



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
14TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT, STATE OF COLORADO
MATT KARZEN, DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Serving Grand, Routt and Moffat Counties

September 13, 2021

TO: Donald Broom, Melody Villard, Tony Bohrer; Moffat County Board of County Commissioners
Beth Melton, Tim Corrigan, Tim Redmond; Routt County Board of County Commissioners
Rich Cimino, Merrit Linke, Kristen Manguso; Grand County Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Matt Karzen, District Attorney, 14th Judicial District

RE: Information for Tri-County 2022 budget submission

Dear BOCC's –

With the 2022 budget meeting ahead, I am writing to provide some information about the DA's office 2022 budget proposal. Back in July I sent you all some information about case statistics, court operations vis a vis COVID-19, and some of the office's initiatives, so I will not repeat all of that in full here. Of course my door is open at all times if you have any questions, concerns or curiosities about our work.

Operational Highlights

We are back conducting jury trials, with felony trials being authorized in August. The backlog is keeping us busy, but with our current staffing, we are managing the trials well and cases are moving relatively smoothly through the system. We conducted multiple felony trials in Moffat and Routt in the past several weeks, and I am happy to report the results in all of them were favorable. Convictions for Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon, Assault, Felony DUI and Felony Theft/Embezzlement have all been obtained through trial since August 1. Looking forward, we have several major trials across all three counties between now and March, including three homicides, child sexual assaults, felony child abuse, and vehicular assault. It is a complicated schedule, but again, I am confident in our ability to manage these cases properly due to the current staff of skilled and committed professionals.

The process of modernizing our case management systems so the information is accessed and transmitted electronically continues, consistent with CRS 16-9-702 and Colo. R. Crim. P. 16 V. Coordinating the needs of three different IT departments in the three counties of the district is a challenge but those departments are working well together and progress appears good.

As I mentioned in July, the Colorado Attorney General's Office contacted me regarding funding aimed at providing certain services and opportunities for adult diversion participants 18 through 24 years old, in collaboration with Rocky Mountain Youth Corp. A recent meeting I had with the AG and RMYC was very productive, and it appears clear our jurisdiction will be receiving about \$600,000.00 from the state to

Grand County
P O Box 168
Hot Sulphur Springs, CO 80451
970 725-3371 Fax 725-3446

Moffat County
221 W. Victory Way, Ste. 302
Craig, CO 81625
970 824-7041 Fax 970 824-9190

Routt County
P O Box 770129
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477
970 870-5200 Fax 970 870-5201



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
14TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT, STATE OF COLORADO
MATT KARZEN, DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Serving Grand, Routt and Moffat Counties

stand up the program spring 2022. We will be coordinating with RMYC through the winter and I will keep you all updated as the program is built.

Budget Highlights FY22

We are scheduled to replace a vehicle in 2022. An error in the budget documents last year caused us to skip the vehicle replacement that was scheduled for 2021.

As you recall from my July letter, I anticipated requesting an 8%-15% increase in our personnel budget, due to the lack of accessible housing for working professionals in our area and escalating cost of living in general. For 2022, to meet these challenges, I am proposing an 8.6% increase in our personnel budget to mitigate the growing disconnect between the salaries of our employees and the actual cost of living in this jurisdiction. As you are likely aware the cost of living adjustment for 2022, due to rising inflation, is estimated to be around 6% nationally, with wages relatively flat and prices moving up. Given the cost of living in NW Colorado, particularly with respect to home prices and rental rates, my assessment is this 8.6% raise represents the bare minimum necessity in order to ensure high quality staffing in the DA's office is sustainable for 2022.

We are seeking to fund the transition of our Grand County Victim/Witness Coordinator from part time to full time through our tri-county budget this year, by adding a .4 FTE position. We were previously able to cover this additional expense through VALE funds, and if necessary we could continue this through 2022, but given its inevitable termination, I am submitting that change in 2022. Full time victim-witness personnel will be a priority in the coming years, and the change in Grand this past year brought us to 2 of our 3 VW coordinators being FTE.

Lastly, in terms of highlights, we are seeking a 5% increase in anticipated medical insurance costs. I think this is less than in years past, but given that we consistently return a significant amount of that money, we concluded it might be better to let those funds stay with the counties from the beginning.

As always, if you would like more information about any of these budget highlights, or anything else, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time, and I look forward to our meeting.

Sincerely,


Matt Karzen
District Attorney, 14th Judicial District

Grand County
P O Box 168
Hot Sulphur Springs, CO 80451
970 725-3371 Fax 725-3446

Moffat County
221 W. Victory Way, Ste. 302
Craig, CO 81625
970 824-7041 Fax 970 824-9190

Routt County
P O Box 770129
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477
970 870-5200 Fax 970 870-5201