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Butte County Officials Recommend Adjustments to the Proposed Budget

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 13, 2009 – 11:30 a.m.

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Oroville, CA – Today, Butte County officials released recommended adjustments to the fiscal year 2009-2010 Proposed Budget. The recommended adjustments are the results of new information and developments since the time the Proposed Budget was prepared for publication and distribution. A large portion of the recommended adjustments are the result of a new agreement Sheriff Perry Reniff reached with the Federal Marshal's Office to house federal inmates in the Butte County Jail. Also, some of the recommended adjustments are the result of the Master Fee Schedule approved by the Board of Supervisors on March 24, 2009 and amended on May 5, 2009. The new fee schedule allows some departments to recognize the additional revenues. For a complete explanation of the recommended adjustments, please see the attached narrative. The Board of Supervisors will consider the Proposed Budget as well as the recommend adjustments on Monday, May 18, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

The agreement with the Federal Marshal's Office allows the County to retain 18 correctional positions that were recommended to be eliminated in the Proposed Budget. Additionally, the agreement allows the County to continue operating three pods (with each pod having the capacity to house 20 juveniles) at the Juvenile Hall. The Proposed Budget initially recommended the closure of a pod and the elimination of 9.5 positions.

The recommended adjustments also augment the library funding. The recommendation maintains the current County-funded operating hours of 126 hours per week, compared to the 60 hours per week originally proposed for July 1. This eliminates the need for additional layoffs in the Library department. The adjustments would provide for 30 hours per week of County funded operations at the Chico, Oroville and Paradise Branches along with 24 hours per week at the Gridley Branch and 6 hours per week at the Biggs and Durham Branches. The increased funding also creates an opportunity for additional funding from cities and Friends of the Library. It is anticipated that the City of Chico will continue to fund extended hours in the Chico Branch, and that the Paradise Friends of the Library will fund extended hours in the Paradise Branch.

Butte County officials emphasized that the Proposed Budget is balanced but is subject to additional expenditure and revenue pressures. "It's clear that we are leaving no stone unturned in our effort to responsibly balance a very difficult budget," said Bill Connelly, Chair of the Butte County Board of Supervisors, "It is my hope that Sacramento will follow our lead and make sensible decisions. However, if in the near future, the State chooses to balance its budget on the backs of local governments, Butte County will need to make yet another round of reductions."

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