

**EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS OF SOUTHERN OREGON
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL
BUDGET MEETING MINUTES**

**March 18, 2015, 2:00 p.m.
ECSO – 400 Pech Road, Central Point, OR**

AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

Jackson County	<i>absent</i>	Fire District #3	Dan Petersen
City of Ashland	Warren Hensman	Fire District #4	<i>absent</i>
City of Butte Falls	<i>absent</i>	Fire District #5	Darin Welburn
City of Central Point	<i>absent</i>	Evans Valley FD #6	Larry Tuttle
City of Eagle Point	Vern Thompson	Applegate FD #9	Brett Fillis
City of Jacksonville	Jim Lewis	Greensprings FD	<i>absent</i>
City of Medford	Randy Sparacino	Lake Creek RFD	<i>absent</i>
City of Phoenix	Derek Bowker	Medford RFPD	Justin Bates
City of Rogue River	Robert Catherwood	Prospect RFPD	<i>absent</i>
City of Talent	<i>absent</i>	Rogue River RFPD	James Price
S. Oregon University	<i>absent</i>		

Others Present

Agencies: Tim George (City of Medford)
Legal Counsel: Martial Henault
ECSO Staff: Margie Moulin, Jody Hathaway, Kevin Harris, Corey Nelson, Chad Pfliler
Sarah Leonard, Craig Williams, Jeff Palmer, Jeff McCamish

Chair: Randy Sparacino **Call to Order:** 2:00 p.m. Roll call taken, quorum confirmed

Jim Lewis moved to approve the minutes from the March 11, 2015 IGC Budget Meeting. There were no objections or corrections.

Margie Moulin presented the FY 2015-2016 proposed budget, which was calculated per the council's instructions to reduce the user fee increase to a flat 4.9% for all agencies and to not calculate chargeout or apply the formula. Each revised line item of the reduced budget was reviewed.

Chair opened the discussion to questions from the public and there were none.

The full budget proposal was reviewed. Dan Petersen questioned why Personnel Services had increased since the previous fiscal year. Jody Hathaway reminded the group that the budget still included the Union 2% increase and the refilling of ECSO's fifth supervisor position.

Questions were asked about the approval process for adding a new position; Margie Moulin explained that it was not a new position but one that had been left unfilled in 2011 as a temporary measure to reduce user fees. In past meetings, the council had assured her that she could decide budget priorities according to ECSO's needs, while the committee controlled the total amount available through capping fees.

Margie Moulin explained why the lost supervisor position has always been needed:

- for 24/7 supervision coverage
- for span of control (Matrix study recommended 6 supervisors, currently have only 4)

- for working on Quality Assurance to stop problems before they happen
- to reduce the number of hours that other supervisors are forced to work the board covering staffing shortages

Derek Bowker noted that the county assessed tax increase is not always passed along in full to the individual agencies, so the 4.9% increase is an unreasonable figure to take back to their own councils and budget committees. Chair Randy Sparacino clarified that the council had chosen that number as an attempt to find some rate that would be fair to all agencies but acknowledged that it wasn't completely fair due to some departments not receiving the same percentage increase from their respective cities.

Chair Randy Sparacino asked whether refilling the lost supervisor position should have been approved by the CEO Board. Per legal counsel and Jody Hathaway there is nothing in the IGA or Bylaws that specifies such. Counsel further suggested that past conversations should be reviewed to determine how much discretion Director Moulin had been given by the council to manage her own budget priorities.

Dan Petersen asserted that the budget committee members, in addition to being able to minimize their agencies' financial obligation, also have the power to override ECSO's priorities and select their own, should the committee decide the money would be better used for things more beneficial to their own agencies.

Jody Hathaway noted two conflicting discussions were occurring:

- a) some were arguing to reallocate money to other projects instead of refilling the lost supervisor position; whereas
- b) others were assuming that cutting the supervisor position would let them bring a lower user fee number back to their own budget committees.

Chair Randy Sparacino suggested that Margie Moulin prepare a justification document for refilling the supervisor position, including details about the purpose of the position and ways to offset funding.

Jody Hathaway reviewed the history of the unfilled positions. In the first year of consolidation, ECSO received a one-time influx of revenue from the City of Medford to cover the buy-out of sick and vacation time for former Medford employees. Since that revenue was not in the following year's budget, user fees would have increased dramatically. To counter this, in 2011 ECSO left the fifth supervisor position and two dispatcher positions unfilled. The intention was that the positions would go unfilled for one fiscal year only. There was never an indication that the unfilled positions were not needed.

Darin Welburn supported Dan Petersen's suggestion of prioritizing funds for radio infrastructure. Chair Randy Sparacino said it would be difficult to justify to the City of Medford why their user fees should be invested in infrastructure for the benefit of the rest of the county when the City of Medford has already invested \$1.5 million on radio infrastructure. Dan Petersen suggested some sort of separate user fee allocation could be devised in the future to address that.

Dan Petersen further argued that, while Medford owns their own frequencies, it is ECSO's responsibility to build out the systems they own. He asserted again that, since the council pays the bills, they have the power to decide fiscal priorities and instruct ECSO staff to make it work. He claimed that ECSO's budget was an evolutionary process, citing that the IGC council had changed ECSO's budget to being revenue driven, while also reducing that revenue to align with the tax base. He predicted that in future years the council members would get to declare their

own rate increase, or zero increase if they wished, and instruct ECSO to build the budget based on whatever the council chose, which would likely be different every year.

The group discussed the specific costs of refilling the supervisor position (approx. \$88,000). Jody Hathaway pointed out that the union wage line item would increase if a senior dispatcher was not promoted to supervisor, as had been planned. The increase (about \$20,000) would be the difference between that senior dispatcher's wage and a new hire step-one dispatcher that would have replaced them.

MOTION: Dan Petersen moved to not fill the supervisor position and take the estimated \$50,000 and put it in the Capital Fund.

The roll call count was 2 No to 10 Yes. The motion passed.

It was pointed out that ECSO does not have a capital fund and that the re-appropriated amount should go into the Equipment Replacement Fund.

MOTION: Randy Sparacino moved to amend the previously approved motion to reflect that the funds would be put into the Equipment Replacement Fund. Dan Petersen approved. The amendment motion passed by unanimous roll call.

There was no further discussion regarding budget approval.

MOTION: Dan Petersen moved to recommend to the CEO Board the proposed FY 2015-16 Budget as revised by the previous motion. The motion passed by unanimous roll call.

The next regular meeting of the Inter-Government Council was moved from April to Wednesday, May 13, 2015.

The meeting adjourned at 3:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff McCamish - Recording Secretary