Ms. Marlow remains concerned about interest revenue because the financial markets are currently unstable and as the stock market decreases, interest rates decrease. Interest revenue is a significant source of unrestricted revenue for the general fund. To put this in context, in 2002 interest rates were at 1% or 2% with interest revenue to the general fund about \$700,000 to \$800,000. The 2009 budget is projected to be \$1.7 million of interest revenue but if interest rates continue to drop Ms. Marlow believes it will be tough meeting that estimate.

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Building permit fees have dropped significantly and the County is beginning to feel the impact of the loss.

Currently the largest expenditure for the County is in salaries, wages, and benefits. Overall Ms. Marlow is projecting a decrease of 1% in County funds but in the general fund the decrease is more significant due to the lack of revenue. There is about an 11% decrease in salaries, wages, and benefits. The budget a proposed does not include any estimates for cost of living allowances. There are persons represented by the unions and those contracts are under negotiation.

Staff reductions amount to 31 FTEs which will result in a savings of well over \$1 million. 52% of approximately 16 to 17 FTEs will be position reductions due to attrition from positions that are currently left vacant. The vast majority of staff reductions are positions that provide administrative, general, and health services to the public. Less than 1 position was lost in the area of Law and Justice. Unless positions are grant funded no new positions were approved for 2009. Most of the staffing increases in both 2008 and 2009 were due to the new mental health sales tax revenue coming into the County; those were approximately 6.4 additional positions in Human Services and 1.1 additional FTEs for the expansion of the therapeutic drug courts.

For maintenance and operations there was a \$2 million decrease which amounts to about 8% overall. Capital projects also decreased. To give an example as to where the money goes Ms. Marlow said in 2008 the County spent approximately 15% of its budget on financial and administrative services. In 2009 it will be approximately 13%. For general services, i.e., parks, planning, and extension services, areas such as those will remain constant. In 2008 the number was about 10%, in 2009 it will be about 10%. All funds: Law and Justice, 23% in 2008, 23% in 2009. Health and Human Services went up about 12% for 2009, was 8% in 2008. Public Works also remains pretty constant, 43% in 2008, 42% in 2009. The general fund is where the significant change is noticed. Health and Human Services 3% for 2008, 2% for 2009. Finance and Administration 30% for 2008, 29% for 2009. General services 16% for 2008, 14% for 2009. Law and Justice from 51% for 2008 up to 55% in 2009. Reductions have occurred in other areas as well.

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**BOARD OF ISLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MINUTES OF MEETING
DECEMBER 1, 2008 – REGULAR SESSION**

The Board approved the tax levies. There was a use of banked capacity for the County road fund of approximately \$105,000 to fund the increased costs of doing business. The Public Works Director expressed concern about how the costs of doing business and the building of County roads continued to experience double digit increases while other revenue sources remained stable. The Board also considered its decision, when thinking about taking banked capacity, to increase the transfer of \$100,000 from County roads to fund deputies to provide road safety. That action saved a couple of positions in the sheriff's office.

Staffing levels remain stable with the exception of a change in the Sheriff's office; he was able to postpone some vehicle purchases to keep two deputies. The Prosecuting Attorney was able to revise his budget and find other funding sources so rather than reduce his staff by a Prosecuting Attorney, he will reduce his clerical and support staff by .8 FTE. Other than those mentioned changes Ms. Marlow does not believe there were any other changes in staffing levels.

Ms. Marlow came away from the last public forum with some good ideas about ways to cut costs. She said the Board will continue to look at outsourcing, a concern expressed by some employees. The budget is tight and as the County moves through 2009 some mid-course adjustments may need to be made depending on revenue. A reallocation of resources may be necessary to fund emerging issues.

Chairman Dean said there is nothing like a budget crisis to force the Board into rethinking how it does business, how we can improve, he underscored Ms. Marlow's comments. The only message he would give at this point is to keep the cost savings ideas coming. A list is being compiled of ideas and after the first of the year conversation will begin at roundtables and staff sessions to discuss those and other places we can save. Chairman Dean believes the crisis will not be over for a couple of years and projections indicate another hard look at the budget at the end of 2009. The theme for 2009 will be how to continue on and provide services but at the same time, have fun and be happy to come to work.

Commissioner McDowell remarked that "Black Friday" generated country-wide, some good numbers better than anticipated; in fact, numbers were up more than last year in sales. Hopefully that speaks well that maybe proposed revenue for sales tax is on target. The area of biggest concern is interest rates. Proposed is \$1.7 million in interest which may be high based on projected interest rates for 2009. He believes this is one area the Board really must keep its eye on in the coming year and possibly is an area that, with some of the ideas employees are suggesting, maybe can be a backfill for that interest. Some of the suggested savings, if implemented, may be able to make up the difference and hopefully will help avoid further layoffs. There is enough in the budgeted reserve for another year, maybe more. He encouraged everyone to look at and consider possible savings for next year.

Questions from the Audience

How does the release of 31 FTEs relate to the stories in the newspaper saying 25?

Ms. Marlow said the net reduction is approximately 25 to 26 but what should be added back to that number are the new positions in Human Services. The reduction is 31 but when adding six new positions the net reduction is 25. A quick count on attrition shows 16-17 positions that are currently vacant or are expected to be vacant factored into the 31 FTEs. The Commissioners in the 2009 budget have provided for two months of salaries and benefits so that all employees will have adequate notice by the beginning of the year if not sooner.

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**BOARD OF ISLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MINUTES OF MEETING
DECEMBER 1, 2008 – REGULAR SESSION**

Mr. Larson said that some people will say “positions” and some people will say “employees.” There are vacant positions being given up which do not account for any employees being laid off.

Joyce Kasperon from Camano asked, for those two months mentioned, since January and February are not as busy a time for Camano as other parts of the year, could the savings extend to later in the year for use during those busier times.

Ms. Marlow will run some numbers, forward that information to the Board, and advise.

Can benefits be achieved by having the County open four days a week, 4-10s for example?

Commissioner Dean commented that the idea was one he was interested in early on but reconsidered for a number of reasons. 4-10s as he understands it would not save salaries; it is more of a building expense. While that would help, it would not reduce the budget enough to meet the \$2 million goal. Public relations, too, would be an issue as it would be necessary to let the public know when the County would be open and not open. There is some value for the County to be open five days a week for the benefit of the public. The idea, however, is certainly something that can be looked at during the next year.

Commissioner McDowell also agrees the idea is something to consider. It would be worthwhile to obtain an estimate from Mr. Sherk as to how much can possibly be saved by closing the County, or parts of the County, for one day versus the inconvenience to the public.

If not a reduction in days then what about a reduction in hours when offices are open?

Mr. Mattens believes that with the reduction in staff remaining employees will have a difficulty in completing their work. A suggestion would be to allow an extra hour in the morning, for example, to enable staff to take care of and process work. Doors would open to the public somewhere between 9 and 10.

Chairman Dean also believes that to be a subject worth carefully considering and discussing at a roundtable meeting. The County will need to change the way it does business and not opening doors until 9 or 10 to the public is a way the County can reduce service to the public by just a little and at the same time allow staff the time needed to complete work.

Ms. Kasperon suggested, as an idea for Camano, closing the office during the lunch hour.

Ms. Marlow commented the idea is something the Board has heard from other groups as well. A suggestion that might help ease the burden on remaining employees. The one thing she always tries to keep in mind is that she wants to make sure the County can provide adequate services to the public. Sometimes there can be a fine balancing act when talking about a reduction in hours.

Commissioner Dean mentioned that he is committed in the coming year to communicating with staff and the public about the budget and discussing those issues facing the County. Public relations will be an important factor in the coming year.

Mr. Larson said that conversations with bargaining unit 1845 and the Board have begun about employees at their choosing, departing at the end of December instead of waiting until February, and receiving a two-month pay-out.

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**BOARD OF ISLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MINUTES OF MEETING
DECEMBER 1, 2008 – REGULAR SESSION**

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Commissioner McDowell followed that statement by saying an employee, if that person chose to stay through the end of February, would receive benefits during that time. If the decision is to leave instead of the end of December, the severance package does not include any benefits, other than any accumulated leave already earned.

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Is the workload expected to slow down?

Chairman Dean answered in departments such as Planning and Health the workload has slowed a bit.

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Member of assembly asked if we expect the same workload or will it slow down.

Ms. Marlow commented that some departments, the Auditor's office for example, will have a reduction in the number of employees available to serve the public so she believes there will indeed be people waiting in line. The Treasurer and Assessor offices will most likely need to adjust their front office staff to better serve the public as well; services in those areas will be affected.

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Can vacant positions be re-filled or must they be re-created?

Ms. Marlow responded that the job descriptions are in place which forms the basis for the hiring process. As revenue picks up and a need is realized departments will bring that request to the Board and on a case-by-case basis new positions will be approved. The budget would then be increased to fund those new positions.

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Commissioner McDowell said that roughly one-half of the positions of the 31 FTEs being reduced are from the two fee-based departments, i.e. Planning and Community Development and Health Departments. When the economy turns around and permits are more frequent, the decision to re-hire in those departments is an easy one because revenue is coming in through permits. The other departments, those not fee based such as the Assessor and Treasurer, will need to wait for the sales tax to build back up before those departments can hire additional staff.

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Aside from the positions being absorbed by attrition, are there any details available on the remaining positions being eliminated?

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Ms. Marlow referred the assembly to the hand-out, Staffing Levels/FTEs, which shows staffing reductions by department. She reminded the assembly that when she refers to 1 FTE, some departments are reducing hours on 2 different positions to arrive at that one FTE. With the exception of 2 or 3 departments the positions that are going to be either left vacant or staff being laid off have already been identified. The Board's philosophy basically has been to work with Elected Officials and Department Heads to come up with the best organizational plan for departments.

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Are the fees charged by the County competitive compared to other counties?

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Commissioner McDowell answered saying the fees are competitive and in some cases, they are actually higher. Septic system fees, for example, are quite a bit higher than surrounding counties. Building fees, he believes, are now in line with others.

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Ms. Marlow remarked that in many areas the County does not get to choose how much of a fee it will charge as some fees are set by State statute. A prime example would be in the Law and Justice system.

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Mr. Larson added that talks have begun with representatives of the union to assure a smooth process for identifying positions and the people affected.

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BOARD OF ISLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MINUTES OF MEETING
DECEMBER 1, 2008 – REGULAR SESSION

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Has postage ever been looked at County-wide rather than just by department?

Ms. Marlow said that in some departments one of the advantages of outsourcing, which presents its own unique challenges at times, is that mail-outs will cost less. Not only is there an efficiency of printing costs but also an efficiency in the type of mail-out that is being handled. Bulk rates also apply. Ms. Marlow agrees that departments should be looking at their mail-outs for that reason and will keep that in mind for discussion.

Commissioner McDowell said that suggestion is precisely the input needed from those who are actually on the front lines. The Board should, in the coming months, continue to look at similar cost saving ideas.

In conclusion Chairman Dean thanked everyone for participating and said the Board will continue with such forums in the future.

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m. The Board will meet next in Regular Session on December 8, 2008 beginning at 10:00 a.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ISLAND COUNTY, WASHINGTON

John Dean, Chairman

[Wm. L. McDowell, Member; Absent when signed]

Helen Price Johnson, Member
[Did not attend the evening forum]

ATTEST:

Elaine Marlow, Clerk of the Board

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decision on the wetlands ordinance adopted earlier in the year

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Mr. Tate said it is the Department's request that the Board authorize sending the three issues via the ordinance to the Planning Commission for a public hearing; the Planning Commission will deliberate and then provide a recommendation to the Board.

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Currently a Planning Commission public hearing scheduled for December 17 so there was time to add this ordinance to the agenda.

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The Planning Commission will hold the public hearing on December 17 and December 17 is also the date that staff will, following the hearing, forward a recommendation to the Board.

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| A budget workshop occurred on November 26 and | |
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| made some revisions to | |
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[Revisions in detail were provided by e-mail dated November 30, 2008 at 5:42 p.m. from Ms. Marlow to the Board of Commissioners.]

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could be assured

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for this important program

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Commissioner McDowell said the fee is not a recording fee, received by the Auditor, but instead is a fee paid to current expense.

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change

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does not support the idea because not replacing 3 of

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| only | |
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| ; obviously vehicles must be eventually changed so delaying the change a year or two years is putting off the expense. | |
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| The expense, therefore, does not go away, it is merely delayed. | |
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| He believes | |
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| he | |
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| that would actually cut the budget down. | |
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| , for the people left here, with a feeling of who is next to go. | |
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First, concerning overhead allocation transfers, Ms. Marlow was able to factor in all the reductions in force and changes in fuel line items, etc., reducing the total amount of overhead allocation transfers by approximately \$48,000. She also made adjustments to funds that are charged to overhead costs.

Second is clarifying the use of fund balance in current expense for ongoing expenditures. First, the Board set aside in its preliminary budget \$210,000 as a separation contingency. The other line item in the current expense budget is for ongoing expenditures, the use of fund balance. The original preliminary

budget showed \$258,000 and given the changes discussed at budget workshop, the number is increased to \$514,000. The \$258,000 increase is itemized as follows: (SHOULD 514 BE 516?)

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| 1.0 FTE Planner | \$ 60,000 | |
| Fuel expenditures | (21,000) | |
| Overhead Alloc. Transfers | 48,000 | |
| Contingency Public Defense | 186,000 | |
| Various minor revisions | <u>(15,000)</u> | |
| Total | \$258,000 | |

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Resolution C118-08 Adopting The Island County Budget And Diking District No. 4 Budget For Fiscal Year 2009, Ordinance C- 119 -08 Increasing the Taxing District's Prior Year's Levy Amount for Collection in Fiscal Year 2009 for the County Current Expense Levy
Ordinance C- 120 -08 Increasing the Taxing District's Prior Year's Levy Amount for Collection in Fiscal Year 2009 for the County Road Levy
Ordinance C- 121 -08 Increasing the Taxing District's Prior Year's Levy Amount for Collection in Fiscal Year 2009 for the County Conservation Futures Levy

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. He believes the best way to solve the revenue problem is to obtain the money from off island;

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His questions were:

Available reserves
Mr. Bryan asked if there were any reserves available in what appears to be a tight budget; what is not allocated that could be used to cover some foreseen development. For example, what is the average price of gasoline assumed in the reduction of \$34,000 for fuel expense.

Ms. Marlow's responses

Ms. Marlow said she assumed it would be approximately \$2.80 per gallon, the County's cost. It originally was

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Mr. Bryan then asked about the reserve capacity.

Ms. Marlow said t

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Mr. Bryan asked the budget amount for 2008, total revenue.

Ms. Marlow said the

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Mr. Bryan, in attempting to arrive at a trend, said the 2009 budget total revenue was \$67.7 million, down 8% from the actual estimated 2008 figure.

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Ms. Marlow clarified Mr. Bryan's statement by saying

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Bryan said the revenue for the 2009 budget, down about \$4 million since 2008.

Ms. Marlow said that Mr. Bryan did not factor in some of the swings. There is a one-half million dollar swing in use of fund balance so if talking about actual revenues, that is different than use of fund balance.

He is trying to find out how far down we think we are going to be in 2009 versus where we think we will be at end of 2008.

Ms. Marlow said m

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Bryan – the 2009 budget is down 8% from the 2008 budget. How much is tax revenue down.

Elaine –

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So, for 2009 she put it in at 2008 actual.

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B – and you're going to continue the level of down 10% next year.

E – She is not going to

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B – What are the number for property taxes.

E –

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B – in 2008, what happened to property tax revenue

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E – Property tax revenue in 2008 went up, probably more because there was more new construction in 2007 for 2008.

B – for the months of 2008, do you know what the percent change in tax revenue was versus 2007.

E – Collection of delinquent taxes of about one-half million to maybe \$750,000 and interest on delinquent taxes is decreasing between the budgets. She would have to look up the numbers.

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we think

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Ms. Marlow suspects there to be a high likelihood of a problem during the year.

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great

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Interest revenue is indicated at 1.7.

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| B – staffing levels, reduction in ftes | |
| E – the hand-out provided concerning staffing levels is basically approved FTEs, total number in | |
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meant that there would have to be

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. So you were looking at

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That would make it very difficult, and it couldn't be in all departments.

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B – suppose legislature passed a law that said you can't balance the budget by reducing people expense, what would be knocked out, what is the alternative?

Mac – there are very few alternatives once down lean with M&O, there is only salaries and benefits and M&O, in other words, the overhead cost. If overhead cost of heating, lighting, fuel are already been hit more than once, there really is not much left to cut other than people. There are s

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that

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, that are not mandated,

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like

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shut parks,

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| e all | |
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| But other than those most everything else we do are pretty much mandated. | |
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| Most of p | |
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| . So | |
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| . Same with the portions of budget | |
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| that certainly, as an elected official, you will cut out. | |
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| , some of the smaller counties, are | |
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| for all reasonable purposes, | |
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| C | |
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| B – uncomfortable with letting taxpayers | |
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| Mac – | |
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he real revenue is

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B – how does average salary of people who are going to terminated, 31 FTEs, compare to the average salary of all county employees

E- best instinct would be that the ones left, if look at average, might be very slightly higher, not anything that would be significant, not a lot.

B – most of people who are going to terminated are probably first line people. Not a lot of managers

E – probably not. Challenge for the County is that the supervisory level for the County has always been well below the 5-7 employees per supervisor, that seems to be the rule of thumb for most industries. When begin looking at that across the board, it makes it very difficult for us to cut managers when you might not have enough managers to start with.

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B – mental health and substance abuse program – the funding is solely the incremental sales tax of 1/10th of 1% approved in 2008, about \$908,000. How much was spent on those programs in 2008, \$900,000?

E – no significantly less b/c it didn't start right away and then had to go through the hiring process, establishing job descriptions, etc.

B – roughly what was spent.

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E – in round numbers \$200,000 or less in 2008, started charging in January but didn't actually see cash come in the door until March. Human Services had to go through the process of establishing job descriptions, budgets, and they are not fully staffed now. \$200,000 spent out of maybe \$500-600,000 in revenue. It can be carried over.

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B – would it be correct to say there isn't any money spent on programs, this was all just getting organized, hiring people.

E – there was money spent on programs b/c that includes people who have been hired during the year to begin providing services.

B – what were the specific and measurable objectives for 2008 for this organization, other than to get ramped up.

E – you would need to have that conversation with Jackie Henderson. She and Mike Merringer worked on specific objectives such as the school counseling program, the vulnerable adults program, early childhood coordination, jail transition program.

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Mac –

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with a

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from

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money

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ramped up.

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funds

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E –

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Jackie

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an uninsured

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and part of the uninsured coordinator position

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be to

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in how they handle requests for these funds

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Extra hours in the clerk's office

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that

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The report

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,

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Most likely at a Wednesday staff session when discussed.

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B – re tourism, is he right to assume that this whole activity has not changed much in the last couple of years. Last time he looked it was 4% extra on the sales tax for lodging, two separate activities, each one got 2% from the 4%, one dols out roughly \$150,000 at that time in response to specific requests from organizations like local chambers of commerce, and the other roughly \$150,000 at that time was based on ideas created by a committee of lodging industry members led by a consultant who takes about 1/3 of that for salary and the rest of it is spent funding the ideas. Is that still true?

John – pretty much. The bright news about that is that the tourism industry is pretty

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in

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, they have a program,

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“The Shortest Distance to Far Away”, they are finding Whidbey especially and Camano to some degree are becoming destination places for people who can’t afford going far away.

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one of the last

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were

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He doesn’t know what the budget is, that will be look at at the next meeting but

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are that that

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around

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Contact Chet Ross, the Freeland Chamber, he is chair. Both programs will be continued in 2009.

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B – any thought given to try to enhance the programs with a view toward more revenue from tourism equals less revenue from taxpayers.

Mac – County funds the EDC which has a program, trying to get economic development visavie tourism,

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J – that is what the group is about, multiple advertising programs, new website, worth taking a look at. Marketing nationally and trying to bring people in from all over. They have stepped up their efforts tremendously over the last two years. He attends the meetings monthly.

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B – IT enhancement program, how much will be spent on software and related consulting

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r

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again, same as in 2007,

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. Prime example is in the treasurer's office. The new system will allow departments to electronically send cash receipt information to the treasurer so that it will only be keyed in once instead of the current process where the department keys it into an excel spreadsheet, they take the excel spreadsheet over to the treasurer's office, the treasurer handwrites the cash receipt, the auditor's office gets a copy of it, and the auditor office keys it into the accounting system. With the new system that will not happen, no duplicate entry, and it will help Linda's department b/c one of the positions she will be losing directly impacts the cash receipting process.

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| Hopefully live in February for the financial side. Then will roll into HR and payroll where we will help automate the HR process. One of the things that will happen is employee service on-line where employees will be able to get on the system, propose changes in their benefits, will automatically be routed to HR, HR will pick it up, approve/disapprove it, and then it will be routed to payroll and automatically entered into the financial system. Sometime in 2009 go live with a major portion of HR payroll. That will then be the end of that particular phase. We're also currently working on an investment tracking system that will once again automate, take information from that system and automate it so that it goes into the accounting system. | |
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| also | |
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| B – are there any new initiatives. | |
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| E – there is an ongoing initiative. | |
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| excellent | |
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| replacing their assessor/treasurer systems. | |
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| so they have to replace theirs so that initiative is going on. | |
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| budget for software and related consulting is \$350,000 for the financial system, she | |
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| didn't | |
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| two systems, the | |
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| and IT, the | |
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| where Keith Dearborn's | |
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pretty much

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his

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Becky – has there been money budgeted for that?

Elaine – not in 2009 simply because

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hadn't

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his

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the

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and was it possible

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She

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believed the

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Elaine –

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that

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c

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are

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Elaine –

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c

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c

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| so next year the property tax levy ordinances will be before you during the budget process and that can be a discussion that next year's board will have over whether there is banked capacity to take. | |
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| boar | |
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| b | |
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| Angie, that would be a bad habit | |
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| that if you don't do the small amount entitled to each year and then you roll it over and ask for more that it will see | |
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| m | |
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| if not done now. | |
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| Because sales tax isn't coming in and b/c we are not having the new construction, that if need money, that is one place we need to get it and she recommends we pursue that. | |
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| Angie, we need to think hard about how we're going to continue | |
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| One concern is | |
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| the system in place where when there is a lot of new growth and bringing in a lot of permits based on that growth, that's what's providing the funding base in the planning department to provide services for things like our critical areas or wildlife programs. Those programs | |
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| Some of those we just need all the time and they shouldn't be | |
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| S | |
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| we can look at places | |
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| make that | |

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Along those same lines, because we've lost folks through attrition, one of those

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people Doug Kelly,

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k

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and he provided an amazing base of knowledge here that is now gone b/c he found a better salary somewhere else.

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Altho we lost someone by attrition, she would hope this is one of the positions we're thinking really hard about bringing back on.

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And the same thing goes along the lines of using consultants

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now in the place of our full-time employees, we lose that

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that those people bring to us when we consult and if it's a small amount of money that is the difference

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in keeping on a staff member, that we're trading off on a consultant, that institutional knowledge is huge for what we lose here at the County. She would like that kept to a minimum and think about how to bring those people back on in these really key positions.

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Mac said the fees you collect

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they have to be used

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, they can't be used for hiring another deputy or the like.

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were

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whether

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or whatever it may be,

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those

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there in

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or would

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reduce the cost of the permit.

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The

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| 9CHECK SPELLING. She | |
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| is | |
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| Elaine | |
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| also has | |
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| said | |
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| and what that means | |
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| e | |
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| to do so | |
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that

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, she asked that the Board consider the tax levy ordinances first

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John

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motioned

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which is

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took

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extra

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for the purpose of paying towards s

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and g

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s

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,

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can't be hitting the

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Seconded by chair.

Moved and seconded

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of

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Helen

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four

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which

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, the only other change to be made in the revised preliminary budget.

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continues

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as well as giving a pass on the personnel cuts

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s

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Helen objects

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Elaine

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| The Board of County Commissioners recessed at Noon, participating in the regular meeting of the Island County Board of Health at 1:15 p.m. The Board of County Commissioners reconvened in Regular Session at 3:00 p.m. for continued budget workshops. | |
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| in the Board's hearing room. The forum is intended for the public and County employees to come for a recap of what was done today with the budget. Approximately _____ were in attendance. | |
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| the | |
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| to recap the budget hearings that took place earlier in the day. | |
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| said | |
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| during Regular Session in the morning | |
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| and the Board adopted a budget. | |
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| The purpose of the forum is to update staff and public what was done and answer any questions or concerns. | |
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| Where one sees the significant change in how the dollars fall out is in the general fund. | |
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| The reductions have happened | |
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| other than law and justice. | |
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| and that was | |
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| The public works director made a good presentation to the Board about voicing his concerns | |
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| The other thing that affected the Board's decision regarding county road was that the Board | |
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| that she | |
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| She | |
| Page 460: [231] Deleted | 12/16/2008 8:18:00 PM |
| meeting | |
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| with employees and public | |
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| things | |
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| that we might look at as we go into the future. She knows that our accounts payable supervisor and so did several individuals from the treasurer's office. | |
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| and continue to review that as we go through next year. She did say to everyone that she thinks that this is a very tight budget | |
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| Page 460: [232] Deleted By all appearances it seems we are getting through the budget crisis with a budget cut, it will | 12/16/2008 8:26:00 PM |
| Page 460: [232] Deleted we are going to have to be taking more hard looks probably at the end of 2009 as indicated by projections. | 12/16/2008 8:27:00 PM |
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coming up with

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some

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I think the sales tax may come in ok, it is the interest that we may be low on but that is a small enough number I think that some of the savings being suggested, if they're implemented, might be able to make up that slack

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not result in anymore layoffs next year's budget

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to go a year, maybe a year and a half to two years beyond 2009 with the current layoffs we revenues come in as projected.

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One area the Board is concerned with is the interest and maybe the savings we can come up with, whether the medical ideas or taking cars home, some of those smaller things, those do add up to real numbers if you are pretty tough on those.

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you have to add back to that number is

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There are a lot of departments who are struggling and grieving over the loss of their co-workers. She hopes the county will be able to offer some options.

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into 2009

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. Could Nancy's position that is going away, could they save that money for later in the year instead of keeping her on in January and February?

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Randy Brackett asked if there has been any consideration of

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that might

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, he was pretty much talked out of it

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wouldn't

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s, it would be more building expense.

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that doesn't get us to the point where we are reducing our budget enough to meet the \$2 million goal.

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certainly

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for additional savings. He thinks it comes down probably just to a public relations issue of notifying the public of when we are open and when we are not. He think it has always been a value for this courthouse to be open five days a week b/c when people want to come they want us to be open. He won't say it is off the table, that would be something that we need to have in our toolbox for the year and he is certainly willing to talk more about it.

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said that is certainly something to look at as to how much is actually saved b/c obviously there are certain departments that are open 24-7 and so maybe at least an estimate from Dan how much that, over years time, how much that would actually save or cost b/c he would say parts of the year the lights are on, four more hours you would be saving lights but nevertheless, he would have to give us an estimate of how much it actually saves, whether it's worth the

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to only have the county open four days a week or parts of the county open four days a week

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Dave matters, if not a reduction in days, what about a reduction in hours when offices are open b/c of the 10% hit we are taking with staff we are going to be spread real thin so if staff

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that needs to be p

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rocessed so it can move out the door and then say open the doors at 9, 9:30 or 10:00 b/c otherwise he is afraid it will be tough to get the work done the way it is. Not having a mechanism in place to do that will make it tough. That may be a solution to help us survive during these lean times.

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said, after having numerous conversations about that, that is something that can be seriously take a look at, maybe bring it up at roundtable.

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are going to have to change

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we

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then still make it reasonable for staff to do what they need to do and keep their sanity.

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that closing for lunch would work for Camano.

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Elaine said the idea

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it

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that is left

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the

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that she

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is

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John said

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to doing in the coming year is not only

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about how we're doing on the budget but also these kinds of issues.

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The public needs to understand that they are not going to get the best service that they want all the time b/c we are already understaffed in many departments and it will just get worse. It will be a public relations job in the next year.

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Larry said it will be a public relations job for everyone b/c we are going out there to explain what is going on. He believes we need to take the communication out so that the right facts are out there and not the rumors that get exploited sometimes.

John said one other thing the board has talked is, we have already said that we want to make sure that people if they were losing their jobs they had until February 28 before they were laid off. We have also had some discussions about having an optional severance package which would allow ...

Larry

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we

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are toying with the idea

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of at the employee's option, those of you who might want to leave

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will have a

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instead of staying on the job until February. Some conversations remain to be had with bargaining unit 1845 and it is still not approved by the board, it is preliminary information, but conversation has begun along those lines.

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Elaine said for

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's

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officer

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and Assessor

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probably have some kind of adjustment in their front office staff, those who are available to serve the public.

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We will see a slow down in the speed in which we can provide services in those areas in particular.

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Member of assembly - The vacated positions, are they still on the books for when things turn around they can be re-filled or do they need to be re-created.

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Elaine said the

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are there and that

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What will happen i

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s that a

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see a need, they

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their

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and t

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| will | |
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| Mac said | |
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| at | |
| Page 462: [286] Deleted | 12/17/2008 10:00:00 AM |
| that are fee based, | |
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| p | |
| Page 462: [286] Deleted | 12/17/2008 10:00:00 AM |
| and building and then | |
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| h | |
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| being the septic systems. | |
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| Those are all permit driven and those that either are already vacant or will be vacant, those departments are probably experiencing close to 15 of those 31. | |
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| As | |
| Page 462: [286] Deleted | 12/17/2008 10:01:00 AM |
| ramps back up whenever that | |
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| might be, and those | |
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| start ramping back up, | |
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| those are easy to make a determination because the revenue is coming in. | |
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| It's those other departments that are not fee based, Assessor, Treasurer, any of those departments, obviously their work is still there and that is where the sales tax has to build back up to be able to bring those people back on. | |
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| Member – you said there were actually 17 positions being absorbed by attrition, the remaining positions, are anymore details available on those. | |
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| Elaine said a hand-out was provided that shows the | |
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| Keep in mind | |
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| an FTE, when I say | |
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,

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get to one FTE

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e

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d

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the

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Mac said there is still a process that must be done visavie the union contracts. It has been requested by all department heads and elected to notify the commissioners or Larry the actual positions that will be dropped in 2009 by Wednesday. And then there is a process within the union contracts about seniority bumping for those qualified within their department and that will take some time for that to all straighten itself out. By position, if everyone doesn't know it yet already, is requested by Wednesday. So probably most department heads have already contacted their individual departments with those positions but maybe they haven't but they will by Wednesday.

Member – regarding earlier statement about fees, are the fees we charge competitive compared to other counties?

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Mac

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said

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they

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The s

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for example

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of

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The b

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I think

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, those have been bumped up over the last five years so those are pretty much comparable to other counties. Those are the two main fees.

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Elaine said in many areas the county doesn't

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they

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are going to charge, it is

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s

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court system and

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l

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j

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Larry said

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make sure that we get

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the

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and how they are affected

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We are trying to get the process in place, still having some last minute notifications of just who is involved in that process.

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Elaine

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said

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when they have outsourced to a vendor they have been able to come up with

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that

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us

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for that very reason

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do you get

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you get

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you

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| are | |
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| ing and also bulk rates. | |
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| She | |
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| believes departments | |
| Page 463: [297] Deleted | 12/17/2008 10:38:00 AM |
| . She will personally | |
| Page 463: [298] Deleted | 12/17/2008 10:39:00 AM |
| Mac said that is | |
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| type of hopefully | |
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| input that will be received over the next year for people | |
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| of doing | |
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| Page 463: [299] Formatted | 12/17/2008 10:43:00 AM |
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| John | |
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| coming | |
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| these types of briefings maybe quarterly. | |
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Phillip Bakke, Member

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