

LINN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
CEDAR RAPIDS, LINN COUNTY, IOWA
FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2023 1:30 P.M.

The Board met in session at the Linn County Jean Oxley Public Service Center.
Present: Chairperson Zumbach, Vice Chairperson Rogers and Supervisor Kirsten Running-Marquardt. Board members voting "AYE" unless otherwise noted.

Chairperson Zumbach called the meeting to order.

The Board met to discuss the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 budget. Present: Dawn Jindrich, Finance Dir. and Sara Bearrows, Budget Dir.

Chairperson Zumbach read a prepared statement. As Chairperson, he is bringing forward a proposal that may or may not be a big shift depending on policies coming out of Des Moines that the Board have no control over. He gave a brief breakdown of how they got to this point including the unprecedented high inflation the county is facing a \$1.9 million shortfall. Just like someone's home or business, they have no control over it with things such as paper, stamps, fuel, rock, supplies, equipment, utilities, etc. After adjusting for growth, that left them around \$1.4 million behind the eight ball. This equates to an 11 cent increase in the levy rate just to break even. At last Wednesday's meeting, their general agreement was to roughly raise the levy rate 6 cents and find deductions of roughly around 5 cents. Today, however, he is going to make a motion that will prepare the Board to more or less hedge their bets to guard against the senate bill 1056. The senate bill would effectively make them cut around \$1.7 million from their budget. That fix would leave their increase at 11 cents. If senate bill 1056 is not moved on by March 22, 2023 they would then go back to what they originally talked about which is to raise the levy roughly 6 cents and to find 5 cents in reductions. If the bill is enacted, they have to start over and find \$1.7 million of reductions.

Motion by Zumbach, seconded by Rogers to adopt an 11 cent increase in the FY24 budget, however if senate bill 1056 is not enacted on by Iowa legislature by March 22, 2023, then the Board will set the levy rate at roughly an increase of 6 cents and leave roughly 5 cents to be made up through budget cuts focusing on non statutory items.

Discussion: Supervisor Rogers stated that they should focus on the budget and conditions as they exist today knowing that there is the potential for this senate study bill which is now an actual bill. If they make proactive cuts and the senate bill goes into effect they take a tool out of their toolbox to lower the levy rate while at the same time increasing some tax burden at the same time showing that they have to make some hard choices. If it becomes reality and is retroactive, then having some of those discretionary, non mandated externally related expenses to consultants or to organizations through a variety of different economic development pots would seem a natural place. They are trying to make a balanced approach to this budget year and getting to a unanimous decision on a very difficult budget. Once they publish what their tax asking is going to be, they can only reduce it and not increase it. He thinks this is a really important motion and the first time in his years on the Board that they have opened up the budget to potentially reducing it.

Supervisor Running-Marquardt stated that she is in support of this motion. She feels this is a good way to protect their core services and allows the flexibility to move back if things were to change with the current language of the senate study bill.

Dawn Jindrich stated that the Board should expect to see \$1.7 million looming ahead of them. They are trying to brainstorm cuts and any revenue opportunities. They hope to find \$500,000 at best. She feels this is the smartest approach and it's a balanced budget that meets their financial policy requirements.

Chairperson Zumbach clarified that there will be no offer pot.

VOTE: All aye.

Jindrich added that February 8th is the next meeting to set the public hearing for the FY24 budget.

Adjournment at 1:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JOEL D. MILLER, Linn County Auditor
By: Amanda Hoy, Executive Assistant

Approved by:

LOUIS J. ZUMBACH, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors