

Dear Supervisor Williams,

Thank you for asking for input and for being transparent in regards to the budget.

I think 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. I also am concerned that other programs that work to keep our communities healthy and safe are grossly underfunded. This not only puts people and situations in the hands of the police that are not the best equipped/don't want to be handling things such as mental health crisis, homelessness, etc. We need more funds for mental health, social workers, and preventative things like education and schools.

I know this will not create a well balanced budget, it's a start. 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. As sheriff Kendall said himself

[\(https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.ukiahdailyjournal.com/2020/01/07/mendocino-county-sheriff-matt-kendall-discusses-first-days-plans-and-priorities/amp/\)](https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.ukiahdailyjournal.com/2020/01/07/mendocino-county-sheriff-matt-kendall-discusses-first-days-plans-and-priorities/amp/), they have the personnel they need:

“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.”. I would like to see that new hire budget go to places we really need it: schools and health services (mental health, services for the most vulnerable populations).

Thanks,  
Lani Bouwer