

## 2023 Budget Hearing

### Investing for the decades

2022 was a good year for Lawrence County. The sales tax was up 7% over last year.

We added 4 full time positions-1 in the Public Administrator's office, 1 in the Collector's office, and two bailiff positions in the Sheriff's department.

We were able to purchase 4 new patrol vehicles.

We began the process of building a new health department.

Ground work began on the new Law Enforcement Center. Groundbreaking ceremonies will be Feb. 9 at 9:00 a.m. Move in date will be in 2024.

The current jail received a new roof and air units. Even though we are building a new facility, this one needed attention while still being used and for the future use of the building.

In the 2023 budget we have estimated a conservative sales tax figure. Lawrence County has been blessed in the increase of sales tax for the past couple of years. But learning from our history, we have funds set aside to withstand the natural drop that will eventually occur. The county has a reserve fund built up to cover a short fall.

We were able to raise the current starting wage for clerical staff from \$13.25 to \$14.00 per hour. We have a salary schedule in place which is based on the beginning salary. The starting deputy pay will increase from \$17.45 to \$18.45 per hour. These come out to a 5.7% increase on the starting wage. Control room staff will start at 15.00 and Civilian jailers start at \$16.00. Office holders and most salary staff will receive a 4% increase. These figures don't include the fringe benefits that are approx. 18% to 20%.

The budget allows for purchasing 2 new patrol cars, adding 8 new jail positions. These positions are to help prepare for the new jail and allow the Sheriff's Department to host an academy. The Sheriff's department will have funds for recruiting jailers and other staff.

The county will be purchasing new election tabulator equipment. The current equipment has been in use since 2012. The new equipment will be more efficient and secure.

Some capital projects the county hopes to complete this year are some tuck pointing on the Courthouse and exterior cleaning and sealing on the Justice Center.

The funds from the Public Safety Sales tax are earmarked for payments on the Law Enforcement Center.

We hope that our conservative budgeting will secure the county finances for decades to come.