

**September 5, 2023**

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a budget meeting on September 5, 2023, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Teske, Commissioner Letcher, Administrative Assistant Jennifer Brown and Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown. Commissioner Hammons was excused.

**01:30 PM Sheriff's Department Budget Discussion:** Present were Scott Shindledecker Reporter-Western News, Hannah Chumley Reporter-Western News, Wendy Drake Director of Finance, Dallas Bowe Human Resources Director, Darren Short Sheriff and Bent Faulkner Undersheriff.

Discussions initiated with nearly \$10,000 cost-cutting measures taken by the Sheriff's Office. The budget for machinery and equipment initially included the purchase of two vehicles and associated accessories. However, a decision was made to eliminate these purchases, resulting in a reduction of \$178,988. There were two unpurchased vehicles carried over from the last budget year due to delivery issues and another two vehicles had been scheduled for purchase this budget year. The Sheriff's Office will seek out grants for patrol cars.

**02:30 PM Library Budget Discussion:** Present were Wendy Drake Director of Finance, Dallas Bowe Human Resources Director, Alyssa Ramirez Library Director, Laura Finley and Annie Gassmann. Meeting allows for teleconferencing and Zoom availability. Present online were Barb Hvizdak and Michelle Bianco.

The Library Board of Trustees agreed to an overall budget reduction of \$17,000. Their budget reflects COLA, yet the operating budget carried straight across from last year. The Board advised after employee costs, operating expenses are about 22% or \$106,000 of the budget.

Conversation ensued exploring multiple avenues to address budgetary challenges and improve the library's financial situation via additional grant funding for specific projects or initiatives, subscriptions to services or resources and even changing the library's organizational structure to become a library district to allow more autonomy which could help address budgetary challenges.

**03:30 PM General Fund Budget Discussion:** Present were Wendy Drake Director of Finance and Dallas Bowe Human Resources.

Taxable value of properties went up, however, by statute the county budget overall increase is about \$245,000. Wendy Drake Director of Finance advised of about \$10,000 reduction available in the general fund and will review the county insurance totals.

**03:53 PM Adjourned**

**LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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Josh Letcher, Chairman

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board