



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MISSOULA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ADOPT BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011

Missoula County Commissioners adopted the County's budget and set the tax levies for fiscal year 2011 at their administrative meeting this morning. The overall budget for fiscal year 2011 is 1.62% less than last year. General Fund departments cut 2% from their budgets for FY2011 on top of a 3.4% cut in operations in FY2010. The County also eliminated 6.5 positions from departments directly affected by the housing slowdown, 1.5 in the Clerk and Recorder's office and 5 in the Office of Planning and Grants. Two areas requiring additional tax levies were the public safety fund and the voter approved open space bond levy.

The public safety fund saw increasing instability due to rising costs in health care services for inmates in the detention center as well as increases in overall operational costs for the Sheriff's department. This combined with flat revenues related to reimbursement rates for State prisoners provided a structural imbalance in the public safety fund. Despite eliminating two full time positions – a deputy Sheriff and a detention officer – the fund imbalance required a 1.06 mill increase to maintain public safety services and ensure the department's ability to deliver those services in the coming years.

The open space bond will require an increase of 0.45 mills to cover the debt service in fiscal year 2011 for the second in a series of three bond issuances to fund the costs of open space land acquisitions in Missoula County. The voters approved the \$10 million open space bond levy in 2006.

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