

Minutes of Meeting
Budget Meeting/Public Defender
August 6, 2013
8:30 a.m.

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Todd Tondee and Commissioner Dan Green met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were Public Defender John Adams, Finance Director David McDowell, Chief Deputy Clerk Pat Raffee, Staff Accountant Kristi Graves, and Deputy Clerk Nancy Jones. Commissioner Jai Nelson was excused.

A. Call to Order: Chairman Tondee called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

B. Introductions: There were no introductions made.

C. Changes to the Agenda: There were no changes made to the agenda.

D. Old Business: There was no old business discussed.

E. New Business:

Public Defender John Adams came before the Board to request reassessment of a FY2014 personnel request to add a criminal investigator position in the Public Defender's Office. Mr. Adams declared that his office is not staffed sufficiently to meet the national standards for investigators, and he provided documentation to support this supposition. Sheriff Ben Wolfinger and Prosecutor Barry McHugh each remitted a letter, advocating for this additional position. Mr. Adams noted that no additional investigators have been added to the staff for seventeen (17) years, and suggested that some staff members are considering retirement, increasing the importance of expanding and training staff expeditiously. The attendees discussed general staffing needs, comparisons of staffing within the Public Defender and Prosecutor Offices, the amount of annual workload for investigators, and the pitfalls of under serving this position. Mr. Adams confirmed that an empty workspace was available, and promised to verify that support for the position was in place (e.g. supplies, computer). The Board confirmed that this position would be instituted no earlier than October 1, 2013, to correlate with the beginning of FY2014, and that the \$38,000 annual pay was in line with midpoint guidelines for a grade 'I' position. The Board approved the personnel request to add one (1) new Public Defender criminal investigator position, with the advertised starting annual wage to be set at \$37,005. Further, the Board directed the Auditor's Department to make the applicable changes to the FY2014 budget proposal.

Mr. Adams also requested approval of a stipend that would be distributed to North Idaho College (NIC) students who had each provided more than 300 work hours in his office this summer, as part of their educational program. In response to questions from the Board, Mr. Adams confirmed that an earlier challenge had been addressed, and that these students would be receiving their full NIC credits for this internship period. The Board denied the stipend request.

Mr. Adams thanked Chairman Tondee for his exhaustive efforts to help complete the attorney pay band adjustments. Having reviewed the proposed attorney pay band report, Mr. Adams asked for one additional change, to allow employee Lisa Chesebro to be raised from level three (3) to level four (4) on the matrix. In response to questions from the Board, Mr. Adams explained that, due to staffing needs, Ms. Chesebro is performing level four (4) duties, with a caseload that includes 163 felony cases. The Board asked questions to clarify the staffing needs of the Public Defender's Office, and the attendees discussed alternative staffing options, as well as the wage discrepancies between the Prosecutor's and

Public Defender's staff. The Board determined that this request warranted additional Board consideration, and they assured Mr. Adams that a final determination would be made next week, when Commissioner Nelson could take part in the deliberation.

Mr. Adams exited the meeting at 9:03 a.m.

Finance Director David McDowell raised questions regarding budget allowances for security staffing in FY2014. The Board concluded that the budget should include security screeners for the campus administrative building through the third quarter of 2014, at which time additional funds would be needed to facilitate the Sheriff's deputies who will be absorbing those duties.

- F. **Staff Reports:** There were no staff reports.
- G. **Public Comment:** This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

CLIFFORD T. HAYES, CLERK

BY: _____
Nancy A. Jones, Deputy Clerk