

**RILEY COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY
SPECIAL LAW BOARD MEETING: BUDGET WORKSHOP**

**Riley County Law Enforcement Center
1001 S. Seth Child Road
Manhattan, KS**

May 18, 2011 6:00 p.m.

Minutes

Members Present: Karen McCulloh Jim Sherow
Barry Wilkerson John Matta
Wynn Butler Loren Pepperd
Dave Lewis

Absent: Captain Grubbs

Staff Present: Director Schoen Assistant Director Doehling
Captain Hooper Captain Moldrup
Captain Nelson Captain Hegarty

I. Establish Quorum: By Chairman McCulloh at 6:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Director Schoen.

III. General Agenda:

A. Public Comment: None.

B. Approve 2012 Budget for Publication: Following the May 16, 2011 Law Board Meeting Director Schoen received a request from Commissioner Lewis for additional budget options. Those options were included in the packets titled drafts 5a and 5b. Schoen said that the purpose of the Special Law Board Meeting is to reach a consensus and formally approve a budget for publication. A brief explanation of the budget drafts was provided.

Draft 5a includes the addition of 1 communication center manager, 5 dispatchers, 1 system administrator, 1 police officer and a 2% Cost of Living Allowance (COLA). This option represents a 7.688% increase over the 2011 approved budget or approximately 3.688% when the carryover is applied.

Draft 5b includes the addition of 1 communication center manager, 5 dispatchers, 1 system administrator and a 1.5% COLA. This option represents a 6.979% increase over the approved 2011 budget or roughly a 2.979% when the carryover is applied.

Lewis informed the Board that he requested the additional options because he had some concerns with approving a budget with overall increase of around 8%. He was equally concerned about falling further behind with respect to a COLA for RCPD employees. Due to the assurances that were made to RCPD employees by the previous Law Board he is hesitant to approve a budget option that contains less than a 1.5% COLA. The Board at that time assured employees that they would receive a fair and adequate COLA in 2012.

Riley County Police Department Accountant Annette Moran was asked by administration to make some rather rough projections regarding what the Law Board might see in the way of a budget for RCPD in 2013. Director Schoen cautioned that the information provided is only a projection, and many assumptions had to be made to reach a final figure.

Schoen explained that the first assumption that was made was the addition of 5 police officers in 2013. The second assumption was what the Consumer Price Index for all Urban (CPI-U) in the Midwest region would call for in the way of a COLA. Included in the projection is a 2% COLA for all employees. Rough calculations were also made for average employee step increases, anticipated retirements and estimated increases to health insurance, workers compensation insurance, Kansas Public Employees Retirement System (KPERS) and Kansas Police & Firemen's Retirement System (KP&F). In addition, a trend analysis of non-personnel budget lines 3-35 was conducted and the lines were adjusted accordingly. Moran's calculations yielded a budget for 2013 with an increase of 3.8%. That figure assumes there will be no carryover funds to be applied.

Lewis asked if there any additional needs aside from the additional 5 police officers which may have a substantial impact on future RCPD budgets.

Doehling responded that beyond 2013, the Department will look to phase in some of the personnel recommendations made in the recent patrol staffing study. The study recommended the addition of 11 police officers over the next 5 years. He anticipates asking for around 2 to 3 officers in 2014 and 2 to 3 officers in 2015.

Butler said he would be interested in receiving information detailing how the additional officers would be utilized. In addition, he asked that the Department look in to the possibility of using cameras to assist with traffic enforcement. Transitioning to an automated enforcement approach for things such as red light violations and speeding tickets could free up police officers.

Schoen said that automated enforcement has the potential to be mildly problematic. The decision to make that transition would be as much a political decision as an operational one. It would also require a willingness on the part of the City to install the necessary equipment. If directed to do so by the Board, he can certainly approach the City and begin those discussions.

Matta addressed some of the misconceptions relating to the consumer price index used by agencies to determine the cost of living rates. In his opinion, the consumer price index truly understates what the true costs are. It does not take into account food, and energy, but does take into account the cost of housing which is decreasing. The consumer price index is more realistically around 5% or 6% which means that everyone in the community is falling behind.

Matta expressed that he is trying to lessen the burden on the taxpayer while still providing adequate pay for RCPD employees. The City mil levy has increased 22% over the last 2 years, and is anticipated to increase 36% in the next 2 years. His primary goal is to get that number down. The fair way to do that is to make small reductions from a number of places so that the City does not have to dig deep into any single budget. Quite a few members of the community are not receiving pay increases, but continue to see some pretty substantial increases in taxes. Everyone is in the same boat. He is trying to find a way to lessen the financial burden on everyone.

Butler echoed the comments made by Matta.

Lewis stated that not all businesses in the community are struggling and withholding raises. He requested the additional budget drafts because he wanted to view an option that was a little more palatable. He felt that an 8% increase was a rather large jump. However, he feels that the Board needs to provide employees with a decent COLA to thwart employees from wanting to go elsewhere for employment. The Department invests a lot of time and money into training police officers. He would like to see a return on that investment.

Lewis said he is uncomfortable offering a 1% COLA to employees. He rather approve of an option that calls for no additional officers, but provides a stronger COLA to those currently employed. He voiced his preference for draft 4a.

McCulloh expressed that she would not be in favor of an option containing anything less than a 2% COLA.

Matta stated his preference of option 4d over 5b. Draft 4d adds 1 police officer to the force and contains a 1% COLA for employees.

Butler also voiced his support of draft 4d.

Lewis explained that employees have received a negative COLA followed by no COLA for the past 2 years. He feels in some ways that is disrespectful to the employees. He stated his preference to have a larger COLA and sacrifice the additional officer.

Sherow said that if the discussion was just about money, everyone would know what to do. The problem is they are talking about people, and what is needed to serve the community. The question then becomes, how can the Law Board best accomplish that? He asked Director Schoen if the 1 additional police officer would make a significant difference in how the force would perform.

Schoen first wished to convey that his main goal is to come from the meeting with a genuine consensus among the Board on a budget for the Department. It is no big secret that there are at times disagreements between the City and County with respect to how RCPD should be handled. It is important that the City, County and RCPD do what they can to build small successes. Unless they get some momentum going, there will not be a good foundation from which to take on the larger issues. What he does not want is a 4-3 vote from the Board on a budget going either way.

He said with respect to the question posed by Sherow, the additional officer would not have a huge impact on how the force could perform. If the Board were to decide not to add any officers in 2012 the Department could live with that. He would not like it, but the Department would continue to march.

Schoen said he believes that he and the Law Board made a commitment to all RCPD employees last November to not take advantage of them. He told employees that he would do everything he could, should something develop where the Board decided they were going to take a different tack with respect to a COLA in 2012, to make sure that did not happen. He feels obligated ethically recommend a 2% COLA for the reasons previously discussed concerning to the decision of the Board to opt out from under the provisions of the Public Employer-Employee Relations Act (PEERA). Schoen clarified that he was in support of the decision, but cautioned the Board at that time that they could not come back in 2011 and balance the budget on the back of RCPD because

things were going to be tough on the City. Everyone recognized that it was going to be a tough budget cycle going in.

Schoen asked that the Law Board come to some consensus on the budget that permits something other than a 4-3 vote, and everyone find a way to do something that is maybe a little distasteful in order to settle on something that does not put in danger the obligations that he and the Board has by virtue of the decision that was made last November. In his opinion, the compromise is reflected in draft 5a. He added that if the Board were to hold his feet to the fire and ask that he decide between a 2% COLA and additional police officer, he would choose the COLA for the reasons previously stated.

Sherow said he was a part of the discussions last year to opt out from under PEERA. He was not in favor of the decision, but that is irrelevant at this point in time. He does not want to see a reduction in force. The Board is dealing with people who provide a tremendous service to the community. Director Schoen has already cut the budget considerably. Either the Board meets the responsibility of the safety of the community, or they do not. The Director said that the additional police officer would not make much of a difference in Department operations. Sherow expressed his preference for draft 5a, but was willing to endorse draft 4a if that was the direction of the Board.

Wilkerson said that last November when the Board opted out from under PEERA assurances were made to employees that it would not be a situation where it would be used as leverage against them, but rather a situation where they would work with employees and try to treat them fairly. He said he understands that there were different members on the Law board at that time, but it is still the Law Board, and it is the integrity of the Board that should be upheld.

Wilkerson stood firm on his preference for a 2% COLA. He explained that no one ever wants to pay for it, but when the 911 call is made everyone wants an officer to immediately respond. When there is a serious problem most citizens want the experienced officer onsite handling their case. The Law Board has to do what is necessary to protect the community and keep experienced officers on the Department. He voiced his favor for draft 3a, but could live with draft 5a if that was the preference of the Board.

Matta said initially he wanted the RCPD budget reduced by 4% and instead challenged the Department with a 2% reduction. Unfortunately the Law Board is a political animal and one Board cannot be bound to the other. He reiterated that he is trying to get a little bit of money from a number of places so there is not large burden on one entity. That is his goal.

Butler said the Law Board has an obligation to RCPD employees and the taxpayers. In his estimation, option 5b represents the best compromise.

McCulloh stated her belief that the best way to show respect is to pay officers and non-sworn employees adequately. Employees have not received a COLA for the past two years. She was in support of draft 4a or 5a.

Sherow concurred and said he too could vote in favor of draft 4a or 5a.

Pepperd expressed that he was not in favor of draft 5a. He preferred draft 5b.

Lewis noted that the difference between draft 4a and 5b is approximately \$58,000.

Wilkerson moved to approve RCPD 2012 budget draft 4a for publication. Lewis seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the results are as follows:

Wilkerson: Yes

Lewis: Yes

Matta: No

McCulloh: Yes

Sherow: Yes

Butler: No

Pepperd: No

The motion passed 4-3.

C. Adjournment: Pepperd moved to adjourn the meeting. Wilkerson seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0. The May 18, 2011 Special Law Board Meeting/Budget Workshop adjourned at 6:46 p.m.