

Supervisors move forward on new budget

July 17, 2023



Del Norte County supervisors took the next step in the process of adopting the 2023/24 budget.

The budget team led by Chief Administrative Officer Neal Lopez recommended supervisors embrace the following changes:

- Discuss and take action to approve the 2023/24 fiscal year budget.
- Approve position list establishing, eliminating, reclassifying, salary range adjustments, budget and title changes, and establishing flex allocations and authorize human resources to revise the county staff chart.
- Approve Measure R funding.
- Approve Measure R funding to hire a second code enforcement officer.
- Designate one-time American Rescue Plan act (ARPA) and Corona State and Local Fiscal Recovery fund (CSLSRF) for all California cities and counties were COVID 19 funds.
- Direct departments to cease acquisition of any fixed rate purchase prior to formally adopting the budget.
- Direct departments to cease budget transfers from salaries and benefits to pay any other category, unless determined to be necessary for operations, prior to formally adopting the budget.
- Accept the recommended children's budget.

The list of recommendations was quite a mouthful for the board to digest.

One such approval sought came from the county's largest department, the Department of Health and Human Services, allowing four new branches of specific deputy director positions. This internal re-organization will cost taxpayers an additional \$425,000 annually. DHHS currently has 210 employees, with 50 vacancies yet to be filled and represents approximately 44 percent of Del Norte county's total employment base. The county, to date, employs 478 employees. Supervisors voted 3-1 with Supervisor Joey Borges, citing costs expense, dissenting to re-organize the department of health and Human Services.

Though not cemented in final form, the proposed balanced budget is \$187.673 million with a general discretionary fund of \$39.198 million. Both pass-through and general funds may be adjusted prior to formal adoption the last week of September.

The new budget effectuated July 1.