



CASCADE COUNTY

Board of County Commissioners

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September 16, 2022

TO: Citizens of Cascade County

RE: Commission comments of FY2023 Budget

As was the case last year, the FY 2023 budget continues to be affected by the influx of an abnormal amount of Federal funds allocated by Congress to mitigate the impacts of Covid and the corresponding expenditure of those funds.

This year's budget includes a modest increase in both revenues and expenses to provide the day-to-day services our citizens rely on. No services are being cut, nor are any new services being added. These fiscal changes are merely a reflection of the increasing cost of providing the services to which you are accustomed.

The large overall increase in the total budget is due to two factors; first, the 2023 budget includes the expenditure of over \$ 13,000,000.00 in ARPA expenditure as well as a significant amount of capital funds that were expected to have been expended last year but due to lack of contractor availability had to be rescheduled into this new budget year. A more detailed explanation of these factors is included in the "Cascade County Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Annual Operating Budget and Capital Improvements Plan". We encourage you to read this informative document.

It is important to realize that the ARPA funds are a one-time revenue source that must be obligated by the end of 2024. Using it to pay any expenses that will continue past 2024 would be like running up bills in your household that come due in the future with no way to pay them. As stewards of your money, this is not something that the Commission should do, nor are we willing to do.

This budget is designed to address the day-to-day needs of county operations, continue to catch up on some deferred maintenance issues as well as make necessary and appropriate investments in Cascade County's infrastructure and employees. To that end, the Commission has crafted a budget designed to hold the county portion of your property taxes as close as possible to last year's amount. The overall difference in your taxes as compared to last year will depend on any changes in the appraised value of your property, which is done by the Montana Department of Revenue, and the particular city, town and school district in which your property lies.

It remains our privilege to serve you as members of the Cascade County Commission and look forward to your questions and comments regarding the proposed budget.

Best wishes,


Joe Briggs
Chairman


James L. Larson
Commissioner


Don Ryan
Commissioner