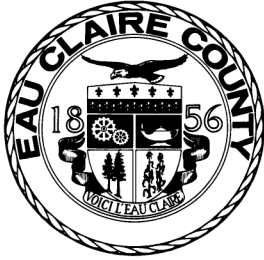


Eau Claire County Board of Supervisors

721 Oxford Avenue – Room 2570
Eau Claire, WI 54703-5481



Voice: (715) 839-4835
Fax: (715) 839-6243



TO: Eau Claire County Board of Supervisors
Eau Claire County Department Heads

FROM: Committee on Finance & Budget

DATE: February 16, 2011

SUBJECT: EAU CLAIRE COUNTY 2012 BUDGET GUIDELINES

Over the last two years, the county has managed to maintain a stable budget, while attempting to minimize the negative impact on services. At this juncture, the federal and state fiscal deficits could have significant repercussions on the county's budget for 2012. Compounding the challenge, the county is undergoing a building program/jail expansion, which will require additional resources.

Nonetheless, the Committee on Finance and Budget is committed to working with every department to draft a budget that will attempt to maintain a similar level of service while mitigating the effect of state and federal reductions.

Once again the committee is asking each department to present a budget proposal with zero increase in county tax levy. For departments that rely heavily on federal and state funding, assume no revenue increases and more likely decreases in federal and state revenues. We specifically ask the departments to base the budget on the departmental priorities as determined by the oversight committees.

Performance management continues to be a requirement for every program. The detail must be clear and transparent. Programs will be assessed on performance, effectiveness, affordability, and prioritized contribution to the county's strategic goals.

Community Agencies must follow the same guidelines as the Departments.

GUIDELINES:

1. All Departments and agencies shall submit a proposed 2012 budget request for county levy funds using the same levy allocation as 2011.
2. Departments that rely on federal and state funding for programs should prepare a budget with no increase in the revenues received for state and federal sponsored programs, unless the department hears otherwise. When information on state and federal program allocations is released, budget proposals will need to be adjusted accordingly.
3. Programs should be uniquely identified and described with performance data. Please do not combine programs, or you will be asked to provide the committee with additional cost and performance information for each individual program.
4. Departments and agencies may submit add-back requests for additional levy funding; however, due to unprecedented fiscal constraints, add-backs granted in previous years may be unlikely in 2012. Departments may see a reduction in levy allocations below the 2011 levels to fund higher priority programs.
5. Each program within a department must be prioritized by the department and oversight committee. Department heads should be prepared to consider additional cost reductions based on priorities; however, a reduction in a lower priority program should not have a negative (more costly) impact on a higher priority program.
6. Each department must rely on program priorities when considering budget adjustments. Oversight committees, the County Administrator, the Committee on Finance & Budget, and the county board will consider the following documents and information sources when allocating funds:
 - the department's Program Priority worksheet
 - the oversight committee's Program Priority worksheet
 - program performance outcomes provided by the department to the oversight committee
 - alignment of the program with the County Strategic Plan (2008)
 - the County Program Prioritization Analysis (2003)
 - results of budgetary public input sessions
 - results of the online budget survey instrument, and
 - other applicable information sources.
7. New program proposals should be avoided unless outside funding is secured.

8. Cooperative, cost saving programs with other departments, outside agencies or other counties continue to be given high priority. Cost saving prevention programs, based on performance management data, or programs that will generate revenue will also be given high priority.
9. Departments are encouraged to look for alternative funding and revenue streams for programs.
10. Specific emphasis should be given to conservation and cost-saving operations.
11. Avoid new position requests unless completely funded by non-levy dollars.
12. Departments affected by the new construction must present a detailed plan of anticipated costs associated with new staff and new equipment, not otherwise budgeted. Please provide the detail regarding the nature and need for the request.
13. Capital improvement plan (5-year plan) requests will be analyzed using all available revenue sources.
14. All departmental fund balances in excess of established fund balance formulas, law or code standards, or in excess of designated non-lapsing funds balances shall revert to the general fund.
15. County user fees shall be reviewed for potential increases commensurate with the increased cost of doing business. The review of fee schedules should include analysis of cost recovery for services. Departments and Committees should review all operations and determine whether user fees should be initiated for cost recovery of programs that primarily benefit the user versus the community at large. All user fee recommendations approved by oversight committees are due in the County Administrator's office by September 1, 2011.
16. All 2012 budget proposals shall be submitted to the Finance Department, without exception, by Friday, August 19, 2011. A separate budget package including all necessary budget worksheets will be distributed to all departments and agencies by the Finance Department.