

MINUTES

SCOTT COUNTY CONFERENCE BOARD

PROPOSAL OF COUNTY ASSESSOR BUDGET

MONDAY FEBRUARY 8TH, 2021 - 4:30 P.M.

WEBEX VIRTUAL MEETING

BOARD ROOM – 1ST FLOOR

SCOTT COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING

600 W. 4TH ST. DAVENPORT, IA 52801

A meeting of the Scott County Conference Board was held on Monday February 8th, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. both virtually via WebEx and in person in the board room on the 1st floor of the Scott County Administrative Center, 600 W 4th St, Davenport IA. The purpose of the meeting was for the Board's review, discussion, and approval of publication of the Scott County Assessor's proposed budget for fiscal year 2021-22.

The meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m. by Board Chair Ken Beck with the following members present (roll call):

Schools:

Daniel Gosa – Davenport School Board – President

Tracy Lindaman – North Scott School Board – Vice President

Jean Dickson - Pleasant Valley School Board, Director District #7

Mayors:

Bob Gallagher – Bettendorf

Martin O'Boyle - Eldridge

Michael Limberg - Long Grove

Michael Bawden – Riverdale

Supervisors:

Ken Beck – Chair

John Maxwell – Vice Chair

Tony Knobbe

Ken Croken

Other:

Tom McManus – Scott County Assessor

John Kelly – Deputy Assessor, County Assessor's Office

Beth Haney – Office Manager, County Assessor's Office

David Farmer – Budget & Admin Services Director, Scott County

A quorum was established by the voting units.

Next order of business was to designate the delegates for each voting unit of the Board.

Schools – Dickson

Mayors – Bawden

Supervisors – Knobbe

A motion to approve the prior meeting minutes was made by Dickson, seconded by Bawden, all ayes, motion carried.

County Assessor McManus then delivered the Assessor's report. McManus welcomed new County Supervisor representative Doug Nelson to the Scott County Examining Board. He also pointed out that representatives from the schools and mayors' terms will both end on 8/24/21 and will need to be addressed at any of the upcoming meetings.

McManus then requested the Board null and void the verbal agreement between the Scott County Conference Board and the Scott County Assessor that the County Assessor reside within Scott County. **After some discussion by the Board, Knobbe made a motion to approve, seconded by Dickson, all ayes motion carried.**

McManus mentioned that the County Conference Board is mandated to reconvene later this year between July and October to determine the re-appointment of the County Assessor to another 6-year term, if so desired. He also presented the board with the education log for himself and the deputy assessor, explaining all mandated education requirements for his re-appointment have been met and that he has received official education status certification for re-appointment from the Iowa Department of Revenue.

McManus reported on the status of the Scott County Assessor's Office, including staffing stability, office remodel, adaptations due to the COVID pandemic, an upcoming appraiser I promotion to appraiser II, and the addition of Nearmap aerial imagery. McManus also reported on the continuous and ongoing education of other staff for necessary job skillset growth.

McManus then presented a proposal to update the Assessor's Office pay scale for all staff which would increase the minimum and maximum pay for all positions within the office. The proposed pay scale was adjusted as a result of an Assessor's Office salary compensation study done by PSPC (Public Sector Personnel Consultants, the same company that recently did the salary compensation study for the rest of Scott County) as well as the result of an in-house salary compensation study done by McManus himself, which shows lagging midpoint and maximum salaries. It was backed by extensive data and research using surrounding, similar-sized assessor's offices as comparisons. McManus also proposed a 2.25% COLA increase to the

proposed new pay scale for all staff. There was much Board discussion. Beck expressed a concern that the study with PSPC was not completed to the point where pay scales for each job category and the means to get from the minimum to maximum pay were determined. Since the assessor's office is a pseudo governmental office of Scott County, Beck suggested that the assessor reengage PSPC, or work with Scott County HR, or even the City of Bettendorf's HR department (Kathleen) to finalize pay scales that were similar in nature to Scott County. The pay increases do not necessarily need to be in steps as is used in the county, but should follow a similar pattern. The study should also place each employee within their new pay scale, and any increases in pay would be reviewed after the conference board receives and reviews this information. This information provided by PSPC or a final report others would be used to evaluate the validity of the increases proposed by the assessor. Beck also recommended to invite PSPC to attend the meeting when a new pay scale is proposed. Knobbe commented that he liked the extensive data research done and that it 'smelled like it was going in the right direction'. However, Knobbe also expressed the desire for more time and more analysis to be done by PSPC. The Board was in agreement that McManus should reach out to PSPC and request a new, updated salary compensation study for the County Assessor's Office before presenting to the Board again for approval. **No action taken at this time.**

McManus then reported on the Board of Review and prior year assessment appeals, including; the steps property owners can take to challenge their assessments, the informal assessment review process, prior year's Board of Review session and stats, and the statuses of current and prior years PAAB and District Court appeals.

McManus then reported on building permit data, and the current status of property assessments, to date, by class, city, and township. McManus noted an amendment to the data in the report was sent to Board members earlier that day.

McManus also reported on the dismissal of the 2019 Multi-Residential Equalization Order, as well as plans for removal of the order, and then revaluation adjustment increases being made to 2021 MR assessments to compensate for the market.

At this time McManus reported on the proposed combined budget of the County Assessor's Office, the County Board of Review, and the County Examining Board for the coming fiscal year. There was discussion as to whether the Board would approve and vote on individual line items, or vote on the overall budget request as a whole at the conclusion of the budget report. The Board opted to approve the overall budget as a whole, sans any individual staff salary adjustments or evaluation increases of any kind other than COLA at this time.

McManus requested a 2.25% COLA increase for all staff, and reported this request aligns with the county COLA increase recommendation. There was more discussion by the Board

pertaining to the proposed pay scale and the proposed salary adjustments to County Assessor staff.

The board elected to vote on the COLA increase only at this time with the provision that McManus work with PSPC again on a new, updated salary compensation study for the County Assessor's Office, and that the Board would revisit the pay scale proposal and all other proposed staff salary adjustments being requested for 2021-22 budget at a future meeting date after PSPC has provided an updated analysis and the Board has had ample time to review.

Knobbe motioned to approve, Bawden seconded, all ayes and the motion for only a 2.25% COLA increase for all staff passed effective 7/1/21.

McManus reported on the rest of the budget line item by line item including; board of review requirements, examining board requirements, employee benefit requirements, expected operational expenses, and explained any adjustments to line items as needed. McManus made sure to report in more detail on large budget decreases such as a reduction in the need for outside commercial services, reduction in postage/ mailing due to an even assessment year, as well and the removal of the vehicle expense from that line item.

McManus noted that the overall total budget as proposed was only increasing less than \$17,000 total from the prior year's requested budget, or about +1.5%. He also noted the Assessor's levy rate is "decreasing" again this year, for the third year in a row! McManus concluded his report and budget proposal noting that the Scott County Assessor's Office has the third lowest levy rate of all assessor's offices in the entire state! He stated the reason for this is that the Assessor is buying down a high fund balance from years prior when office budgeted for contracted appraisal services. There was some discussion and David Farmer briefly explained how this works to board members.

A motion to accept the Assessor's proposed budget as presented for publication and to set for public hearing was made by Knobbe, seconded by Dickson, all ayes, motion carried.

No old business reported.

No new business reported.

The date of the meeting for public hearing and adoption of the County Assessor's budget was set by the Board for Monday March 1st , 2021 at 4:00 p.m. virtually via WebEx.

At 5:43 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made by Dickson, seconded by Bawden, all ayes, meeting adjourned.

Date: _____

Tom McManus,
Conference Board Clerk,
Scott County, Iowa

Date: _____

Ken Beck,
Conference Board Chair,
Scott County, Iowa

SIGNED COPIES RETAINED IN COUNTY ASSESSOR'S OFFICE