

Report to the People: Revised budget discussion

by Philip W. Chapman
October 20 2017 9:59 AM

Dear Editor,

This Report to the People # 36 is meant to provide information to the voters and assist with government transparency. This issue provides information on the 13 October Revised Budget prepared by Mr. Hulme and sent to Finance Committee on Saturday, 14 October.

My review generated the following observations questions I hope you find useful.

I. Capital Projects

A. CONCERNS: The administration may not have ear marked capital project funding based upon future property use or upon agreements with the Edwardsville School District.

1. Concern: The proposed budget earmarks \$200,000 for repair for the Clay Street property which some think the county should sell. Therefore, I humbly requested funds for repair be cut from the FY 2018 Budget until we decide the fate of this property.
2. Concern: The budget requests \$440,000 for repair of the Freeman school for roofing and tuck pointing. If I understand correctly, the county's agreement with the school district requires the school district maintains this building. I suggest the repairs be stricken from the county budget. The responsibility for building maintenance appears to rest with Dr. Daiber. This doesn't appear to be a cost that should be borne by all Madison County taxpayers.
3. Concern: Currently, there is only \$30,000 earmarked for the improvement of the Wood River facility. Given the future proposed use of this facility by a number of county staff currently working elsewhere I'm concerned we're not out in front of having adequate office space for those who may be moving.

4. Concern: There is \$170,000 earmarked for Emergency Building Repair. There was no money dedicated for this last Fiscal year. What emergencies does the administration foresee that warrants this sum? Is the \$170,000 actually 'a bank' for projects they have already identified? If so, what are these projects?

5. Concern: The administration earmarks \$850,000 to improve the parking lots around the administration building. Questions: (1) Can this work proceed without any damage by heavy trucks completing the upcoming jail project? (2) How does this improvement fit into the proposed parking garage suggested by the City of Edwardsville which calls for a multi tiered garage with spots dedicated to county government's use? Is spending money now warranted or does it amount to double spending on something that will be subsumed by the larger Edwardsville Parking Lot vision later?

B. STRENGTHS: (1) By in large, the current Administrations' budgeting process appears more transparent. (2) The Administration earmarked \$5,472,438 for improvement of the Jail. This sum is far less than the \$28,000,000 million bonding issue for jail improvements voters rejected and still makes needed improvements. (3) The call for \$187,625 to improve the Detention Home is long overdue. (4) Facility Director Schmidt's call for preventive building maintenance is necessary.

II. Full and Part Time Positions and Veteran's Continuum of Care

A. CONCERNS: Funding of Full and Part Time Positions: Previously, I humbly requested the administration provide a; "Table of Cost Centers Gaining or Losing Positions". The administration did not comply with my request with the issuance of the revised budget 13 October. I hope Mr. Hulme does so Monday, 16 October. Positions make up a huge portion of the budget and allow for mission completion. Funding of positions reflect the changing priorities and mission of government.

I. Concern: Funding of Full Time Positions **QUESTIONS:** The Coroner, Public Defender, Recorder, Sheriff, State's Attorney all asked for additional full time positions. Which, if any, will receive additional full time positions? What are the titles of these full time positions? There has been discussion that the Animal Control may have too many positions. If so, will the administration cut some full time positions? A Table clearly delineating which positions will be cut and which shall be added seems necessary.

2. Concern: Funding Part Time Positions The Auditor, County Clerk, Superintendent of Schools, and State's Attorney asked for the funding of part time positions. Questioning during Finance Committee meetings revealed part time positions assist with mission

completion in specialized functions while reducing full time positions and their legacy costs. QUESTION: What part time positions previously requested by cost centers will be cut?

3. Concern: Recorder Positions Question: How many full time positions did the Recorder's Office start with in FY 17? How many part time positions did the Recorder's Office have in FY 17? How many Full Time Positions are proposed for the Recorder's Office to start with in FY 18? Have FY 17 Part Time Positions become Full Time in the proposed FY 18 Recorder's budget?

4. Concern County Clerk's Budget: The Clerk's Election Line Items were cut \$156,848. What election activities will be affected?

5. The Administration proposes cutting the "Veteran's Continuum of Care" \$20,362. I need to find out how has this money traditionally helped Veterans.

B. STRENGTHS: I don't wish to comment on any possible strengths of this Proposed General Fund Budget until I receive additional information and answers to my questions.

Respectfully,

Philip W. Chapman

County Board District Three

This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.
www.avast.com

Opinions expressed in this section are solely those of the individual authors and do not represent the views of RiverBender.com or its affiliates. We provide a platform for community voices, but the responsibility for opinions rests with their authors.