

**CALLED MEETING OF THE
BREWSTER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2011, AT 9:00 A.M.**

Judge Beard called this meeting to order. Officers present are listed as follows:

VAL CLARK BEARD	COUNTY JUDGE
ASA STONE	COMMISSIONER PCT. 1
KATHY KILLINGSWORTH	COMMISSIONER PCT. 2
RUBEN ORTEGA	COMMISSIONER PCT. 3
JERRY SOTELLO	J.P., PCT. 1

1. Road & Bridge Department / Request to authorize bid process for Sheep's Foot Roller and Haul Trailer

Supt. Frenchie Causey said the roller is priced at \$115,000. He is expecting two quotes on a haul trailer, although he expects the cost to be less than \$50,000.

Commissioner Stone said maybe we should start at a cost of \$50,000 for the trailer because he thinks it will go out for bids, anyway, in order to get the best price.

Commissioner Ortega agreed that we should seek bids.

Judge Beard said that the bid notices and specs will be sent to people who are interested. She asked if Mr. Causey could have specs for both the roller and trailer by Monday. He said he thinks so.

Commissioner Killingsworth made a motion to proceed with the bid process, which was seconded by Commissioner Stone, and passed unanimously.

2. County Employee & Elected Officials / Compensation & Performance & Duties / 2012 Budget

A. Executive Session Pursuant to § 551.074, Government Code, VTCA, to discuss the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, compensation, or dismissal of a public officer or employee for the following Departments

At 11:25 a.m., Judge Beard announced that Commissioners Court was going into Executive Session pursuant to Section §551.074, Government Code, to discuss employee compensation related to the 2012 budget.. The courtroom was cleared of all but Commissioners Court.

*County Judge & Courthouse
County Attorney
County Treasurer
County Clerk
District Clerk
Justice of the Peace #1, #2, & #3*

*Emergency Management
Tax Assessor-Collector
Sheriff
Constable Pct. #1, #2, & #3
Road & Bridge Department
Commissioners Court Members*

Reconvene in Open Session

At 12:00 p.m., the Commissioners Court reconvened in open session. Judge Beard said that the Court had been in Executive Session pursuant to Section §551.074 of the Government Code. She asked if there was any action to be taken as a result of the executive session.

No action was taken.

***B. Discussion and appropriate action resulting from Executive Session
(Note: No final action to be taken to set 2012 compensation for
employees or elected officials)***

3. 2012 Budget Workshop / General Discussion concerning all aspects of County revenues/expenditures and upcoming financial needs for all county Departments and other entities funded by the County / Scheduling issues related to adoption of Budget and setting Tax Rate, presentations by contracting agencies and nonprofits

Judge Beard said that this is going to be an exceedingly difficult budget. Higher insurance costs and lower jail revenue are contributing to the difficulty, along with frivolous lawsuits, state mandates, fewer tickets in Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1, high advertising costs, the PILT allocation, new facility costs and a coming election year.

Judge Beard asked Sheriff Dodson to speak about budget issues related to the jail.

She said the jail is running behind in projected revenues because the Marshals are not utilizing the facility to the extend they used to.

Sheriff Dodson said the Marshals are moving out more prisoners on a daily basis than is necessary, which causes the federal daily rate to drop. The Marshals service has now said that the jail is too small and isn't being run correctly. They have also been calculating the wrong dates that prisoners are admitted.

That date error was pointed out and a meeting has been scheduled between Judge Beard and the Marshal.

Sheriff Dodson said he is concerned with the Presidio County jail re-opening and losing population to that facility. Also, the Federal District Judge is magistrating defendants in Pecos more often than Alpine, so the van which was

purchased for transport between the jail and the local federal courthouse isn't being used very often.

Commissioners took some time to review a first pass at a budget printed by the Treasurer's Office.

Judge Beard said the draft shows a 1.5 percent COLA increase. There are no job classification increases.

The tax rate used is .342997.

Commissioners decided to go through revenues first and note any issues.

With a little work in the Tax Office, additional delinquent taxes could be collected. Judge Beard noted that the District Clerk needs to take a larger role in filing tax cases.

Judge Beard asked if the Election budget includes HAVA reimbursement. Deputy Treasurer Megan Antrim said she is unsure. Berta Martinez, the clerk, is at training.

Killingsworth suggested an increase in the hotel/motel contribution.

Judge Beard suggested an increase in the Appraisal Office rent. They current pay \$1,000/mo.

Judge Beard said she would like to adopt a policy in the coming year state that the County will pay for required certification, but non-required training needs to be curtailed, due to its cost.

Commissioner Killingsworth said a policy on what is considered indigent for indigent burial is necessary. Judge Beard said each Commissioner is currently allowed to determine indigence on a case by case basis. They could each adopt their own policy, or there could be a County-wide policy.

Judge Beard said she shaved a little off the library funding; the County has been supporting library construction and operations generously. She said she took \$500 off the total, and she hopes that the board will begin to step up its own fundraising for operations.

Commissioner Killingsworth suggested maybe a part-time IT Director rather than full-time, unless it's necessary.

The EMD budget includes a \$10,000 for a microwave tower for which nobody knows its use. The service will be cancelled.

Judge Beard has \$10,000 budget for permanent improvements for updates to the old library building and to the Commissioners Courtroom. It may not be used at all, but she would like to keep it in the budget.

Commissioners discussed decreasing the food and uniform items in the jail budget.

In the Sheriff's budget, Commissioner Ortega suggested going out for bids on fuel. Judge Beard concurred, and said they would need to go through a process.

Deputy Treasurer Antrim said much of the Sheriff's Office fuel is reimbursed, although that's not reflected in the budget. The budget shows \$63,000 for fuel, but Ms. Antrim said nearly \$43,000 of that is paid by grants.

In the Road and Bridge Department, Judge Beard removed the sign tech and mapping supplements.

LUNCH RECESS

Judge Beard read a list of items for the Treasurer's Office change in the next draft of the budget.

Judge Beard said she is hoping for a budget that can be filed as the "proposed budget," hopefully by the end of the day Aug. 8. She noted that amendments can be made to the proposed budget.

Commissioners again recessed so that the changes could be made, and Commissioners could again review a printed budget.

Commissioner Killingsworth said this particular proposal is based on a seven percent tax increase, a .3398 combined rate.

It was noted that the new trailer for the Road and Bridge Department was not included in Interest and Sinking. However, after the new rescue vehicle is paid off at the beginning of the year, there will be enough budgeted in I&S to cover the cost.

Following a meeting with the U.S. Marshal, Judge Beard said she had nothing new to share about federal prisoner rates. There are obviously some personnel issues, but the meeting seemed productive.

Commissioner Killingsworth said the hotel/motel contribution was changed from five percent to seven percent.

Each department's budget was reviewed, line by line.

Commissioner Stone made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Commissioner Killingsworth, and passed unanimously.

VAL CLARK BEARD, COUNTY JUDGE

ATTEST:

BERTA RIOS MARTINEZ, COUNTY CLERK