

BOS #19
Feb 3, 2009

To the Board of Supervisors
From Supervisor Jack Sweeney



The budget for members of the Board of Supervisors has long been a topic of discussion by members of the board and the public. In the past three weeks I have found out that this budget does not ring true and is not easily understood. In preparing for this item today I have had many discussions with staff to better understand what the budget might mean.

I was flabbergasted to discover that due to a variety of added benefits we have two assistants that cost the county more than members of the Board. I was amazed to find out that there is as much as \$38,000 difference between the costs for each district. I was also concerned that the range for expenses beyond salaries and benefits was from \$4,700 to \$23,000.

As one illustration of the errors in the budget, I do not take PERS so the \$10,071 shown under retirement for me is wrong. Also I do not get the \$800 shown as deferred compensation.

With all of this taken into consideration, I believe we can best serve our individual districts with a uniform and equal budget for each district. This would allow each member to determine the level of ability they desire from their assistant, whether or not they need to receive reimbursement for meals and travel, if they want to go to a particular county business related conference and be reimbursed for such, or perhaps they might want to hire some extra help for a research project for their district or the county.

My examination of the budget indicates that the average of the proposed budgets for each district is \$215,870. However this number contains some numbers that are not correct. I believe that the Auditor/Controller could best clarify the true budgeted numbers.

I believe that we could set the budget for each district at or below \$200,000 and come in about 6.5% below the current budget. However, until we have the desired input on numbers from the Auditor/Controller, I am not prepared to propose a number.

As an example of the issues, current expenses through December 2008 are:
(Note that District 1 & 2 are new members so these numbers do not fairly represent them therefore only districts 3,4, & 5 are shown)

District 3 \$1,982; District 4 \$550; District 5 \$ 4,001 & District 5 Assistant \$1,264;
with a potential that mileage and use of county supplied vehicles is not yet included.

Since the goal of this Board is to reduce our budget, and since some districts could overrun a district allocation just with their salary and benefits, I would move to curtail all expenditures beyond salaries and expenses until February 24, 2009 when I would ask the Auditor/Controller for his assistance in a budget number and for the County Counsel to provide an appropriate resolution setting forth the policy of the Board on this matter.

Since our assistants show an annualized cost from \$89,000 to \$124,000 it appears that we need to examine their pay schedule and benefits to bring their pay into line BELOW that of Board members.