



COUNTY OF MARIN

NEWS RELEASE

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BUDGET BALANCING PLAN TO BE CONSIDERED ON MARCH 21st AND 23rd

San Rafael, CA - Next week, County Administrator Matthew Hymel and department heads will present to the Board of Supervisors their plan to balance the County's FY 2011-12 budget. Given the slowdown in revenues, the County expects a relatively flat operating budget next year. The projected shortfall is approximately \$5.6 million, or 1.5% of the County's operating budget. This is significantly less than the 5% to 10% budget gaps faced by many of Marin's comparable counties.

"The recession is certainly impacting us, but we are relatively better off than most counties due to many years of prudent fiscal management," said Board of Supervisors President Susan Adams. "The proposed budget plan continues our practice of proactively managing our finances to live within our means."

Over the past four years, the County has eliminated over 200 positions and reduced spending by \$30 million. A hiring freeze and a voluntary separation program enabled the County to reduce 90% of these positions through attrition. While the plan that will be unveiled next week is designed to bridge the entire budget shortfall, not all actions will occur at that time. Of the \$5.6 million needed to balance next year's budget, approximately \$1.3 million in proposed savings would involve filled positions and will be considered in June.

The majority of potential layoffs will occur because of the closing of the County's obstetrical (OB) clinical services program at the Health & Wellness Campus in San Rafael. When the County opened this clinic 18 years ago, no other local agency provided women's health services. Today, community providers such as Marin Community Clinics provide comprehensive primary care and OB services, and they are able to receive significantly higher federal reimbursements than the County.

"Our budget hearings are an opportunity for department heads to share their work plan for the coming year and to share the impact of these reductions with the Board and our residents," said County Administrator Matthew Hymel. "Our employees have stepped up to address our financial challenges while still providing excellent services to our residents."

The Board of Supervisors will hold public hearings on Monday, March 21st at 9 a.m. and Wednesday, March 23rd at 1 p.m. to review the proposed FY 2011-12 budget plan. Both hearings will take place in the Board chambers, located in Room 330 at the Marin County Civic Center in San Rafael, and will be webcast from the County's website at www.co.marin.ca.us. Copies of the proposed budget materials are also available online at the County's website, along with other information about the County.

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