

Hello Everybody! It must be election season; I see a lot of pretty signs growing in everyone's yard.

I figured a way out of my commissioners comments this month. I am going to defer to Jean "Skrinny" Dixon, our retiring County Clerk. She will present this year's budget report summary. Hope to see everyone at the County Fair and I would like to remind everybody to vote in the primaries, all of our County Offices will be decided August 17th. Your vote counts!

Annual Budget Message

I, Jean Dixon, present the following budget message for my **twelfth** and final year as County Clerk and County Budget Officer for the County of Platte, State of Wyoming: The assessed valuation came in at \$152,798,262, an increase of \$18M due to the power plant increasing in value from \$44M to \$62M. Our field appraisers picked up \$1.5M in county-assessed property this year.

The county's financial position remained stable all through the downturn of the economy. Many thanks to all the departments for submitting realistic budgets and for their conservative spending. State revenue projections are down somewhat but the state did allocate hardship funding using a formula designed to estimate the difference between county needs and county revenue and Platte County is one of the six counties to receive hardship funding for 2011 in the amount of \$719,157. Revenues from sales tax is down approximately \$150,000 with the elimination of the grocery tax exemption.

We've seen a decrease in inmate population and revenue resulting from the opening of the new prison in Torrington and adjusted the detention budget accordingly. Although salary increases weren't possible, the employees will receive another benefit beginning September 1 which is the additional 2.87% in retirement contributions that the county will absorb. Voluntary vision care was also approved for all county employees. The Commissioners froze salaries for elected officials for years 2011 & 2012 and gave small increases in years 2013 & 2014. Our group health insurance carrier, WINHealth, had no increase in premiums for FY2011 and employee participation was not increased. Delta Dental and life insurance premiums will remain the same. County property insurance was awarded to Colorado Casualty in the amount of \$26,325 and our LGLP liability insurance came in at \$39,935.

Two primary long term needs were addressed and completed by the Board of Commissioners during my three terms as Clerk; the new jail/detention facility and renovation of the PCMH. A first for Platte County was the passage of the Capital Facilities Tax Improvement Projects. Little Rose Wind Farm is the first wind farm permitted in Platte County and Chugwater Flats Energy Project is the first wind farm permitted by the Wyoming Industrial Siting Council. There is the potential of a waste burning power plant called AREA to be constructed in the near future and potential

benefits from the Building the Wyoming We Want (BW3), a long-term regional development visioning process.

An IT Department was established and our website continues to be an asset for the county and is updated daily. The county was awarded an energy grant in the amount of \$250,000 for window replacement for the courthouse. These windows will match the original architectural design intent and restore the historic character of the original courthouse, a big plus since the courthouse is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. New court room facilities should become a priority for future needs.

Road & Bridge had another busy year and will continue their full work schedule repairing, patching and regravelling roads that were damaged by severe flooding and high water that occurred in June. Roads that are on the list to be chipsealed this summer are Horseshoe Creek, Deer Creek and Dickinson Hill. Improvements were made to several county roads including Windmill Rd, Fish Creek Rd, Lakeshore Dr, Pepper Rd, and Pleasant Valley Rd. Supt. Lockman has been able to expand his equipment budget with some much needed items and has lost sleep over the five leased Cat motor graders with the final payoff coming due Jan 2011. I am confident Jim and the Commissioners will get this resolved with their great decision-making ability.

The number one asset of the county is the employees and Platte County is fortunate to have such qualified and dedicated people. As Platte County prospers, the employees need to be compensated appropriately.