

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I sent the forwarded email below to Ted Williams this morning regarding my thoughts on the proposed budget/proposed Sheriff's department budget, and I was encouraged to share it with you.

Thank you,

Miquette Thompson

Hello Supervisor Williams,

I am from Gualala and saw your Facebook post about input on the proposed budget and the Sheriff overtime issue. Thank you for providing transparency around the budgeting process and inviting input. I am concerned that there is not enough accountability and transparency in general around how the Sheriff's Department and County Jail are spending their County budget allocation annually, and their efficacy in keeping our community safe, versus other types of programs that we know keep our communities safe and healthy. While I know this will not create a fully balanced budget, rather than sacrifice general fund allocations to cover overtime that wasn't budgeted for, I would ask that at a minimum, the Sheriff's new hire budget be eliminated for the 2020-2021 fiscal year, and overtime spending capped if possible. Many members of your constituency share concerns around the Sheriff's spending and jail spending and wanting more data/greater transparency from the Sheriff's department. While that is not necessarily the job of the BOS to get that data/provide transparency, it would be helpful to those seeking to learn more to know that we aren't continuing to pour resources in to new hires. I also think it's fascinating that there's a discrepancy between Kendall's statement in January in this Ukiah Daily Journal article:

"I think the sheriff's department is in a really good place.

For the first time in 30 years, we are sitting in a place where we have optimum manpower. We have good training, tools, and equipment, and we are hiring really good people. The only direction I can see us going is up,"

Kendall said.

and the fact that he's asking for additional resources now when he's made it abundantly clear that his department isn't really doing much of anything related to health code enforcement/COVID support. He is also claiming to be addressing an uptick in DV/child abuse cases, but then simulataneously released a PSA that these events are being underreported. A lot of contradictory info, and there's a growing number of locals who want greater accountability/transparency/data before continuing to fund his department at the level it has been funded in the past. Anyhow, that's just my two cents, and thank you again for asking for input!

--Miquette Thompson