

Budget Update

October 4, 2022

11:10 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, Commissioner Grose, Steve Wohld, Becky Butler, Nic Scott, Lee Napier, John Clark, Kate Chatterton

Guest(s): Tim Wood, Harry Bhagwandin, Tim Wood, Paul Crouner, Usha Sahadeva-Brooks

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Public comment: None.

Becky Butler presented the preliminary budget for 2023.

Among the highlights:

- The preliminary budget is being presented Oct. 4 pursuant to the alternate budget dates Lewis County established under RCW 36.40.050.
- The total 2023 preliminary budget for all funds (including operating transfers) reflects anticipated revenue totaling \$160,511,526 and expenditures totaling \$181,184,020.
- The 2023 preliminary budget for the General Fund reflects a beginning fund balance of \$12.4 million, revenues estimated at \$44.4 million and expenditures estimated at \$48.4 million with an estimated \$3.9 million use of fund balance.
- Unanticipated revenues and savings from vacant positions in 2022 and 2023 likely will lead to a decreased use of fund balance.
- The preliminary budget reflects recently approved COLAs and increase to employer-paid health and welfare.
- Sales and use taxes that trended upward over the last year appear to be tapering off.
- Court fines and fees are projected to be significantly lower next year as a direct result of bills passed by the Washington State Legislature over the last few years.
- Revenue from fines on delinquent taxes also is anticipated to decrease due to changes in Washington legislation.
- The 2023 revenue estimate does not include anticipated new construction for property taxes, as this will be provided by the County Assessor for the final budget
- The BOCC will hold two all-day budget meetings with the offices and departments requesting increases. The meetings will take place Oct. 12 and 17.
- The BOCC will make decisions on the 2023 property taxes for the General and Road Funds during its Dec. 5 hearing.
- Department heads and electeds have submitted budget increase requests totaling \$2,084,162.
- The Citizens Budget Committee will participate in the commissioners' upcoming meetings.

Commissioner Swope asked that the offices and departments seeking additional funding provide five-year outlooks of the budget impact. He also requested information on how the groups would address the end of grants / other funding sources. Becky noted that the requests already include four-year impacts.

Meeting ended at 11:33 a.m.