

Budget Work Session April 30, 2024

1. Call to Order

Chairman George Trujillo called the meeting to order at *1:40 p.m.*

2. Pledge of Allegiance and Salute to the Flag of the State of New Mexico

All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance and Saluted the Flag of the State of New Mexico.

3. Roll Call

Deputy Clerk Vivian Trujillo polled the board:

Commissioner George A. Trujillo	-	Present
Commissioner John H. Trujillo	-	Present
Commissioner Veronica M. Serna	-	Present

4. Approval of Agenda

County Manager Garcia stated I recommend approval.

Commissioner Veronica Serna made a motion to approve as recommended.

Commissioner John Trujillo seconded the motion. *All in favor. Motion carried.*

5. Public Comment

No Public Comment.

6. Discussion: 2024/2025 Fiscal Year Budget Review

Commissioner G. Trujillo stated what deadlines do we have?

CFO Jesus Baquera stated the deadline for the budget is July 1. We have another meeting. I think it is the 16th of May to present the final budget to DFA.

My understanding was to go through this budget and get a wish list from all your Department Heads, and then I'll enter those wish lists into here, and we'll figure out how much we can afford and adjust accordingly. The final budget is what we approve on the 16th of May and send to DFA.

Mr. Baquera further stated the spreadsheet is by department. Elected officials, that would be your Board of Commissioners. 0400 is the budget for the Commissioners.

Further discussion took place.

Commissioner G. Trujillo stated to increase the budget for the new incoming Elected Officials, we're going to have to do a resolution, before we do the budget?

Commissioner G. Trujillo stated can I get a motion to enter into a 2-hour recess to allow the departments to meet with Mr. Baquera to discuss their budget.

Commissioner V. Serna made a motion to enter recess.

Commissioner J. Trujillo seconded the motion. *All in favor. Motion carried.*

The Commission entered recess at 1:53 p.m.

Commissioner G. Trujillo stated he would entertain a motion to reconvene regular session.

Commissioner V. Serna made a motion to reconvene regular session.

Commissioner J. Trujillo seconded the motion. *All in favor. Motion carried.*

The Commission entered recess at 3:48 p.m.

Commissioner G. Trujillo stated we will return to item number 6.

(Continue Item 6)

Mr. Baquera stated everybody's wish list is on the spreadsheet. Next step will be to go in and compile the whole thing and see what it adds up to, and then compare it to our revenue, see how much we can afford, there's going to be some sanding. I gave everybody a heads up, told them, it's subject to change. We're going to sand it down to where we can afford it and go from there.

Commissioner G. Trujillo stated can you give us info about the wishes?

Mr. Baquera stated it was all salaries, there was very little increase for supplies, and for gas and maintenance. A couple of people had maintenance agreements that they had to deal with, that weren't in there. On the Road Department, I adjusted for his new salary, and I gave everybody else a 10%, but I will talk with him.

Commissioner G. Trujillo stated I as Chairman of this Commission would like say if we're going to give any raises, give a raise across the board, to everyone. I don't see how we're going to pick and choose 10% here and 5% there. I just don't see it. I feel that employees need a raise, but employees need to understand that everybody, to me, are equal employees.

Commissioner V. Serna stated employees are equal to a certain extent for the cost-of-living raise, but then you have Operators, and you have EMS and you have people that require certifications. Those certifications need to be worth something.

Commissioner G. Trujillo stated I agree with you 100%. I meant to say that too. I am also a firm believer in seniority. I think we should do a study. A pay scale.

Commissioner J. Trujillo stated there are employees here that have already worked 20 years. I'm just saying everyone should be on the right pay scale.

Commissioner G. Trujillo stated also myself and Commissioner Serna were having a conversation about retirement. I think the County needs to upgrade your retirement because right now if you will retire you only get 50% of your salary. That's kind of crazy to me. So, we need to do a study on that too, but what I'll do now is hear some comments.

Commissioner V. Serna stated there are other things that you guys have invested in such as your education or certifications that cost you time and effort to go get that. You guys deserve that increase based on those credentials, your degrees or whatever it might be.

County Treasurer Rumaldo Pino stated everyone's job performance is having to increase the workload because of the whole thing that's happening. As far as the Clerk's, they're researching tons of different things that they wouldn't be doing every day, the Assessor's office as well. Planning and Zoning dishing out these letters of residency. Our office is on the increase of collecting for all that as well. We've got an increase, an influx of people coming to the County, even from Las Vegas, that have navigators here. So, we've got a whole increase of just a lot of business.

Commissioner G. Trujillo stated when you guys do your evaluation, then if your budget can afford it. Well then you do the raise and justify with an evaluation and seniority and whatever.

Commissioner J. Trujillo stated when I came in as a commissioner, four years ago, my goals were to help the employees and we have given raises. Two dollar raises, I think it was last year, if I'm correct straight across. And the year before that we gave a 50 cent raise to the help to the HR and the others. The Commission were able to get health insurance for the employees. I agree with the Commission. We need to work on that retirement, I want you guys to have a future where you want to come to work.

County Treasurer Rumaldo Pino stated if you guys do your review of what we've proposed to Mr. Baquera I think the increases that we've set aside that we want to do for our employees is very much needed. I'm not sure if you all know, I'm losing my Chief Deputy, because they offered her back to her old job offering more money.

County Clerk Carlos Arellano stated our office has added duties. For instance, a couple of years ago, it was one meeting a month, now it's sometimes five or six. We're still working with the same number of people, but there's a lot more work headed our way, it's going to be that way for a few years. Cost of living is probably the hardest because some of these people, well, I have one employee in my office 18 years, and she should be way above that. The whole thing is, is that there's a lot of things to consider and we have got good employees, and we want to keep them. If we pay them a little more, I think if we can, it's the thing to do.

Commissioner G. Trujillo stated I know you guys need to get wages that's what we're here for, right, to make a living. So, you know sometimes we're going to make hard decisions, but I'm here to work with you guys. You guys are the backbone of the county. Not us. I see you guys as the backbone; you guys are doing the work.

County Sheriff Americk Padilla stated if you guys want to see the increase of what I was putting forward, I got copies where you guys can look at any questions, comments, concerns. It is just for my deputies. They're my foundation they represent my department and without them I wouldn't be where I'm at right now.

Commissioner G. Trujillo stated can we get elected officials a raise?

County Treasurer Rumaldo Pino stated I'll reiterate what Americk said it's our staff that keeps us running.

Commissioner G. Trujillo stated I'm willing to look at giving you Elected Officials a raise, we have to vote on resolution. I think you guys should get the max. It is something we will have to look at.

Manager Garcia stated I think it can be up for discussion with Department of Finance, in Santa Fe. I don't think it's fair that your workload increased significantly, everybody's did, almost 100%, I would say, and you're still expected to do the same job for the same pay. Well, that just doesn't make sense. Mrs. Cruz and I spoke with the folks at FEMA, and they had promised to give us money upfront, and then after that, they went back on their word. We actually need 16 more employees to keep up with what they're doing now, and then for the State to mandate our Assessor to raise taxes by 3% a year. Mora doesn't keep that, the State gets 3% more, we don't really see it, it's not significant enough for us. I think it's a conversation to be had. If we don't pay these people what they're worth, they'll leave us tomorrow, then you can't blame them.

Continued discussion took place.

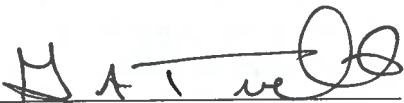
7. Adjournment

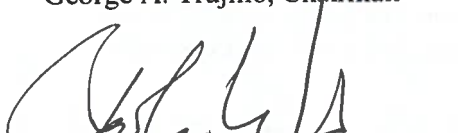
Commissioner V. Serna motion to adjourn.


Commissioner J. Trujillo second the motion. All opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 4:09pm.

MORA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSION


George A. Trujillo, Chairman


John H. Trujillo, Vice-Chairman


Veronica M. Serna, Member




Carlos J. Arellano, County Clerk