

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SHERIDAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 5:30 P.M.
JULY 16, 2007 SHERIDAN COUNTY, WYOMING

The Board of County Commissioners of Sheridan County, Wyoming met in Special Session at 5:30 p.m. on July 16, 2007, Sheridan County Courthouse. Members present were Chairman Terry Cram, Commissioner Steve Maier and Commissioner Robert L. Rolston. Chairman Cram called the meeting to order and then led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Pursuant to W.S. 16-4-109(b), the Special Session was called for a duly advertised public hearing to receive comment on the proposed FY 2007-2008 Sheridan County budget. Chairman Cram opened the public hearing at 5:40 p.m. The Budget Message was not read, being available in printed form for those present.

BUDGET MESSAGE
FY 2007-2008

This past fiscal year has shown continued improvement in the financial picture for Sheridan County, including a cash carryover of over \$4,300,000. The carry-over is attributed to unexpended budget line item expenses, unanticipated collection of revenues, and an increase in the collection of one cent optional sales tax revenue.

The Detention Center remodel project, the planning for which began over four years ago, was completed in FY 2006-07. While it was most certainly a financial drain on our fiscal abilities in the past, we believe this project is a success and was constructed at roughly 60% of the cost for a new facility.

While coalbed methane mineral development (CBM) continues to generate more revenue for Sheridan County and the Sheridan economy, it has also led to increased costs for our social service programs, facility and road maintenance, and personnel needs. A partial list of major projects for FY 2007-08 include: Detention Center kitchen construction; first floor remodel of the Clerk, Treasurer and Assessor offices; interior renovation of the county annex (formerly Dr. Strahan's office building); a new phone system; County Comprehensive Plan development; transportation and waste water studies; road and bridge equipment; Airport fuel storage facility; and numerous road projects.

For three consecutive years, we have been able to include raises for our employees. Staffing levels have remained fairly constant, with the exception of the County Clerk, Administration Department, Sheriff's Office and Road & Bridge Department. The County Clerk will hire an additional employee to begin training, in advance of several long term employees nearing retirement. The Administration Department will hire a Grant Writer/Administrator. The Sheriff's Office will hire an additional deputy for security at the County Courthouse.

REVENUES:

Per initial estimates, Sheridan County's assessed valuation has risen to \$619,388,341 which includes an estimated \$290,259 million attributable to natural gas and oil activity. Based on this valuation, each property tax mill will generate \$619,388 in revenues.

In November of 2006, the voters of Sheridan County passed another four-year Optional One-Cent Sales Tax. The tax is projected to generate \$2,100,000 in revenues, some of which are dedicated to operational support of the hospital, airport, library and fairgrounds. In addition, it is used to fund equipment purchases, the Juvenile Justice Program, and many non-profit and social

service organizations in the community. Also, a substantial portion of the One-Cent Optional funding will fund emergency services protection. The contract for fire and ambulance protection between Sheridan County and the City of Sheridan was terminated by the City of Sheridan in FY 2006-07. In November of 2006, the residents of Sheridan County who lived in the “donut” area of non-fire district protection voted to create a new fire district called the Sheridan Area Rural Fire Protection District. The Commission dedicated \$300,000 to the new fire district and entered into a contract with Rocky Mountain Ambulance Service for \$98,000 per year for county-wide ambulance service. The Capital Facilities One-Cent sales tax is expected to generate \$2,550,000 to be used on our county road system. These two taxes are critical in enabling Sheridan County to continue to provide the services our residents expect and the financial support our many social organizations have come to rely upon.

We are expecting to receive approximately \$9.9 million in dedicated grant funding during FY 2007-2008, the bulk of which will be going to the county roads and bridges for construction, improvements, dust mitigation and capital equipment. Additional grant funding is dedicated for the Airport’s fuel storage facility, Airport Commercial Park, homeland security grants, county and social service agencies, and affordable housing projects.

EXPENSES:

In addition to the capital projects approved for FY 2007-08, the county will replace four vehicles, fix drainage issues at the Road and Bridge building, improve parking lots and sidewalks, and maintain normal departmental operations.

Fixed costs include funding for the library \$1,030,000, fairgrounds \$435,000, airport \$200,000, and hospital \$125,000. (The fairgrounds budget reflects a substantial increase, due to the Commissioners’ decision to forego the relocation of the county fairgrounds facilities and to instead improve the existing facilities.) Other fixed costs include property and bond insurance premiums, accounting and auditing services, equipment leases, contract services, postage, grant match funds, reserve allocations, computer support and training, parks and beautification and miscellaneous totaling \$1,606,056.

In an effort to contain the rising costs of our employee self-funded insurance benefit package, the employee participation for spouse insurance coverage increased from \$100 to \$125. Overall premiums will increase by 10% in the 2007-08 fiscal year, which will be absorbed by Sheridan County and not passed on to the employees. There are minimal cost increases in the dental and life insurance packages offered to employees for the coming year. (Sheridan County Commissioners believe that employee benefits are critical to employee retention and to offset the higher salaries and wages offered in the private sector.)

In FY 2007-2008, elected officials and department heads will be asked to stay within their budgeted line item amounts. Any salary adjustments will continue to require Board approval.

Sheridan County will continue to show spending restraint and evaluate expenditures in terms of necessity. All in all, Sheridan County can look forward to a good year. Our financial picture has improved considerably from the shortfalls we have experienced in the past.

/s/Terry Cram, Chairman

COMMENTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

Renee Obermueller gave an overview of the proposed County budget for revenues, expenses and special funds outlined in the Budget Summary, which indicates totals of beginning cash carryover as \$9,257,162, projected revenues at \$31,085,436 and projected expenditures at \$39,956,550.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public other than Cathy Butler thanking the Commissioners for the Library's budget as an expression of their confidence in the facility.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

The Commissioners commented that the Detention Center and Road and Bridge Department expenses continue as the largest part of the budget. Costs for health care have also increased, which have not been passed on to the employee except for spouses of employees enrolled in the health program. Chairman Cram said the County enjoys minimal turnover of employees which benefits County operations.

The public hearing was closed at 5:50 p.m. The Board accepted the proposed FY 2007-2008 Sheridan County budget and stated that it would be officially adopted the following day in regular session. The meeting was adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Sheridan County, Wyoming

Audrey Koltiska, County Clerk

Terry Cram, Chairman