



Morton County

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

Commissioners:
Cody Schulz, Chairman
Bruce Strinden, Vice Chairman
James Boehm
Andy Zachmeier
Ron Leingang

Auditor:
Dawn R Rhone

For Immediate Release

October 3, 2017

Contact: Morton County Public Information Officer (701) 426-1587

Morton County website: <http://www.co.morton.nd.us/>

<https://www.facebook.com/MortonCountyEM/>

<https://twitter.com/MortonCountyEM>

Commission funds priorities with only slight tax increase in 2018 budget

Mandan, N.D. – On Monday, Morton County Commissioners approved a budget for 2018 of \$25,101,562. The budget reflects an increase of \$1,249,260 or 5.2 percent from 2017. Morton County has avoided any property tax increases for its residents for the past six years, and despite the State’s change in funding, the Commission was still able to limit the property tax increase for 2018.

“We have always budgeted in a lean, conservative manner, but this budget was definitely challenging,” said County Commission Chairman Cody Schulz. “But I think this budget really strikes the right balance between funding our priorities and minimizing tax increases. I’m very proud of our department heads and employees for recognizing the fiscal situation we are in; I just wish we could have done something in the way of pay raises.”

The 2018 budget does not include funding for employee pay raises.

Like other political subdivisions in the state, Morton County had to adjust funding and priorities due to changes in State funding levels and methods. During the 2017 session the state legislature discontinued its 12 percent property tax buy-down and replaced it with a pilot program to takeover Social Services funding.

“We are certainly grateful for the State’s takeover of Social Services funding, but because it is less total dollars than the 12 percent buy down it will cause some transitional challenges,” said Schulz.

“The mill rate that will be levied to support this budget is a pretty significant reduction in the mills from last year,” said County Auditor Dawn Rhone. “This is due to a 6.4 percent increase in total valuation due

to new property and the State's takeover of Social Services funding which eliminated the County's levy for Social Services."

The average 2017 bill will only be slightly higher than 2016. The average homeowner with a \$250,000 home in the City of Mandan can expect a 3.4% or \$27 increase in their tax bill from the County, while a homeowner with a \$250,000 home outside the City of Mandan can expect a 4.3 or \$39 increase.

The budget, including more detailed information can be found at <http://www.co.morton.nd.us/>

###