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# CHAIR'S EXECUTIVE BUDGET MESSAGE

Tuesday April 25, 1995

I am pleased to offer you my 1995-96 executive budget. The budget has been constructed mindful of the county's urgent benchmarks for public safety, children and families, access to services and good government. The budget balances pressing needs with fiscal constraints by emphasizing efficient, careful use of resources and stretching tax dollars by leveraging our investments with non-county private and public dollars.

The public deserves, and the county is committed to, a customer-oriented, outcome driven, quality focused, highly productive government. This budget provides incentives and tools to accelerate our movement in that direction.

To maximize our resources, I have continued the emphasis on inter-departmental collaborations within Multnomah County, and county partnerships with other governments, education, business, and the community. These partnerships are the only way we can reach the scale of effort needed to respond to our challenges.

In the county, we are responsible for addressing complex societal problems. There are no simple solutions or silver bullet programs which will change that reality. Our challenge, using this budget as a tool, is to think systemically, use data and best practices to the extent available, and continue to hold out the vision of a healthy, liveable community.

To the extent resources were available you will find emphases in this year's budget on the following:

* increasing resources to reduce juvenile crime and meet the public's mandate for more punishment;
* working with the Sheriff and the Community Corrections Director to maximize public safety by increasing the capacity and efficiency of our jails and community corrections system;
* preserving the public's investment in our county facilities and adding value to our work force investments;
* upgrading and enhancing our information systems;
* investing in programs for children and families.

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I very much appreciate the work of the Citizen Budget Advisory Committees which provide citizen input into our budget process. I am pleased to report that in large part my budget tracks the recommendations and emphases recommended by the Central CBAC.

## Highlights of Resources Available and Expenditures

I am proposing a budget for Multnomah County that will expend $559.7 million. This represents a decrease from the prior year of just under 0.9% The net decrease is primarily a result of reduced construction spending at the Juvenile Detention Home and the Central Library and more realistic budgeting in the CareOregon Fund where our experience of a year's worth of operation enables us to lower the budgeted amounts.

General Fund expenditures are proposed at $172.6 million, an increase of 4.9%. State/Federal Fund expenditures are proposed at $182.9 million, an increase of 2.9%. Total property tax collections are projected at $132.45 million, an 11.9% increase over last year, due to rising property values and new construction. Business Income Tax receipts are projected at $27.4 million, an increase of 2.3% over last year's budget.

I have allocated an additional $1.5 million in this budget toward the goal to build a General Fund reserve of 5% of budget expenditures. This will bring our reserve to a total of $4.6 million. Our policy goal is $8.6 million.

By necessity, this budget was constructed in an environment of uncertainty. We know there will be an impact on the county from state budget cuts and changes in state relationships with local government, but we don't know the full extent of state actions at this time. The long and short range implications of federal funding and policy changes are also not known.

While the specific details of the state proposals to shift the responsibilities for felony offenders sentenced to less than 12 months are still being discussed at the capitol, we have utilized some of what we anticipate will be at least $7.4 million in new state funding (based on the current per bed/per day rates being discussed). I have included $825,000 from this amount to continue funding for beds and sanctions for parole violators at the Multnomah County Restitution Center.

## Increasing Resources to Respond to Juvenile Crime

The increase of juvenile violent crime is a major public safety concern, an urgent county benchmark, and the county is responding. This is the only area in which major increases in funding and new programs are recommended in this budget. Approximately $1.75 million in General Fund is added to the Juvenile Justice Division budget.

Using the best data available, we have projected the future impact of Ballot Measure 11, the availability of secure detention at the state level (McLaren), and the effect of our Detention Reform initiative, in order to identify our needs for detention space and community programs. Investments are needed in every category. We have tried to strike a balance which recognizes the importance of public safety, prevention, early intervention, accountability and efficient use of resources.

This budget includes funding to expand our detention center by 32 beds and money for additional community programs. The investments in our juvenile system in this budget build on the programs started last year and continue our goal of creating a true continuum of services and accountability. Last year the Board funded a new diversion program with increased accountability for failure to participate. As a result, attendance at mandated diversion programs has increased from 40% to 74% with the added benefit of increased parental involvement.

## Improving Public Safety

I have worked closely with the Sheriff and the Community Corrections Director to maximize public safety by increasing the capacity and efficiency of our jails and community corrections programs. Sheriff Bunnell and I have agreed on this budget submission. The objectives of our agreement are:

* to assure that all released offenders (pre-trial and sentenced), including matrixed offenders, who need supervision to protect the community and to assure appearance at trial, will get that supervision;
* to use the Sheriff's work force and facilities in the most cost effective and proactive ways possible;
* to use the community policing experience of the Sheriff's Office and the Department of Community Corrections to enhance our ability to deal with troubled families and juvenile crime.

To accomplish these objectives we have agreed that the budget will include funding for the Sheriff to temporarily add 45 inmates at the Inverness Jail, to expand the use of video technology for arraignments, and to open a temporary holding site in Gresham.

The Sheriff has also agreed to consolidate enforcement records and corrections records functions to save money and use resources more efficiently.

The Sheriff is working with the Community Corrections Director to coordinate the pre-trial release system in order to conserve tax dollars by eliminating duplication and to assure we are supervising offenders appropriately to protect public safety.

The Department of Community Corrections budget absorbs a $2 million cut in state funds and faces much uncertainty due to proposals in the state legislature. However, this budget is built on the premise that we are still committed to a continuum of services and sanctions aimed at reducing recidivism. The STOP program has proved to be a successful way of diverting offenders with drug and alcohol problems. Since the federal grant which supported this program is ending, we have funded it in this budget because of its success and broad support in the justice community.

We need a public safety system which is integrated, coordinated, and which uses tax dollars wisely. This requires a high degree of trust and collaboration among traditionally independent institutions. I believe these budget proposals and related agreements contribute to creating such a system.

## Preserving Our Public Investments in County Facilities and Adding Value to Our Workforce Investments

Some 50 county-owned buildings stand as a testament to generations of taxpayer investment in the future. Last year, a comprehensive assessment of our property confirmed our suspicions that we are not maintaining our buildings properly. I have allocated $2.9 million to maintain, upgrade, and comply with ADA requirements for our buildings in order to protect the public's investment. The next step is for the Board to define a facilities plan and funding mechanisms to implement the plan.

This budget includes funds to open the Midland Library by the end of the fiscal year. We are looking forward to this expansion of our library services in mid-Multnomah County.

County government is a labor intensive business. The quality and productivity of our services depends primarily on the skills of our workers. Employee training is the most direct and cost-effective path to high quality services. The RESULTS Steering Committee and it's Design Team are developing a comprehensive plan for the RESULTS initiative. This work will contribute to shaping the training plan for the county. We already know that line employees and managers need training to work in teams, redesign processes, evaluate data, and to take advantage of the richness of a diverse workforce. We also know we need resources for training in conflict resolution, performance evaluation, and new roles for managers.

This budget includes an important investment in training our workforce. I believe it will pay us a return far beyond the dollars we invest in terms of productivity and improved customer service.

## Upgrading and Enhancing Information Systems

The county's ability to work effectively and to communicate is dependent on increasing our capacity to gather, analyze, and distribute information. We cannot be an outcome-driven government if we can't get the information we need to evaluate our programs. And all the data in the world is not useful if we don't have the capacity to evaluate and use it. We cannot be customer-focused if we can't communicate easily internally and externally. Therefore, this budget includes funds for information systems, communications and evaluation.

You will find in this budget funds allocated for:

* hardware, software and personnel investments in Community and Family Services that will begin to create an integrated client database and provide information necessary to do good program evaluation;
* investments in Environmental Services to implement the information systems strategic plan, to develop automation requirements in Planning, for records imaging equipment in Transportation, a mapping system upgrade, and an imaging/cashiering system at Assessment and Taxation;
* use of Casey Foundation funds for a document imaging system at Juvenile Justice;
* funds for additional public computers, an automated scheduling system and grant funding to develop Children's CD-ROM Centers in the Library;
* funding within the Sheriff's Office for continuing work on the Sheriff's Warrant Inmate System and the development of a scheduling system.

Aging Services and Community Corrections have secured state money for some important investments in technology for their areas.

## Investing in Programs for Children and Families

Family support networks are built on the strengths of families and communities. Networks incorporate and combine resources from various sectors and recognize that families are diverse. These networks continue to be the framework for our children and families policy. The Multnomah Commission on Children and Families is playing an important role in advocating for the changes which are required to make such a system a reality.

This budget adds services which are catalysts for systems changes and fills pressing service gaps. Many of these proposals require contributions from other sectors and institutions.

I have incorporated funding to start a crisis triage center to assist the police and others to deal with people with mental illness who are in crisis. Other partners will have to come forward to make this important service a reality.

Funds are allocated for staff to advocate for and coordinate child care services (with the City of Portland and ESD), to improve county services delivered to school children, and to combine our District Coordinating Teams and the Leaders Roundtable Caring Communities. All these functions require matching funds from others. I have also proposed a challenge grant to the business community to augment school and county funds to add alternative school services to meet the needs of our young people.

Few efforts have more benefits than reducing teen pregnancy and child abuse. In this budget, I have funded the Health Department request to expand the Postponing Sexual Involvement program to 15 schools in the county. This program focuses on teaching refusal skills to middle school students. Success in these areas will prevent many future problems. I have added funding for a District Attorney to the Child Abuse Team.

Health services are going through radical transformations as we move to a managed care system. The county Health Department has been a pioneer in this area with CareOregon. Now our Community and Family Services Division is preparing to implement capitated managed care systems for alcohol and drug and childrens' mental health services. Recognizing the potential financial risk to the county, and the degree of innovation required to make these changes, I have incorporated in this budget funds to provide the technical assistance and advice needed to assure we are acting prudently in these managed care endeavors.

Protecting the vulnerable elderly is a very important community and family value. This budget includes enhancements for monitoring and training adult home care providers and for expanding the public guardian program.

## Appreciation and Thanks!

I want to thank the department and division heads and their budget analysts, Barry Crook and Dave Warren and the Budget and Quality Office staff, and Bill Farver and Meganne Steele from my staff, for their team work, and professional and cooperative approach to this budgeting process. To make this work, everyone was required to do their part--and they did. Thank you.

Beverly Stein

# Budget Notes

At the time they adopted the 1995-96 Budget, the board of Commissioners also adopted the following directions to be pursued during the fiscal year.

Use of the Contingency Account

The Board will consider contingency requests for:

- additional resources for the Mental Health Triage Center,
- matching funds for the District Attorney's AmeriCorps grant,
- the establishment of an East County Senior Office after reinitiating discussions with the City of Gresham for matching funds and with the Gresham Seniors Inc. concerning their continuing role in using a County owned facility in Gresham for senior activities,
- additional funding for the Anti-Violence Public Education Campaign, depending on the results of fund raising efforts,
- full year funding of staff at the Inverness Jail Annex.

Community and Family Services

Funding for Developmentally Disabled Transition Services is authorized pending Medicaid availability and SSI and/or family contributions and is scheduled to start in January or earlier if other resources are identified. If Medicaid is not available, it is the Board's intention not to supplement the program in 1995-96 beyond the $80,000 from the General Fund, but to review alternative ways of using the General Fund support to assist this client group. The Board intends to annualize the program in 1996-97 at an amount reflective of the program's ability to leverage other resources. The Board's goal for the program is eventually to cause the State to accept it as a model and to implement it throughout the state.

Juvenile Justice

The Board will consider a transfer of up to $361,500 from General Fund Contingency after reviewing the Juvenile Justice proposals for use of this appropriation for community services programs.

# Budget Notes

It is the intent of the Board to fully restore funding for VORP, PIC, and CASA from General Fund Contingency depending on evaluation and negotiations with these providers has been completed.

Health Department

The Board intends to institute a restaurant awards program funded through program revenue, if allowed under state law.

Sheriff

The Sheriff will assist Sauvie Island Fire District in its capital needs in joining the new 911 system (assuming the continued Fire District commitment to capital funds already identified). The Board will encourage the Sauvie Island and Corbett Districts to make appropriate changes in their funding bases, to consult the County EMS office for possible funding, and/or to work with the User Board to provide ongoing operating funds.

The Board requests the Sheriff to explore the establishment of a booking fee in the corrections facilities.

The Board requests the Sheriff to return with suggestions for different approaches to use the beds at the Restitution Center now that the funding mix supporting the center has changed.

The Board requests the Sheriff to report in July on additional staffing requirements to permit additional courtroom use in the Justice Center courtrooms.

The Board is interested in exploring ways to reduce the costs associated with holding prisoners in hospitals when their medical conditions cannot be handled in corrections facilities. As a result, the Board requests that the Sheriff return in the Fall with a full briefing leading to a policy review process around this issue. Specifically, the Board requests:

- analysis of the cost of housing prisoners at hospitals in comparison with possible expansion of medical services in the jails,
- a report on the billing processes for health services provided to prisoners at County expense and the reimbursements achieved through these processes,
- analysis of the potential to reduce costs by contracting with fewer hospitals for these services, preferably by contracting with a sole

provider, and for combining this contract with negotiations for a mental health triage center.

It is the Board's intention to end matrix releases from County jails at the earliest possible date.

District Attorney

The Board intends to evaluate the success of the Teen Paternity Rights and Responsibilities Project by reviewing its success in establishing paternity and securing child support. The Board intends that the project should be coordinated within the school curriculum with abstinence and birth control education and that it should be coordinated with the Teen Pregnancy Coordinator in the Health Department.

Environmental Services

The Board requests Animal Control to participate with other jurisdictions in the development of a program to fund a technician to assist local jurisdictions in developing an approach to control problem wildlife, including coyotes. $10,000 in additional animal control revenue from 1994-5 is included in Contingency if an acceptable plan is presented.

Nondepartmental

The Board's authorization to the Auditor to secure professional advice on courtroom use and standards is contingent on a work plan for use of the money and on agreement from the Facilities Client Committee.

The Board recommends that the East and West Soil and Water Conservation Districts explore merger.

The Board requests Commissioner Kelley to arrange a briefing on countywide mediation efforts and on opportunities to use mediation in providing County services.