

Coronavirus Relief Fund debated by commissioners

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On Wednesday, June 24, the Board of Josephine County Commissioners held a weekly business session (WBS) at Anne G. Basker Auditorium in Grants Pass.

The commissioners were joined by JoCo Finance Director Arthur O’Hare, who was making his last appearance at a WBS before his retirement, for the first part of the meeting, which was dedicated to a public hearing on the county’s supplemental budget for fiscal year 2019-2020. As is customary, this was timed to take place not long before the beginning of fiscal year 2020-2021 July 1.

O’Hare explained that the supplemental budget is basically “the codifying decisions that have been made throughout this year that impact the budget.” The original budget for the fiscal year was \$143,410,000. As the year went on, it was revised and the final tally was \$145,536,000, a change of a little over \$2.1 million.

“The change that we’re implementing or I’m requesting today is about one and a half percent,” O’Hare concluded. “Most of that

expense is in dedicated funding areas.” Specifically, the 2019-2020 supplemental budget consisted of 7% general fund expense, 32% law enforcement, 16% special revenue, 39% trust and reserve, and 6% combined interfund transfers and contingency, enterprise funds, and internal service.

The only specific transaction that “reaches the threshold to be defined as supplemental,” O’Hare noted, “is the county school trust fund.” He explained that this fund was composed of pass-through dollars afforded to the county by the U.S. Forest Service. “That’s the reason why we’re having this public hearing,” O’Hare noted, “the rest of the transactions are below that threshold and are minor enough to where they are considered budget adjustments and could be approved by resolution on any public meeting.”

After going through all of the specific budget increases made throughout the last year in “painful detail,” O’Hare concluded his presentation. Board Chairman Darin Fowler asked him if the supplemental budget was “normal,” to which O’Hare replied that a supplemental

budget of 1.5% isn’t anything out of the ordinary. Thus, the board approved it.

Also considered at the session was approval of a Department of Administration (DAS) grant agreement between the state of Oregon and Josephine County for the Coronavirus Relief Fund. Assistant Finance Director (soon to be Finance Director) Sandy Novak was called to the podium to detail this agreement. The Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) provided about \$1.4 billion to the state of Oregon. Of that, Novak explained, approximately half is available to local governments. Josephine County requested \$2,474,819.23 of the fund.

“All expenditures under this reimbursement request have been isolated in our general ledger system to ensure no double-dipping,” Novak said. “The state approved the request on Saturday, June 13, then on the 15th the state sent out a grant agreement.”

Commissioner Dan DeYoung emphasized during the discussion of the relief fund that this round of funding from the state government is going exclusively towards making counties whole and reimbursing them for added expenses that have been shouldered during the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds are not going out to reimburse or support local businesses. However, it

was noted that a significant amount of Federal funding handed out to the state regarding COVID-19 has not yet been distributed and may eventually be given to businesses, but details of these potential plans have not yet been disclosed.

County attorney Wally Hicks also weighed in on the relief fund. “The League of Oregon Cities and Association of Oregon Counties have both been pretty publicly dissatisfied with this entire approach - whether the state should have attached any strings,” Hicks said, referring to local jurisdictions’ opposition to the state of Oregon’s decision to attach their own additional terms to funding received from the Federal government for distribution.

One of these terms, Commissioner Lily Morgan said, is the state’s ability to conduct a background check on any county employee as part of the grant agreement. “What’s the authority of the state over a county employee background check and what is the significance of grant funding on a background check of a county employee with employment practices in place?” Morgan asked skeptically. “If

somebody’s already hired and on payroll, what can the state do if somebody has a background... I mean, it’s kind of like, why can at any time DAS can require that any employees, at their discretion, must submit to a criminal background check? Okay, those are odd requirements.”

Hicks pointed out that several Oregon counties are signing off on a letter to the state addressing Morgan’s concern and others that arose out of the state’s terms. “I don’t think there’s consensus anywhere regarding whether this is an agreement that the counties want to enter into or should,” Hicks added.

It was ultimately decided to put the vote on the Coronavirus Relief Fund agreement on hold for two weeks to see if the Association of Oregon Counties can get the state’s terms renegotiated.

Email bcc@josephine-county.gov to submit comments to the board or request to chime in at a future session via Zoom.

Go to the county’s official YouTube channel to watch this WBS and future sessions.

Building a digital defense against COVID-19 shipping and insurance scams: by the F.B.I.

The FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint Center has issued a warning about individuals or companies that reference alleged “newly enacted” COVID-19 shipping laws, regulations, or insurance requirements with the purpose of charging additional fees before the delivery of a product. Examples of this criminal activity include demanding fraudulent COVID-19 insurance fees after the purchase for the delivery of live pets from online U.S. websites. There are also reports of criminal actors fraudulently collecting “refundable” maritime insurance fees, citing fake COVID-19 laws.

The following are indicators of possible scams or fraudulent activity:

- The reference to “new” laws or regulations resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and refusal to provide additional information;
- Requiring additional

charges or fees before delivery of a product;

- Repeatedly providing excuses for delivery delays, including citing COVID-19 laws, regulations, or requirements;
- Requesting money be paid to an unknown third party (e.g., warehouse, insurance company, or shipping company);
- Stating that any required fees, payments, or deposits will be refunded or reimbursed later; and
- Inability to make direct contact with shipper or manufacturer by phone or email (disconnected lines, lack of response, etc.).

Here’s how to protect yourself:

- Never give out personal or financial information to a person or company you do not know and trust;
- Always verify the information of manufacturers, shipping companies, and

Tech Tuesday: COVID-19 Scams

Watch for companies that require extra charges for shipping because of “COVID requirements”

Don’t pay extra fees to unknown third parties

Be wary if you shipper or manufacturer won’t communicate by phone or email

Report fraud to tips.fbi.gov or [IC3.gov](https://ic3.gov).



FBI – Portland Division

service providers before making payments;

- Be wary of unsolicited messages claiming that a delivery is being held until payment is received, especially if you or your business have not placed

any orders or expect to receive any deliveries; and

- Research and verify that any laws or shipping requirements related to COVID-19 are legitimate before sending payment.

If you believe you are the victim of an Internet scam or cybercrime, or to report suspicious activity, please visit the FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint Center at www.ic3.gov or call your local FBI office.

Today in History : by The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, July 2, the 184th day of 2020. There are 182 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History:

On July 2, 1881, President James A. Garfield was shot by Charles J. Guiteau (gee-TOH’) at the Washington railroad station; Garfield died the following September. (Guiteau was hanged in June 1882.)

On this date:

In 1566, French astrologer, physician and professed prophet Nostradamus died in Salon (sah-LOHN’).

In 1776, the Continental Congress passed a resolution saying that “these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States.”

In 1917, rioting erupted in East St. Louis, Illinois, as white mobs attacked Black residents; nearly 50 people, mostly Blacks, are believed to have died in the violence.

In 1937, aviator Amelia Earhart and navigator Fred Noonan disappeared over the Pacific Ocean while attempting to make the first round-the-world flight along the equator.

In 1961, author Ernest Hemingway shot himself to death at his home in Ketchum, Idaho.

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy met Pope Paul VI at the Vatican, the first meeting between a Catholic U.S. chief executive and the head of the Roman Catholic Church.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law a sweeping civil rights bill passed by Congress.

In 1976, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Gregg v. Georgia*, ruled 7-2 the death penalty was not inherently cruel or unusual.

In 1986, ruling in a pair of cases, the Supreme Court upheld affirmative action as a remedy for past job discrimination.

In 1987, 18 Mexican

immigrants were found dead inside a locked boxcar near Sierra Blanca, Texas, in what authorities called a botched smuggling attempt; a 19th man survived.

In 2009, federal marshals took possession of disgraced financier Bernard Madoff’s \$7 million Manhattan penthouse, forcing Madoff’s wife, Ruth, to move elsewhere.

In 2018, rescue divers in Thailand found 12 boys and their soccer coach, who had been trapped by flooding as they explored a cave more than a week earlier.

Ten years ago: Gen. David Petraeus arrived in Afghanistan to assume command of U.S. and NATO forces after his predecessor, Gen. Stanley McChrystal, was fired for intemperate remarks he’d made about Obama administration figures in *Rolling Stone* magazine. The United States defeated Japan 7-2 to win its seventh

consecutive world softball championships. British novelist Beryl Bainbridge, 77, died in London.

Five years ago: Trying to close the books on the worst offshore oil spill in U.S. history, BP agreed to provide billions of dollars in new money to five Gulf Coast states in a deal the company said would bring its full obligations to an estimated \$53.8 billion. A Philippine ferry, the *Kim Nirvana*, capsized after leaving port in Ormoc City, killing about 60 people.

One year ago: Lee Iacocca, the automobile executive who helped launch some of Detroit’s best-selling vehicles at Ford and then Chrysler, died in California at the age of 94. Fire erupted at a Jim Beam warehouse in Kentucky that was filled with about 45,000 barrels of aging bourbon; the warehouse and bourbon were a total loss and the bourbon leaked into nearby creeks and rivers. A deco-

rated Navy SEAL, Edward Gallagher, was acquitted of murder in the killing of a wounded Islamic State captive in Iraq but was convicted of posing with the corpse. (Gallagher would be sentenced to four months’ confinement, but was set free since he had spent more time in custody awaiting trial; the case led to a conflict between President Donald Trump and armed services leaders over military discipline and forced the ouster of Navy Secretary Richard Spencer.)

Today’s Birthdays:

Former Philippine first lady Imelda Marcos is 91. Jazz musician Ahmad Jamal is 90. Actor Robert Ito is 89. Actress Polly Holliday is 83. Racing Hall of Famer Richard Petty is 83. Former White House chief of staff John H. Sununu is 81. Former Mexican President Vicente Fox is 78. Writer-director-comedian Larry David is 73. Luci Baines Johnson, daughter

of President Lyndon B. Johnson, is 73. Actor Saul Rubinek is 72. Rock musician Roy Bittan (Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band) is 71. Rock musician Gene Taylor is 68. Actress Wendy Schaal is 66. Actress-model Jerry Hall is 64. Actor Jimmy McNichol is 59. Country singer Guy Penrod is 57. Rock musician Dave Parsons (Bush) is 55. Actress Yancy Butler is 50. Contemporary Christian musician Melodee DeVevo (Casting Crowns) is 44. Actor Owain (OH’-wyn) Yeoman is 42. Race car driver Sam Hornish Jr. is 41. NHL center Joe Thornton is 41. Singer Michelle Branch is 37. Actress Vanessa Lee Chester is 36. Figure skater Johnny Weir is 36. Actor Nelson Franklin is 35. Actress-singer Ashley Tisdale is 35. Actress Lindsay Lohan (LOH’-uhn) is 34. Actress Margot Robbie is 30.