



Gilpin County Colorado

Commissioners

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PRESS RELEASE

June 30, 2020

Gilpin County Residents and County Employees,

There has never been a more challenging time for Gilpin County in the past half century. We have lost approximately \$3 Million dollars in casino related revenues due to the COVID-19 coronavirus-related business closures over the last four months. As a result, the County has reduced the 2020 adopted budget by approximately \$2.3 Million dollars by furloughing fifty-seven staff, postponing large vehicle replacements and delaying large county-funded projects. The County temporarily closed the Community Center and stopped the associated services we have come to appreciate so much. It is projected that the County may lose between \$23 Million dollars and \$46 Million dollars over the course of the next several years due to COVID-19 related closures and changes in consumer practices. Unfortunately, we must do more to reduce our budget.

Due to the continued economic impact of COVID-19, Gilpin County must take even further measures to ensure the financial viability of the County. As you are aware, the current pandemic situation has impacted our community and businesses significantly and the negative impacts will continue into the foreseeable future. Even though the casinos are partially re-opened, Gilpin County had a substantial loss in revenue during their closure, and will continue to do so. We anticipate the loss in revenue will take us years to recover. Additionally, there has not been any changes to the Federal CARES Act as we had hoped. Funding is still not being granted to local governments for use to backfill our budgets for the revenues lost or that will be lost due to COVID-19. As a result, we are forced to make more difficult decisions.

After careful review and consideration over the past few months, the difficult decision was made to restructure and reduce county staff. This will impact services throughout the County. Additionally, the decision was made to close the Community Center, as it is not a statutorily mandated service. A total of seventy - nine positions including previously furloughed Community Center employees, have been laid off due to a reduction in workforce effective July 2, 2020. This will reduce County expenses by \$2.1 Million dollars annually. The Gilpin County Sheriff's Office is expected to make an additional \$1 Million in budget cuts around July 15th, 2020 if grant funds are not secured. Total ongoing decrease in the County budget will be \$3.1 M in addition to the onetime 2020 budget cuts of 1.36 M, which is a total of \$4.46 M. If we didn't act now, the County would be facing a disruption of many states and federally-mandated services by as early as March of 2021.

We understand the huge loss and impact these decisions make to the community. While Gilpin County can no longer fund a community center, we would like to offer assistance if residents would like to start an exploratory committee to create a special district with taxing authority for a community center. We will be hosting a special meeting in the near future to help residents understand what would be involved. Please monitor the Gilpin County website at GilpinCounty.org for more details.

While these are very difficult actions to take, we are making decisions that are best for the County and its financial sustainability. We continue to be committed to delivering the best customer service we can and we know we will not be able to provide service as quickly or in the same manner as you have become accustomed to. Please know that we will continue to do everything we can to provide statutorily required services to our residents in a manner that reflects our values and mission.

We appreciate your support during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Gilpin County Commissioners:
District 1, Ron Engels
District 2, Linda Isenhardt
District 3, Gail Watson

