I. BUDGET PRESENTATION:

Andrew Czorny:
The meeting started with a presentation by Andrew Czorny, Chief Financial Officer for Missoula County. The hearing, open to the public, gave a summary of the County’s revenue and expenditure for the coming fiscal year. Czorny stated the certified values from the Department of Revenue for county-wide property values combined came in .41% higher than projected by County staff. The vast majority of the increase was due to increased building within the city limits. After careful review of budget priorities, the County was able to decrease the proposed 4.99% tax increase by .39%. As a result, the County will have a 4.61% overall increase. The overall increase would mean $27.85 on a $225,000 home in Missoula County, which is $2.11 less than the original budget projection.

This hearing reviewed the findings of not only the preliminary budget hearing on July 29, but also the consequential Commissioner meetings with department heads on their proposed budgets throughout June and July.

At the end of presentation, the meeting was open for public comment.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Question from the audience (no name given): I know that City Council declined funding for Relationship Violence Services. They were looking for $60,000 to fund another position. Why is the County choosing to take the whole burden of funding upon yourselves?

Commissioner Jean Curtiss: We do not base our decisions on their decisions. We meet with our departments and they tell us what their needs are, and we listen. We review the needs and the ethics. We believe there’s been a growing demand for these services. Also, there’s been a change in public grants. They were not able to get the funding, so we made up the difference.

Commissioner Nicole Rowley: We didn't fund the position requested for by the city. This
was a completely different position. Regardless of who pays for the services, the services are provided to all county residents. The location is not important. We have heard from the community that this program is valuable and highly regarded, and there is a strong demand to provide services to victims of violence. We are responding to that demand.

**Commissioner Jean Curtiss:** And some of our enhancements that are being provided to the Sheriff’s Office and County Attorney’s Office will also provide and support for that program.

**Question from the audience (no name given):** Can you explain the General Fund and how there are not increases to the General Fund and yet we have a 4.6% tax increase?

**Andrew Czorny, Chief Financial Officer:** The General Fund is not like the City where all the funds are contained in the General Fund. The General Fund is separate from the other funds. We have special revenue funds. We have bonds. The General Fund is the Commissioner’s Office, the County Attorneys, the Surveyors Office, the Finance, Recording and Surveyor’s Office. There were no increases in the General Fund. All the increases came in Public Safety, Grants, Fair, Risk Management. The largest fund is the Public Safety fund.

**Vickie Zeier, Chief Administrative Officer:** I think it’s noteworthy to state that the funding of the Sheriff Deputies was in response to a persistent request from that department dating back several years.

**Commissioner Jean Curtiss:** Since we have new numbers [based on the presentation], none of the departments have been told the exact amount for their budgets. We thought we had less money than we are now told.

**Question from the audience (no name given):** Will the County expect the taxes to increase in the upcoming years? How will these decisions influence the budget of 2017?

**Andrew Czorny, Chief Financial Officer:** I have budgeted a 1.5% budget increase for next year, but we do not have clear picture of the revenue coming in with the growth in the next couple of years. Most of the growth will happen within the city, but the county will still see growth. I’m hopeful and optimistic that we are looking at a continuing trend for growth. This is a good start. We’ll have a few changes in capital expenditures. The Courthouse renovation will be completed; this building [Administration Building, 199 West Pine Street] will be up for purchasing, where right now we are leasing; we have quite a few road improvement and bridge projects.

**Commissioner Jean Curtiss:** Elections may need new equipment. This will allow us to gather results faster and ensure they are accurate. We’ve hand-counted enough to know
that we do a good job, but we want to make sure we have the resources we need to be confident in our results.

**Commissioner Bill Carey:** Anything else? (No comments were offered.) I guess not.

**III. OTHER COMMENTS/INSTRUCTIONS**

**Commissioner Jean Curtiss:** So, we actually take action on the budget tomorrow morning, right?

**Andrew Czorny, Chief Financial Officer:** Yes, we will provide a final presentation and the numbers and the final documentation for you tomorrow.

**Recess:**
Commissioner Rowley called recess at 1:53 p.m.