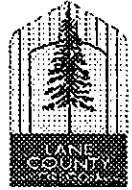


W. S. B.

AGENDA COVER MEMO



AGENDA DATE: 2/8/2006
TO: BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DEPT: Health & Human Services
PRESENTED BY: Joseph J. Reiley

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: ORDER _____ IN THE MATTER OF ADJUSTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES BUDGET (HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION FUND 285) TO ACCEPT ADDITIONAL REVENUES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$122,858 FOR THE VETERAN SERVICES PROGRAM AND, OF THIS, TO APPROPRIATE \$61,429 IN REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES TO INCREASE FTE BY 1.5 BY ESTABLISHING A 1.0 FTE ASSISTANT VETERAN SERVICES COORDINATOR AND INCREASING THE CURRENT 0.5 FTE OFFICE ASSISTANT 2 TO 1.0 FTE AND INCREASING MATERIALS AND SERVICES.

I. MOTION

ORDER _____ / To adjust the Department of Health & Human Services budget (Human Services Commission fund 285) to accept additional revenues in the amount of \$122,858 for the Veteran Services program and, of this, to appropriate \$61,429 in revenue and expenditures to increase FTE by 1.5 by establishing a 1.0 FTE Assistant Veteran Services Coordinator and increasing the current 0.5 FTE Office Assistant 2 to 1.0 FTE and increasing materials and services.

II. ISSUE OR PROBLEM

With the passage of Senate Bill 1100, the 2005 State Legislature established a County Veterans Services Expansion program. Along with Senate Bill 5629 which allocated funding, these measures provide for direct disbursements to expand each County Veteran Services Office (CVSO). Based on the funding formula developed by the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA), Lane County will be allocated \$122,858 per annum for fiscal years 2005-06 and 2006-07. This money is to be used to expand the Lane CVSO and may not be used to supplant current county funding for that office, except in certain circumstances (See, SB 1100, Section 6). Please recall that this Board wrote a letter to the Lane County Legislative Delegation this past summer to object to a "Maintenance of Effort" requirement. While the language originally objected to was modified, the basic concept was maintained. In early January, 2006 Lane County received a disbursement of \$61,429 for the first two quarters of FY 2005-2006. That money is currently waiting the Board's ruling on this Motion and Order before use. In

order to implement this expansion program, revenues and expenditures must be approved and positions must be created or increased.

III. DISCUSSION

A. Background

Veterans and their dependents and survivors are eligible for a wide variety of state and federal benefits based upon qualifying military service. These benefits range from monthly compensation for current, chronic health conditions which are due to their military service, to eligibility for special financing for the purchase of a home, to direct health care services at medical centers and out-patient clinics nationwide. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) administers federal benefits for veterans. In 2004, the VA expended over \$85 million in Lane County alone. Of that, over \$46 million was in direct payments to disabled veterans eligible for either service connected compensation or non-service connected pension.

As the decision making body for benefit eligibility questions, the VA may not also advocate for individual veterans. The application process is complicated and may take up to a year in the initial phase and three to five years if an appeal is necessary. Although this process is intended as a "non-adversarial administrative adjudication" many veterans, who have been waiting years for a favorable benefit determination, would disagree. Accordingly, the millions of dollars paid by the VA into Lane County's economy are at risk without a strong and accessible local advocate for veterans. That local advocate is the Lane County Veterans Services Office whose mission is to assist veterans in obtaining the maximum benefit to which they are entitled under the law. Since this office became a county program, direct VA payments to Lane County veterans have increased by over \$12 million.

The efforts that CVSO's make to assist local veterans and support local communities were recognized during the recent legislative session. Along with this recognition came the realization that local services must be expanded to meet the increasing needs of the veteran population. This population is facing the twin pressures of aging of the World War II, Korean and Vietnam era veterans and expansion by veterans newly returned from the battlefields in Iraq and Afghanistan. Furthermore, since the counties have carried much of the obligation of funding veteran services offices in the past, the state acknowledged their responsibility in this arena and passed SB's 1100 and 5629 to provide state funding for the necessary expansion of CVSO services.

B. Analysis

To further the implementation of the SB's 1100 and 5629 and adequately serve the needs of Lane County veterans 1.5 FTE positions are needed: a 1.0 FTE Assistant Veteran Services Coordinator and an additional 0.5 FTE Office Assistant 2. Additionally, an appropriate increase in Materials and Services is also necessary.

The Assistant Veteran Services Coordinator will join the Program Coordinator and another Assistant Coordinator in providing direct counseling and case worker services to, and advocacy for, local veterans and their dependents and survivors. Currently, veterans must wait over four weeks to obtain an appointment and with this added position we expect wait times to decrease. Furthermore, with the additional staffing, current veteran services outreach efforts will be expanded. The Assistant Coordinator is now traveling to Florence to see veterans twice a month. This is obviously inadequate as 15 to 25 veterans seek services during each visit. As we typically allocate an hour for each in-office appoint, at least a doubling of the number of hours in Florence is warranted. Furthermore, with additional staff, increased services to other outlying county communities and to home or facility bound veterans will be feasible.

The expansion of the current 0.5 FTE Office Assistant 2 to full-time (position #50101) will provide greater stability and full-time administrative support to the case workers. Currently, the service office relies on VA work-studies (County volunteers) to provide coverage and such support. This is a less than ideal situation due to their relative inexperience and varying school schedules.

C. Alternatives / Options

1. To adjust the department of Health & Human Services budget (Human Services Commission Fund 285) to accept additional revenues in the amount of \$122,858 for the Veteran Services program and, of this, to appropriate \$61,429 to increase FTE by 1.5 by establishing a 1.0 FTE Assistant Veteran Services Coordinator (March – June) and increasing the current 0.5 FTE Office Assistant 2 to 1.0 FTE (February – June) and increasing Materials and Services.
2. Not to adjust the department of Health & Human Services budget (Human Services Commission Fund 285) to accept additional revenues in the amount of \$122,858 for the Veteran Services program and, of this, to appropriate \$61,429 to increase FTE by 1.5 by establishing a 1.0 FTE Assistant Veteran Services Coordinator (March – June) and increasing the current 0.5 FTE Office Assistant 2 to 1.0 FTE (February – June) and increasing Materials and Services.

D. Recommendation

To approve Option #1.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION / TIMING

Upon board approval, the budget adjustments will be processed and the positions adjusted and established. A comprehensive and detailed expansion plan will be filed with the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs by March 31, 2006 in order for the Quarter 3 Disbursements to be authorized. Thereafter, quarterly reports on expenses

and activities will be required by ODVA. The recruitment process for the personnel will commence immediately. Interviews will commence as soon as possible.

V. ATTACHMENTS

Board Order

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, LANE COUNTY, OREGON

RESOLUTION) IN THE MATTER OF ADJUSTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND ORDER:) & HUMAN SERVICES BUDGET (HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
) FUND 285) TO ACCEPT ADDITIONAL REVENUES IN THE AMOUNT
) OF \$122,858 FOR THE VETERAN SERVICES PROGRAM AND, OF
) THIS, TO APPROPRIATE \$61,429 IN REVENUE AND
) EXPENDITURES TO INCREASE FTE BY 1.5 BY ESTABLISHING A
) 1.0 FTE ASSISTANT VETERAN SERVICES COORDINATOR AND
) INCREASING THE CURRENT 0.5 FTE OFFICE ASSISTANT 2 TO
) 1.0 FTE.

WHEREAS, Lane County Department of Health & Human Services, Human Services Commission, funds and administers a veteran services program; and

WHEREAS, the Oregon Legislature has made available \$2,600,000 to provide for the expansion and enhancement of county veteran service offices; and

WHEREAS, Lane County Department of Health & Human Services, Human Services Commission, Veteran Services Program was allocated \$122,858 for each year of the current biennium by the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners as the governing body of Lane County may, in accordance with ORS 294.326(2), appropriate by resolution unanticipated revenues and expenses.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED AND ORDERED, that the Lane County Department of Health & Human Services is approved to accept disbursements from the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs in the amount of \$122,858 for the Veteran Service Program; and

IT IS FUTHER ORDERED that appropriations are increased by \$61,429 in revenue and expenses; and

IT IS FUTHER ORDERED a 1.0 FTE Assistant Veteran Services Coordinator be established and the current 0.5 FTE Office Assistant 2 position #50101 be increased to 1.0 FTE in the Department of Health & Human Services.

DATED this _____ day of February 2006.

Bill Dwyer, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioner

APPROVED AS TO FORM
Date 1/23/06 lane county
Maile Law
OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL

BOARD ORDER BUDGET CHANGE FORM

BOARD ORDER PERSONNEL BREAKOUT (Add rows as needed)							
Title	FTE	Job Code	Position #	Effective date	Position Cost	Benefit Cost	Total
Asst. Veterans Svcs Officer	1.00	B055	New	3/1/2006	\$11,183	\$8,243	\$19,426
Office Asst. 2 *	1.00	A005	50101	2/1/2006	\$6,171	\$2,228	\$8,398
TOTAL	2.50				\$17,354	\$10,470	\$27,824

*Increasing .50 to 1.00

REVENUE ALLOCATION

Fund 285	Org	Account Code	Amount
Veterans Affairs	3427070	453830	\$61,429
TOTAL			\$61,429

EXPENSE ALLOCATION

Fund 285	Account Code	Amount
Permanent Operating Salaries	3427070 511100	\$17,354
Employee Benefits	3427070 511600	\$10,470
Salary Offset	3427070 511850	\$3,657
Telephone Services	3427070 512344	\$250
Fleet Vehicle Services	3427070 512531	\$14,558
Copier Charges	3427070 512536	\$420
Direct/Information Services	3427070 512552	\$500
County Overhead Charges	3427070 512554	\$2,520
Office Expense & Supplies	3427070 512611	\$1,000
Printing & Binding	3427070 512614	\$300
Postage	3427070 512618	\$200
DP Supplies and Access	3427070 512621	\$500
DP Equipment	3427070 512622	\$5,000
Business Expense & Travel	3427070 512811	\$2,000
Outside Education & Travel	3427070 512821	\$2,500
County Training Classes	3427070 512822	\$200
TOTAL		\$61,429

3427030 (\$2,520)

\$0