

Press Release

Lea County FY 15/16 Preliminary Budget

Lea County Courthouse, Lovington, NM:

Lea County Manager Mike Gallagher reports “we are well into the FY 15/16 Budget Preparation Timeline. With an early start this year, the Preliminary Budget Presentation will be voted on by the Lea County Board of County Commissioners at the Thursday, May 7, 2015 LCBCC Meeting at 9:00 am.

Lea County Finance Director Chip Low states “every aspect of the Budget Work Sessions with the LCBCC and staff receives a thorough review.” Budget Hearings included Capital Outlay, Personnel & Operating, Departmental & Elected Officials, and Outside Agency Presentations. Some of the Budget Highlights include a reduction in Lea County Operational Expenditures, excluding Trust Funds; \$13.35 million in Capital Outlay Grant Funding; and Funding to reconstruct Delaware Basin Road. The Final Budget will be submitted to the New Mexico Department of Finance by July 31, 2015.

Director Low reports for the 15/16 fiscal year, the General Fund Revenues are projected at \$41.3 million with expenditures projected at \$31.3 million. Total Revenues, excluding Capital Projects and Trust and Agency Funds, is \$58.6 million with projected expenditures of \$65.1 million. The majority of the projected deficit is due to the unfunded mandate of Senate Bill 268 which requires Lea County to remit 116% of the Indigent Gross Receipts Tax Revenue to the State of New Mexico.

Lea County is also projecting Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$83 million with \$13.4 million in projected grant funding. Budgeted projects include a new Judicial Complex, Indoor Equine Facility, Courthouse Remodel and more than \$15 million in Road Projects. Lea County has allocated \$76.1 million in reserves to meet Operational and Capital Project needs. Lea County will also maintain a cash reserve of five months of General Fund Expenditures projected to be \$14.3 million.