

County OKs tentative budget

Three plans laid out to account for timber money, levy

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

POLK COUNTY — Polk County's tentatively approved 2015-16 budget is a "tale of three budgets," according to County Administrator Greg Hansen.

"This budget is much better from a fiscal standpoint than what we've had in the past," he said while delivering his budget message March 30 at the beginning of four days of budget hearings. "No layoffs are proposed in this budget."

But as Hansen characterized it, there are three distinct components to what will end up being the county spending plan for 2015-16.

First, the general fund — which includes the majority of the public safety departments — is essentially "status quo," if the county's public safety levy is not approved. Hansen's proposal will add 1.75 positions divided between Community Corrections and Community Development departments. Funding would also purchase vehicles for the Polk County Sheriff's Office and Community Corrections and a check scanning system for the Treasurer's Office.

If the levy is approved in the May 19 election — the second budget scenario — 22 additional positions will be hired in the Sheriff's Office — jail and patrol — and the District Attorney's Office. Hansen included expected revenue from the yet-to-be voted on levy in a separate fund, which would be distributed to the appropriate



Hansen

POLK COUNTY 2015-16 BUDGET

	General Fund	Total Budget
Without Public Safety Levy	\$16.94 million*	\$54.2 million
With Public Safety Levy	\$19.09 million	\$56.46 million

* \$100,000 of the \$2.25 million expected revenue from the levy is included in the Juvenile Budget. If the levy fails, that revenue will be removed.

Learn more: to view the budget documents:
www.co.polk.or.us/ms/finance-department

The last meeting of the Polk County Budget Committee — where formal approval will be given — is scheduled for May 20.

Source: Polk County

KATHY HUGGINS/Itemizer-Observer

Whether or not Polk County's public safety levy 27-109 passes will decide how much money the county can spend on staffing and other programs.

departments if voters say "yes." If the vote is "no," the fund would be eliminated.

Departments classified under "other funds" make up the third piece of the pie. These departments receive the vast majority of their funding from dedicated state, federal or other sources outside the general fund.

Public works and the fair fund may see slight decreases. Public health, the juvenile, youth programs, health services, and management services will see increases ranging from 2 to 16 percent.

Behavioral health (formerly mental health) is seeing growth at an unprecedented rate, getting a \$3 million boost. Hansen said growth at that rate is not likely to last — budget declines could happen just as



quickly as increases — and the county is trying to find strategies to avoid heavy layoffs when that occurs.

He said options include hiring contractors — instead of new employees — to provide services and holding some in reserve, which is now close to \$1 million.

"We are trying to find contractors," he said. "They are not easy to find on our side of the (Willamette) River."

The budget committee

tentatively approved the budget Thursday. It will reconvene on May 20, the day after the election, to vote on formal approval.

Committee members said they were glad to not have to be considering layoffs this year, regardless of what voters decide about the levy.

"It's nice to have a budget where we are not wringing our hands (about layoffs)," said Commissioner Craig Pope, who is also part of the budget committee.

He stressed, however, for the general fund, "status quo" simply means the bleeding has stopped.

Budget Committee Chairman Norbert Hartmann said the county still is in a "public safety crisis."

"Until we have the revenue to support public safety, we are still in trouble," he said.

Workshops aim to help build business

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

INDEPENDENCE — Whether opening a new business or honing skills to run a long-standing one, a pep talk can be helpful.

Promote Enterprising Performance workshops are back at Monmouth-Independence Chamber of Commerce starting Tuesday. The series of six seminars will cover everything from developing and building a budget to marketing to fundraising.

"The concept is to provide information, best practices, tips, things of that nature, to help businesses and organizations in our community," said Jean Love, executive director of the chamber. "We don't want to be just a workshop or class, but rather something that can really help you."

Each session is led by local leaders, experts in their fields, Love noted, with both real-world experience and book knowledge.

Each one-and-a-half-hour workshop includes lunch, a presentation, question-and-answer session, and something for participants to take away and use, Love said, whether it's a list of resources or a budget document.

The chamber started PEP talks in 2013 in a different format. They were held in the evening for three hours at a time.

A chamber survey revealed that members wanted the talks back, but for shorter amounts of time and during the lunch hour instead, Love said. This year's topics also are chosen directly from feedback from last year's survey.

Check it Out

What: PEP Talks series, sponsored by the Monmouth-Independence Chamber of Commerce.

When: Tuesday, April 14 (Developing a Budget and Understanding Cash Flow); Tuesday, April 28 (Fundraising for Non-profits); Tuesday, May 5 (Writing a Marketing Plan); Tuesday, May 12 (Making Volunteer Programs Come to Life); Monday, June 1 (How to Use Social Media to Your Advantage); Tuesday, June 16 (Managing Difficult Employees and Volunteers).

Where: Most PEP Talks are held at either the Independence or Monmouth public libraries, except the social media one, which will be held at Henry Hill Education Support Center.

Admission: M-I Chamber members, \$15; nonmembers, \$20. **For more information:** www.micc-or.org, or call 503-838-4268.

"Topics are more specific," Love said. "What people will be able to say is more funneled instead of broad and generic."

Each of the workshops will be helpful, depending on the business, but the one Love is looking forward to the most is on May 5 — Writing a Marketing Plan.

"How do you get your name out there, what do you support?" Love said. "Do (businesses) really know their target audience?"

The workshops are open to anyone, not just to chamber members.

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GYNECOLOGY SERVICES

Gynecological care is now available in Dallas at the West

Valley Surgical Specialty Clinic. Gynecologist Keita Sakon, MD, specializes in gynecology exams and procedures, including hysteroscopy and laparoscopy, as well as family planning, abnormal Pap evaluation, treatment of pelvic pain, symptom control for menopause and abnormal periods. Dr. Sakon works in Dallas on Fridays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. seeing patients at the clinic and performing gynecological procedures in the West Valley Hospital surgical suites. New patients are welcome! West Valley Surgical Specialty Clinic is located at 591 SE Clay St., Dallas. Call 503-831-0784 for an appointment. Visit westvalleyhospital.org/specialtyclinic. (UPDATE W/ONLINE APPT URL WHEN AVAILABLE.)

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