



December 21, 2020

Douglas County residents,

The annual operating budget for any local government integrates organizational policies and priorities with public services and facilities on behalf its citizens. Douglas County's FY 2021 budget has been designed to represent a fiscally and socially responsible policy and public service framework that responds to the Board of County Commissioner's desire to balance our core statutory obligations with the desires of our community.

Developing the FY 2021 budget was different than previous in how budget requests were presented to the Board of County Commissioners, particularly due to COVID-19. County departments, agencies, and community partners had the opportunity to present and provide context to their budget requests via video conferencing software, Zoom. This allowed for more accessible budget hearings for presenters and the public. The Board of County Commissioners continue to work to address alternatives to incarceration and improvements to the criminal justice system, behavioral health, and other human services for our most vulnerable residents. Acknowledging that COVID-19 has had a significant economic impact for many, the mill levy remains flat at 46.430.

Expanded Initiatives

The FY 2021 budget reflects a continued focus on advancing Douglas County's efforts to address human services, public safety, and workforce development.

- \$27,653 to Heartland Community Health Center for one-time expenses associated with adding a primary care provider team consisting of a medical assistant, registered nurse and primary care provider for a total of 1.75 FTE.
- \$296,000 to Lawrence Community Shelter for continued operational support to continue to assist adults and children experiencing homelessness
- \$231,000 in one-time capital improvement expenses to Lawrence-Douglas County Fire and Medical for new portable radios

Additionally, \$230,000 in funding was set aside for several human services agencies if they do not receive money from the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund.

Future Outlook

The 2021 budget maintains a fiscally responsible plan and positions Douglas County to provide continued and additional services to citizens, all within the State of Kansas' Property Tax Lid for the fourth year in a row. In addition, sufficient authority is still available under the tax lid to accommodate any future budget increases if needed without requiring an election.

Douglas County Board of County Commissioners

Patrick Kelly, Chair

Michelle Derusseau, Commissioner

Nancy Thellman, Commissioner