Leadership Team (L-R)
Lindsay Poe Rousseau, Chief Financial Officer; Tania Cole, Assistant County Manager; Tom Stolz, County Manager; Tim Kaufman, Deputy County Manager; Rusty Leeds, Assistant County Manager; Sheena Schmutz, Chief Human Resources Officer; Wes Ellington, Chief Information Officer

MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Thank you for reviewing the 2021 Recommended Budget. In all of our combined years of public service, this was the leadership team's most challenging budget process, ever.

What started as a "normal" budget process in late 2019, where all departments and elected offices began planning their upcoming budgets, through the budget retreat with Commissioners in February of 2020 - soon turned to an upside down world of the COVID-19 pandemic followed then by weeks of civil unrest due to continued police misconduct issues in other parts of the country. The resulting budget process was like none any of us have ever been through before. Our plans to enhance public services within the county were consumed with a massive response organizationally to COVID-19 including closures of the Courthouse and county facilities for several weeks during the usual budget development cycle. Throughout the response to COVID-19, we were unable to host Manager budget review sessions and had to take a drastically modified budget directly in front of Commissioners in May. Our staff did the best they could with limited fiscal data available and no ability to consider historical trends in revenue and spending due to the unchartered waters of a historic pandemic and varying stages of economic impact and shutdown.

Out of caution regarding the economic future of Sedgwick County, the 2021 recommended budget includes:

- No raise in compensation package for any employees.

- No travel or external training for employees that are not required for mandatory certifications.

- Approval of emergency or highly necessary commodity and contractual items only.

- A continued partial hiring delay with the exception of key emergency personnel.

In addition, the organization will aggressively look at all positions and services to determine unifications, consolidations, or service reductions which could be considered depending on the depth of the economic crisis.

In the 2021 recommended budget we did include the following which were deemed critical to the operations of the county in time of the pandemic and civil unrest:

- Added 2.0 FTE positions (1.0 FTE Clinical Social Worker and 1.0 FTE Paramedic) for Integrated Care Team 1 (ICT-1) ($139,930)

- Added 1.0 FTE Diversity/Inclusion Officer in the County Manager's Office ($93,746)

- Added 5.0 FTE Docket Assistants to the Trial Division of the District Attorney's Office (269,642)

- Added 4.0 FTE Judicial Services Deputy positions to the Sheriff's Office **($359,818)**

- Added funding for the extension of the medical services contracts for the Sheriff's Office and the Department of Corrections **($462,566)**

- Added funding to the Sheriff's Office for out of county inmate housing **($1,000,000)**

- Added funding for recurring equipment costs for the Sheriff's Office **($310,000)**

- Added funding for increased medication and medical supply costs for EMS **($30,000)**

- Added 1.0 FTE Chief Toxicologist position at the Regional Forensic Science Center **($124,764)**

- Added 1.0 FTE Epidemiologist position at the Health Department **($80,438)**

- Added 1.0 FTE CDL Program Manager position with six months of funding in 2021 to the Highways Department at Public Works **($37,719)**

In closing, the 2021 recommended budget is like no other budget that has come before this Commission and the people of Sedgwick County in our lifetimes. We will continue to use our strategic plan to guide the organization at a level that provides the best services possible but is sustainable and manageable under the current economic and health crisis. The Leadership Team and employees of this county remain devoted to the people of Sedgwick County in a unified effort to provide the services our citizens expect in such a challenging time.

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