



More Budget Cuts In The Future For Mesa County

Commissioners Say Despite A Slight Dip In Revenue, They're Still On Stable Fiscal Grounds

Janelle Ericsson jericsson@kjct8.com
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GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. -- The 2012 budget dipped less than a percent from last year to just under 146 million dollars. The general fund is where most of the money was lost with a decrease in property tax revenue from falling property values.

"The main difference is we are having to do some further reductions," Mesa County Administrator Chantal Unfug said. "While this is approximately 60% less than we had to reduce last year it still will be reduction."

"We really tried to spread the pain across all of the budgets: both for department heads that report to us as well as the local elected officials," Mesa County Commissioner Janet Rowland said. "We tried to focus on the priorities. The outcome based budgeting process is intended to prioritize all of the services we offer and make sure that those now have the highest priority get the funding they need." Rowland went on to say, "If we have to cut, we cut where the lower priorities are and so the next couple of months we'll just be talking with our department heads and elected officials to see what those priorities really should be."

On a bright note, Mesa County's sales tax revenues have been steadily increasing for 12 consecutive months.

"The sales tax now is up to over just eight percent and that is fairly stable at the moment and we just have to cross our fingers going into the next few years."

Mesa County Administrator, Chantal Unfug says the county is working hard to minimize the impact of cuts on services in the community. She says the county plans to put more than 32 million dollars into the community through infrastructure projects paid through the capital spending fund.

"It's essential that we look at this carefully and we're conservative," Unfug said. "I would never want, under my watch for this county, to get into a place where we do not have choices and a stable future."