

**Things to keep in mind as the Jefferson County Quorum Court considers the County Judge's proposed 2025 budget for public safety (law enforcement/jail operations/support staff):**

- Of primary relevance, the Jefferson County Treasurer...*the elected official tasked with this role*...has affirmed the budgets submitted by the Sheriff and, indeed, *all* the other constitutional officers are under 90 percent of projected revenues as legally prescribed.
- The *entire* Jefferson County Quorum Court in 2023 approved a 2024 budget and set pay for slots. In the face of the Quorum Court's "purse keeping" role and the process of consideration and decision making that body went through then, the County Judge's proposed budget for 2025 would particularly drastically reduce pay for most slots or even *eliminate some currently filled* slots.

This, again, comes after the Treasurer and her projections confirm the proposals submitted by *all* the other elected officials are legal and sustainable in 2025. Voting for the County Judge's proposed 2025 budget will mean you agree with and endorse:

- *Cutting* our Undersheriff's pay 6.3 percent and our Operation Major's pay 2.9 percent.
- *Cutting* our IT Director's pay 40 percent and our Technician's slot by 27 percent compared to 2024 – these slots are currently filled.
- *Cutting* pay to Sheriff's Captains, Lieutenants, Sergeants, Corporals and most deputies, *while increasing other deputies' pay without any rhyme, reason or acknowledgement of the length of service pay framework in existence since at least the previous Sheriff's time in office.*
- *Cutting* law enforcement pay, but arbitrarily maintaining 2024 rates for Secretary / Clerks.

- *Eliminating...terminating...letting go the Sheriff's Administrative Secretary – the slot is currently filled. When the County Judge was Sheriff, this slot was funded.*
- *Eliminating the Jail's assistant administrator – the slot is currently filled. When the County Judge was Sheriff, this slot was funded.*
- *Cutting Jail Captain, Jail Corporal and Jail Guard pay (while eliminating a jail guard slot), but increasing Jail Lieutenant and Jail Sergeant pay.*
- *Eliminating the Jail Facility Maintenance slot – the slot is currently filled. When the County Judge was Sheriff, this slot was funded.*
- *Cutting pay for Security slots – those employees responsible for Courthouse and Courtroom security...while seeking to hire (a) Sergeant(s)-at-Arms.*
- *Cutting the Jail Cook Supervisor's pay, but increasing the Cooks' pay – after the Jail administration and kitchen staff have dramatically reduced the cost of feeding detainees.*
- *Cutting Jail Managing Nurse pay by 17 percent and full time Jail Nurses' pay 38 percent – outsourcing these positions will cost far more than what we are now paying.*
- *Cutting the Jail Medical fund to less than the actual cash in the fund right now.*
- *Cutting the Sheriff's proposed 2025 Juvenile Justice Center budget by 10 percent, but with such insufficient notation as to render it impossible to determine from where reductions are to occur.*
- *Arbitrarily cutting the proposed Tri-County Drug Task Force personal services budget...which is reimbursed...by 18 percent. Again, this was not well notated enough to determine how the County Judge's figure was conceived or how it is to be implemented.*

- Arbitrarily and needlessly *increasing* the Tri-County Seized Assets budget when it is nearly impossible to predict the amounts of potential...if any...new receipts to this fund
- *Cutting* the Boating Safety Sheriff proposed budget to less than the actual cash in the fund right now.
- *Cutting* the Emergency Vehicle Sheriff proposed budget to less than the actual cash in the fund right now.
- *Cutting* the Juvenile Education fund's Sheriff proposed budget by 36 percent *from the amount the State of Arkansas has agreed to fund*.
- *Cutting* the LLEBG fund to less than the actual cash in the fund right now.
- *Cutting the RSAT grant funded budget by 86 percent!*
- *Cutting* the Sheriff's Justice Equitable Sharing fund to less than the actual cash in the fund right now.
- *Funding* the now defunct GVI/GRIP grant fund.

Once more, voting for the County Judge's arbitrary proposal, one made without any recent firsthand knowledge of the funds, budgets and *people* at issue, would signal *your* agreement with needlessly disrupting not only operations, affecting Jefferson County residents / voters / taxpayers, but also the lives and families of the Jefferson County employees who look to all of our elected officials for some leadership.

- Treasurer's reports for 2024 demonstrate revenues were up in every major fund for the year, well more than \$78 million for all funds combined as of the *November* report, begging the question, "What is the County Judge's rationale for the cuts?"
- The Sheriff stayed within all budgets in 2024, asking for no new monies except for new monies acquired through grants or other such means. The County Judge's proposed reductions would undoubtedly change this without need. Keep in mind, the Sheriff has never asked for appropriations / transfers from the \$1.6 million Detention Facilities

M&O Reserve Fund the County Judge and the Quorum Court created in 2022 without the Sheriff's consultation as to need, whereas the Road Reserve Fund was completely exhausted within months of its creation and remains so to this day. If the Sheriff's proposed budgets are legal and sustainable according to the Treasurer and necessary according to the Sheriff, why make the arbitrary changes as proposed by the County Judge? Other than the County General funding for the parts of the Sheriff's Office's operations and a portion of Public Safety Sales Tax funds, none of these monies may be used for other purposes anyway.

- Some Justices of the Peace at a recent meeting advocated passing the County Judge's proposed budget as a bookmark going into 2025, with the idea that the budget could later be revisited and amended. In 2024 the County Judge, recall, refused to consider amendments to the budget, saying, it was "set". This was in response to other elected officials seeking some equity in pay for their chief deputies and managers when compared to the County Judge's. Because of this "set" attitude it seems inadvisable, then, to pass the County Judge's proposal and entertain amendments later.

As far as those chiefs and managers are concerned:

- A *majority* of the Quorum Court passed parity increases to achieve equity with the County Judge's chief's pay in 2024.
- A *majority of this current Quorum Court* has signaled their continued support
- Approving the County Judge's proposed 2025 budget would mean, pay cuts as follows:
  - Office Manager – 24 percent
  - Jail Administrator – 7.5 percent

- Juvenile Detention Administrator – difficult to determine, again, because the Judge's Office's budget notations were insufficient, but presumably 12.5 percent