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To: **Honorable County Board of Commissioners**

From: **Sheriff Marty Kelly**

Date: **Tuesday December 1, 2026**

Subject: **2027 Budget for Sheriff's Office & Salary for Sheriff**

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

Below you will find the answers to your questionnaire dated 11-6-2026 regarding my budget and salary for our office. I tried diligently to include everything that I do as your sheriff, but as you know, things change very quickly and we may have to respond to something never seen before, so please keep that in mind as you read this.

Question #1: Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Leadership and Administration

- **Office Oversight: I serve as the chief law enforcement officer of the Sheriff's Office and manage its overall operations and personnel. I also serve as chief law enforcement officer for the cities of Pine Island, Wanamingo, Goodhue, Bellechester and Dennison.**
- **Policy Development: Develop, implement, review and enforce policies and procedures for the Sheriff's Office.**
- **Budget Management: Oversee the preparation, presentation, and management of the Office's 17.3 million dollar budget, ensuring efficient use of taxpayer funds.**
- **Supervisory Responsibilities: Direct and supervise 115 staff members, including deputies, administrative staff, volunteers and other employees.**
- **Strategic Planning: Set long-term and short-term goals for the office and establish strategies to achieve them.**

- **Hiring and Training: Oversee recruitment, hiring, and training of personnel, ensuring proper qualifications and ongoing professional development.**
- **Performance Evaluations: Conduct and oversee staff performance evaluations, ensuring fairness and consistency. I take great pride in personally reviewing each staff member's self-appraisal to understand their perspective and recognize how they feel about their performance and development and following up with them as necessary.**
- **Public Reporting: Regularly report to five city councils, two school boards, twenty-one townships and the county board of commissioners to ensure transparency, accountability, and alignment with community and governmental expectations.**

2. Statutory Obligations

As per Minnesota Statute 387.03, the sheriff is required to:

- **Preserve the Peace: Keep and maintain the peace within the county. To achieve this, the sheriff may call upon individuals or the power of the county as deemed necessary.**
- **Apprehend Felons: Pursue and apprehend all felons within the jurisdiction.**
- **Execute Legal Processes: Execute all processes, writs, precepts, and orders issued or made by lawful authority.**
- **Court Attendance: Attend district court sessions and fulfill all duties related to the judiciary.**
- **Recreational Vehicle Accidents: Investigate recreational vehicle accidents involving personal injury or death occurring outside municipal boundaries.**
- **Search and Rescue:**
    - **Search for and drag for drowned bodies.**
    - **Search for and locate lost people.**
    - **When authorized by the county board, purchase boats and other equipment or hire airplanes for search purposes.**

The county is mandated by Minnesota Statute §403 to administer, operate and maintain the county's 911 and ARMER radio systems. The Sheriff administers these mandated duties:

- **911 System (§403.02 – 403.11): The Sheriff administers continuous 24/7 emergency call handing through a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) that meets state and federal standards.**
- **ARMER Radio (§403.36 – 403.40 & §373.041): The Sheriff must ensure county participation in the statewide interoperable radio network, maintaining infrastructure, encryption, and system reliability for all public safety partners.**

These statutory duties ensure the sheriff's role is deeply rooted in public safety and legal compliance, as outlined by state law.

3. Law Enforcement and Public Safety

- **Crime Prevention: Develop and implement strategies to prevent and reduce crime in Goodhue County.**
- **Law Enforcement: Enforce local, state, and federal laws within the county. Enforce ordinances within contracted municipal jurisdictions when necessary.**
- **Criminal Investigations: Oversee investigations of crimes, including homicides, thefts, drug-related offenses, and more.**
- **Traffic Enforcement: Supervise or delegate enforcement of traffic laws and accident investigations.**
- **Emergency Response: Coordinate responses to emergencies such as natural disasters, riots, nuclear power plant emergencies or large-scale accidents.**
- **Court Security: Ensure the safety and security of courthouses, judges, and court personnel.**
- **Service of Civil Processes: Serve legal documents such as subpoenas, eviction notices, and restraining orders.**
- **Jail Administration: Operate and manage our Adult Detention Center, ensuring inmate care, custody, and control.**

4. Community Engagement

- **Public Relations: Serve as the public face of the Sheriff's Office, fostering positive relationships with the community.**
- **Community Policing: Engage in programs to build trust between law enforcement and residents.**
- **Educational Outreach: Promote crime prevention education and awareness programs in schools, businesses, and community groups.**
- **Media Relations: Act as or appoint a Public Information Officer (PIO) to communicate with the press and public about law enforcement activities and issues.**
- **Victim Support: Provide resources and assistance to victims of crimes.**
- **Community Accountability: Use regular reports to city councils, school boards, townships and the county board as opportunities to address community concerns and demonstrate the office's efforts in public safety.**

5. Collaboration and Partnerships

- **Interagency Cooperation: Work with local, state, tribal and federal agencies on joint law enforcement initiatives.**
- **Judicial System Coordination: Collaborate with district attorneys, public defenders, judges, and court officials to ensure smooth judicial processes.**
- **Community Organizations: Partner with nonprofits, schools, and other organizations to address social issues like drug addiction, mental health, and domestic violence.**
- **County Government Relations: Report to and collaborate with county commissioners, city councils, township officials and school boards to address policy needs and funding priorities.**

6. Accountability and Ethics

- **Legal Compliance: Ensure that all office activities comply with local, state, and federal laws.**
- **Transparency: Provide regular updates and reports to the public and governmental bodies on office activities and outcomes.**
- **Internal Investigations: Address misconduct or complaints against deputies or staff through appropriate disciplinary measures.**
- **Ethical Leadership: Set a standard of integrity and ethics for the office.**

7. Specialized Functions

- **K-9 Unit Management: Supervise the use of police dogs in tracking, drug detection, and apprehensions.**
- **Search and Rescue Operations: Lead or coordinate search and rescue efforts for missing persons.**
- **SWAT or Tactical Units: Oversee the training, deployment and operation of specialized tactical response teams.**
- **Dive Team: Oversee the training, deployment and operation of specialized Dive Team operators for rescue and recovery purposes.**
- **Drone Team: Oversee the training, deployment and operation of specialized Drone Team members.**
- **School Resource Officers: Assign deputies to work with schools to enhance safety and build relationships with students.**

- **Civil Asset Forfeiture: Manage the seizure and allocation of assets acquired through criminal activity.**

8. Political and Electoral Responsibilities

- **Constituent Engagement: Respond to inquiries and concerns from citizens.**
- **Public Meetings: Attend county board meetings, city council sessions, township meetings and school board meetings to address law enforcement issues and present updates.**
- **Policy Advocacy: Advocate for legislation and policies that improve public safety.**

9. Training and Professional Development

- **Personal Development: Stay informed about changes in law enforcement practices, technologies, and laws.**
- **Deputy Development: Support continuing education and certification for deputies and staff.**

10. Miscellaneous Duties

- **Civil Defense Leadership: Coordinate civil defense or homeland security efforts.**
- **Event Security: Plan and implement security for public events, parades, and festivals.**

Question #2: Performance

As Sheriff of Goodhue County, I am proud to report several accomplishments and areas where my performance and that of my office have exceeded expectations, demonstrating our commitment to public safety, operational excellence, and professional standards.

Accomplishments

•Third Year of Contracted Policing for Goodhue:
Successfully implemented Year 3 of contracted law enforcement services for the City of Goodhue. This continued partnership ensures effective community policing while enhancing resource utilization across the county and maintaining strong relationships with contract cities, townships, and school boards.

• Body-Worn Camera Program Implementation:
Successfully completed out first Body-Worn Camera Program audit and made changes

from their recommendations. This program improves transparency, accountability, and public trust in our operations.

• SRO (School Resource Officer) Contracts:
Continued agreements with Zumbrota-Mazeppa Schools and Pine Island School to provide School Resource Officers. These contracts enhance school safety, foster positive relationships between law enforcement and students, and proactively address concerns within educational environments.

• Facility and Space Study:
Continued work on the facility and space study for the Law Enforcement Center, addressing evolving operational demands and ensuring adequate infrastructure for personnel and detainees. The study is now in its final phase, and I look forward to a resolution in 2027.

Challenges and Goals Not Fully Achieved

While significant progress has been made, the following areas remain a priority for future improvement:

• Facility Needs Assessment: Implementation of solutions to address space constraints and reduce liability for Goodhue County is a long-term objective.

Performance Summary

In 2026, the Goodhue County Sheriff's Office exceeded numerous goals while addressing complex challenges and implementing several important initiatives. Among our accomplishments were the successful implementation of our Body-Worn Camera Program and the completion of our first Body-Worn Camera Audit. We also realized significant cost savings in our Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) through the use of AI-driven software, GovWorks. Our office fully digitized our records, completing the project under budget while creating additional space in our training room. We also fully implemented flex scheduling, which has significantly reduced overtime costs and has been embraced by our staff.

Community engagement remained a priority throughout the year. I was pleased to see nearly 95% attendance at our annual township meetings, where we had the opportunity to connect directly with residents throughout the county. We also hosted the Great River Leadership Group for a full day of our condensed Citizens Academy, providing participants with a better understanding of the many responsibilities and services of the Sheriff's Office. Following the elimination of our Community Engagement Officer position as part of our efforts to assist with the 2027 county budget, our employees have stepped up in an impressive way. Community engagement has continued without missing a beat, demonstrating that it is a shared responsibility throughout our organization, not simply the responsibility of one individual.

We have much to be proud of beyond our day-to-day operations. We will soon be conducting a Hostile Action Based drill in preparation for our work with the Xcel Energy Nuclear Generating Plant. Three of our employees will be recognized for life-saving actions, and Earl

Merchlewitz received the Emergency Manager of the Year Award from the Minnesota Emergency Managers Association. These accomplishments reflect the professionalism, dedication, and commitment to service that I see throughout this office every day.

Looking ahead to 2027, my focus remains on building new partnerships, addressing our infrastructure needs, and continuing to provide the highest level of service to Goodhue County residents while remaining responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. As we work through the county's budget challenges, our office will continue to carefully evaluate each position as it becomes vacant, looking for opportunities to improve efficiency and reduce costs without compromising public safety or the services our residents depend on. Our decision to relinquish one full-time equivalent (FTE) position for the 2027 budget is one example of that commitment. While the position we gave up was our Community Engagement Officer, our current staffing levels are in a good place, and our employees have demonstrated that we can adapt to organizational changes while maintaining the services and community relationships that are so important to this office.

I am proud of what our employees accomplished in 2026 and confident in our ability to meet the challenges ahead. Our responsibility is to continue moving forward, finding better and more efficient ways to serve, and making certain that the residents of Goodhue County receive the professional, dedicated service they deserve.

In response to the Board of Commissioners' request letter, under Item #2, *Performance*, specifically the directive to "Provide the same information for any positions in your office for which you are requesting a salary increase," I would like to formally address my recommendation for Chief Deputy Jonathan Huneke.

This is the second consecutive year I am bringing this recommendation forward, as I feel strongly that it is both warranted and deserved. Although my request was not approved last year, my position has not changed. I am again requesting a salary increase for Chief Deputy Jonathan Huneke, who currently serves at Grade 119, Step 10.

This recommendation is based on Jonathan's exceptional performance, consistent leadership, and the substantial responsibilities he carries on a daily basis. His contributions to this office go well beyond the expectations of his position, and I believe his compensation should appropriately reflect the level of responsibility, dedication, and value he brings to the Goodhue County Sheriff's Office.

Jonathan Huneke has been an outstanding Chief Deputy and an invaluable part of the leadership of the Goodhue County Sheriff's Office. Over the past year, and particularly over the four years he has served as Chief Deputy, Jonathan has continued to grow as a leader, demonstrate sound judgment, and take on the many challenges that come with overseeing a complex organization. I have come to rely on him tremendously, and the trust I place in him is a reflection of the confidence I have in his abilities, his decision-making, his work ethic, and his commitment to this office.

Jonathan is someone I can count on to take ownership of problems, work through difficult issues, and follow things through to completion. He does not need constant direction or oversight. He understands the expectations I have for this office, and he works hard to ensure those expectations are met. Whether dealing with personnel issues, operational

challenges, staffing, training, or working with outside agencies, he approaches his responsibilities professionally and thoughtfully. He has the ability to look beyond the immediate issue, consider the bigger picture, and find solutions that are practical and in the best interest of the organization.

His accomplishments this past year speak for themselves. His work on staffing and overtime management, the completion of our records digitalization project, Deputy Refresher Day, and the continued strengthening of our community engagement efforts are all meaningful contributions. His work with local fire departments and city administrators is another excellent example of his ability to listen, build relationships, address concerns, and produce real results. These efforts resulted in measurable operational improvements while maintaining the level of service and patient care our community expects. I appreciate that he doesn't simply identify problems but takes the initiative to work toward solutions.

One of Jonathan's greatest strengths is his ability to manage the day-to-day responsibilities of this office while continuing to look for ways we can improve. He has a tremendous amount of institutional knowledge and understands the people, operations, and responsibilities of this Sheriff's Office. He is willing to take on difficult assignments, step in when needed, and handle matters that allow me to focus on other responsibilities. Quite honestly, having someone I trust to manage and oversee so many aspects of this office is extremely important, and Jonathan has earned that trust.

I also appreciate his honesty, humility, and willingness to evaluate himself. He recognizes the importance of developing supervisors, delegating responsibility, and continuing to grow as a leader. His desire to be more engaged with employees throughout the office and to continue expanding his knowledge of budgeting, personnel, and long-range planning demonstrates that he understands leadership is a continual process. He is not someone who believes he has all the answers, and I respect that.

Jonathan has become much more than someone who holds the title of Chief Deputy. He is a trusted advisor, a dependable leader, and a person I lean on every day. The working relationship we have developed over the years is something I genuinely value. I know he has the best interests of this Sheriff's Office at heart, and I never question his commitment to our employees, our organization, or the citizens of Goodhue County.

His performance this year has been outstanding, and I cannot overstate how much I appreciate what he brings to this office. I am fortunate to have Jonathan as my Chief Deputy. He has my full confidence, my respect, and my support. I look forward to continuing to work alongside him, and I believe he has the leadership ability, experience, dedication, and character to take on even greater responsibilities in the future. He is a tremendous asset to this Sheriff's Office, and I am grateful for his service and everything he does for our office. Given Jon’s 26+ years of outstanding service to Goodhue County, his proven leadership record, and the critical scope of his work, including his ongoing involvement with the Excel Energy Nuclear Power Plant, I strongly recommend that he receive a step increase from Grade 119, step 10 to Grade 119 Step 12.

Thank you for your consideration of this well-deserved recognition for Chief Deputy Huneke’s continued dedication and exceptional service to Goodhue County.

Question #3: Experience and Qualifications:

I bring extensive education, training, and over three decades of experience in law enforcement to my role as Sheriff of Goodhue County. This is supported by a strong educational foundation and a proven record of leadership and service, which I believe merits consideration in setting my salary and the office budget for 2027.

I graduated in 1988 from Mankato State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Law Enforcement and a minor in Psychology. To further enhance my qualifications, I completed the POST Skills program at Alexandria Technical College, laying a strong foundation for my career in law enforcement.

I began my law enforcement career with the City of Red Wing on March 1, 1989. Over the years, I served in multiple roles that expanded my skills and responsibilities. These roles included:

- **Patrol Division Officer: Ensuring community safety and responding to incidents.**
- **Investigative Division (SRO): Serving as a School Resource Officer, fostering positive relationships with youth and enhancing school safety.**
- **Emergency Response Team (ERT) Operator: Participating in high-risk operations requiring specialized skills.**
- **Bike Patrol Officer: Engaging in community policing and maintaining a visible presence in the community.**
- **Sergeant: Leading and supervising teams within the department, further developing my leadership and administrative expertise.**
- **Medico-legal death investigator for the Southeast Minnesota Regional Medical Examiner's Office from 2005 to 2013, serving both Goodhue and Dakota County.**

In 2018, I successfully ran for and was elected Sheriff of Goodhue County. I have since been re-elected in 2022 and now in 2026. I have dedicated myself to serving the community with integrity, innovation, and efficiency. Now, as I complete my 37th year in law enforcement, I will continue to lead the Sheriff's Office with a steadfast commitment to public safety, community engagement, operational excellence, and community trust.

Question #4: Requested Increases in Budget Line items:

This request from the Board is somewhat unique in that the wording of your letter gives the impression that my office budget is being considered for approval today, which, as we all know, is not the case. Furthermore, I presume this request is specific to the Sheriff's Office and County Attorney's Office, as we are the only department heads being asked to provide a line-by-line explanation of budget increases. I have no issue with providing that information and am happy to do so. However, I would ask that the Board keep the overall picture in mind when reviewing these figures.

The Sheriff's Office budget consists of 223 individual line items. Of those, only 64 reflect an increase over last year's budget, 94 remain unchanged, and 65 are actually below last year's budget. I

believe it is important to recognize that the majority of our budget is either holding steady or coming in below the previous year.
For the Board's information, I have provided the requested line-by-line breakdown of the increases below.

Line-Item Budget Comparison 2026 vs 2027

Sheriff Expense – Department 201

Account Description	2026 Budget	2027 Budget	Difference	Notes
Membership Dues & Fees	13,400	13,900	500	Rate increases
State Required Registration or License	2,500	2,600	100	Rate increases
Electricity	2,700	3,200	500	Rate increases
Software Maintenance	67,500	90,000	22,500	Addition: 3 Year Cradlepoint Netcloud = $18,000 plus rate increases
Software Licensing	55,500	57,500	2,000	Rate increases
Contracted Services	25,350	30,350	5,000	Increase in LE Officer Wellness Program
Copies/Copier Maintenance	1,100	1,300	200	Rate increases
Other Machinery & Equipment Maint.	7,500	12,000	4,500	Added drone maintenance and portable radio battery replacements
Other-Vehicle Costs (Non-County)	1,000	1,500	500	Rate increases
Mileage & Transportation	1,500	1,700	200	Rate increases
Meals & Lodging	17,000	20,000	3,000	Prices trending up
Conferences/Schools	52,500	57,500	5,000	Added motivational speaker - Red Wing paying other half

Firearms Supplies & Range Fees	21,000	24,000	3,000	Added training/less lethal equipment
Medical Supplies	3,000	8,000	5,000	AED battery replacement
Sheriffs Personnel Equipment	4,000	8,500	4,500	Added 2 ballistic shields and 2 PBTs
Gasoline (Unleaded)	185,000	200,000	15,000	Increase in fuel prices
Forensic Expenses	2,000	2,650	650	Rate increases
Investigative Expenditures	13,000	17,000	4,000	Added pole camera expenses

Public Safety Funds Expense

Furniture/Equipment < $1,000	20,000	30,000	10,000	Paid with Public Safety funds; revenue increased to offset

MDT Agreement Expense

Account Description	2026 Budget	2027 Budget	Difference	Notes
Software Maintenance	10,594	11,420	826	Rate increases
Future Fund Balance	5,781	6,640	859	Transfer money to fund balance

Counteract Funds Expense

Conferences/Schools	0	450	450	Added DARE conference expense
Other General Supplies	3,000	5,550	2,550	Added DARE workbooks and materials

Sheriff - Seasonal Expenses - Department 205

Cell Phone	1,000	1,400	400	Rate increases

Employee Medical, Drug & Alcohol Testing	800	1,000	200	Rate increases
Maintenance Contracts	1,150	1,345	195	Rate increases
Diesel Fuel	8,000	8,900	900	Rate increases
Gasoline (Unleaded)	3,000	4,000	1,000	Rate increases
Other General Supplies	500	800	300	Added snowmobile gear
Other Machinery & Equipment Maint	1,000	1,800	800	Increased ATV maintenance
Gasoline (Unleaded)	50	100	50	Rate increases

ADC Expenses - Department 207

Freight	50	100	50	Rate increases
State Required Registration or License	1,100	1,500	400	Increase in notary dues
Software Maintenance	18,200	19,500	1,300	Rate increases
Software Licensing	18,400	21,300	2,900	Rate increases
Physician & Medical Fees	510,000	590,000	80,000	Increased inmate prescription costs
Other Professional Fees	3,600	4,800	1,200	Rate increases
Other Machinery & Equipment Maint	15,000	16,000	1,000	ADC kitchen exhaust cleaning
Conferences/Schools	18,200	19,000	800	Rate increases
Copy Machine Paper & Toner	2,000	2,500	500	Rate increases
Medical Supplies	600	800	200	Rate increases
Detainee Meals	235,000	248,000	13,000	Increased price per meal

Other Detainee Supplies	2,500	5,600	3,100	Added inmate trays

Inmate Improvement Fund Expense - Funded by Inmates

Mileage/Transportation	0	200	200	Training mileage for Programs Director
Cable TV	1,000	1,100	100	Rate increases
Other Furniture and Equipment	3,000	4,000	1,000	Increases trending up

E-911 Expense - Grant Funded - Department 209

Telephone	13,700	14,900	1,200	IQ SIP service addition
Cell Phone	950	1,100	150	Rate increases
Software Maintenance Contracts	36,000	38,600	2,600	Rate increases
Software Licensing	4,000	20,500	16,500	Added GovWorx
Maintenance Contracts	46,000	50,200	4,200	Rate increases
Other Machinery & Equipment Maint	1,000	2,500	1,500	Trend increases
Equipment/Furniture < $5,000	0	23,200	23,200	Desktop/laptop replacement
Equipment/Furniture >= $5,000	0	65,200	65,200	Phone VPN console replacements

Communications Infrastructure Expense - Department 211

Radio Tower Software & Maintenance	49,500	50,500	1,000	Rate increase
Software Maintenance	600	4,100	3,500	Added switches - ARMER Fortinet equipment
Maintenance Contracts	60,500	60,600	100	Rate increase

Emergency Management Expense - Department 281

Other General Supplies	1,500	2,500	1,000	Increased EM supplies

REP Expenses - Grant Funded - Department 281-280

Internet	0	660	660	Added Starlink Internet
Software Licensing	0	100	100	Added cybersecurity software
Maintenance Contracts	6,753	7,003	250	Moved expense from EM department
Vehicles Purchased	0	63,300	63,300	Vehicle replacement

Byllesby Dam Expenses - Department 523

Maintenance Contracts	5,272	5,378	106	Rate increase
Other Machinery & Equipment Maint	0	1,000	1,000	City of Cannon Falls siren maintenance

Budget Summary

Description	2026 Budget	2027 Budget	Difference
Increases to 64 Expense Line Items	1,584,850	1,970,846	385,996
No Changes to 94 Expense Line Items	399,383	399,383	0
Decrease to 65 Expense Line Items	776,539	514,800	-261,739
Total Expenses	**2,760,772**	**2,885,029**	**124,257**
Salary & Benefits	**14,553,760**	**15,322,934**	**769,174**
Revenues	**2,747,015**	**2,935,862**	**188,847**
Net	**14,567,517**	**15,272,101**	**704,584**

Capital Plan

All the items in the 2027 capital plan are replacements for old equipment that have met their useful life, which includes the following:

- (2) Squads…one being replaced with grant funds
- Computers
- (4) Toshiba Copier/Printers…one being replaced with grant funds
- (4) Phone VPN Consoles being replaced with grant funds

Fiscal Responsibility

The following chart demonstrates our office budget since I assumed the role of Sheriff in 2019. Over this period, our office has consistently operated under budget by a total of just over $4.177 million dollars through 2025, underscoring a strong commitment to fiscal responsibility and accountability to our taxpayers.

This track record reflects prudent financial management, careful allocation of resources, and a steadfast commitment to maximizing the value of taxpayer dollars while maintaining high-quality law enforcement services

2019-2025 Budget Vs Actual

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Revenue Budget	$2,896,157	$2,830,636	$2,075,738	$2,492,333	$2,231,524	$3,412,105	$2,517,902
Revenue Actual	$2,824,499	$2,485,325	$2,151,533	$2,381,499	$2,513,297	$3,351,234	$2,866,212
Over/(Under) Budget	($71,658)	($345,311)	$75,795	($110,834)	$281,773	($60,871)	$348,310
Expense Budget	$13,691,207	$13,666,667	$12,828,658	$13,786,515	$14,618,079	$17,389,164	$17,164,184
Expense Actual	$12,996,179	$12,445,040	$12,470,960	$13,516,958	$14,087,090	$16,938,810	$16,628,789
(Over/(Under) Budget	($695,028)	($1,221,627)	($357,698)	($269,557)	($530,989)	($450,354)	($535,395)
Net Budget	$10,795,050	$10,836,031	$10,752,920	$11,294,182	$12,386,555	$13,977,059	$14,646,282
Net Actual	$10,171,680	$9,959,715	$10,319,427	$11,135,459	$11,573,793	$13,587,576	$13,762,577
Better than Budget	$623,370	$876,316	$433,493	$158,723	$812,762	$389,483	$883,705
Percent of Budget Used	94%	92%	96%	99%	93%	97%	94%

***Year-to-date actual 2026 revenues are exceeding budget projections, while expenditures remain below budget year-to-date, resulting in projected year-end results that are favorable to budget.**

Question #5: Other:

For the County Board's consideration in setting my salary and the budget for my office for 2027, I respectfully present additional information, including comparative salary data and a summary of accomplishments and responsibilities that highlight the unique demands of my role.

Comparative Data:

Wright County, the only other Minnesota county with a nuclear generating plant, provides a relevant comparison for my position. The Sheriff of Wright County earned $211,168 last year, with an increase anticipated for 2027.

The Ottertail Sheriff, whose office is also similar in size would be another comparable office, however they do not have any contract cities in their jurisdiction. The current Sheriff has

been in office for 8 years as I have. The Ottertail County Sheriff's salary for 2026 was $206,343 and I anticipate an increase for the new sheriff as well.

The newly elected Olmsted county Sheriff will be receiving $210,040 which is a 5% increase over the outgoing Sheriff who was Sheriff for 12 years.

While all sheriffs bring varying levels of education and experience, Goodhue County's unique challenges, including the presence of Xcel Energy's nuclear facility and the ongoing training and planning that go along with that, the Lake Byllesby Dam and Treasure Island Casino to name a few are all considerations the board needs to keep in mind.

Unique Responsibilities and Accomplishments:

Over my tenure as Sheriff, I have managed a variety of complex, high-stakes situations and spearheaded numerous initiatives that have advanced public safety and modernized the Sheriff's Office. Below is a summary of key responsibilities and achievements:

1. **Crisis and Incident Management:**
    - **Navigated the challenges of COVID-19 and the aftermath of George Floyd's death, which significantly impacted law enforcement and community relations.**
    - **Managed the first Officer-Involved Shooting (OIS) in Goodhue County history.**
    - **Successfully resolved high-profile cases, including two infant deaths from over two decades ago.**
2. **Operational Enhancements:**
    - **Oversaw the takeover of policing for the City of Goodhue.**
    - **Implemented a new inmate housing contract with Dakota and Hennepin Counties for 2024-2025.**
    - **Enhanced River and Port Security, particularly focusing on nuclear and dam-related safety.**
3. **Leadership and Engagement:**
    - **Provide oversight for 21 townships, five city councils, and two school boards.**
    - **Led countywide community engagement efforts, significantly expanding outreach and trust-building initiatives.**
    - **Introduced and expanded wellness programs such as Lodestar, Peer Support, ACH for ADC, a patrol mentor program and a Chaplain program.**
4. **Technology and Modernization:**
    - **Implemented new technologies like GrayKey and PenLink to enhance investigative capabilities.**
    - **Digitized historical records, improving efficiency and accessibility.**
    - **Launched the Body-Worn Camera (BWC) program for both the Patrol Division and Adult Detention Center and was fully operational in 2025.**
    - **NextGen 911 will be coming to our county in the near future as these processes are being worked now.**
5. **Training and Workforce Development:**
    - **Expanded training programs to mitigate liabilities, including countywide training for all county law enforcement agencies that wish to attend free of charge and made crisis intervention training a priority for our staff.**

- **Addressed staffing shortages by improving recruitment and retention strategies.**

6. **Infrastructure and Space Management:**
   - **Initiated a building assessment and space study to identify and address future needs.**
   - **Purged old equipment, creating additional functional space.**
   - **Completed the process of scanning all old cases and files to reduce the physical storage space needed, improve efficiency, and maximize available space within our facility.**

Personal Dedication:

Throughout my tenure as your sheriff, I have been on-call 24/7/365 for the last 8 years, often sacrificing personal time to prioritize the needs of Goodhue County.

This combination of leadership, innovation, and unwavering dedication underscores the value I bring to the position and highlights the evolving demands on the Sheriff's Office. I believe this information demonstrates the merit of my salary and budget requests, ensuring Goodhue County remains at the forefront of public safety and community engagement.

Salary Request Justification:

Finally, I am respectfully requesting a 6% salary increase for 2027, amounting to $210,840. This request reflects five key factors and assumes the County will have a general wage adjustment (GWA) of 3%.

1. **General Wadge Adjustment (GWA):**

   A 3% GWA aligns with anticipated economic adjustments, ensuring that compensation remains equitable and consistent with inflationary trends.

2. **Comparable Adjustments:**

   This requested increase is comparable to the step increases that all other department heads, and all employees for that matter, in the County will be receiving as part of their compensation adjustments in 2027. The average range for increases for all department heads is 5.6%

3. **MN Paid Leave Act**
   This act requires me to pay for leave time that I do not qualify for given my position as an elected sheriff. This will amount to $800 per year with no benefit to me.

4. **Retirement Benefits:**

   My position does not qualify for any type of severance package upon my retirement. This distinction further underscores the need for equitable salary consideration in

recognition of long-term service and the absence of post-employment compensation available to all other positions within Goodhue County.

5. **Comparable Sheriff Salaries:**

   The comparable Sheriff's Office salaries outlined above are consistent with and support my request. I would also point out that, as I enter this next term, I will have the most experience of the three comparable Sheriffs. I believe that experience, along with my years of service, institutional knowledge, and the responsibilities associated with leading the Goodhue County Sheriff's Office, should be considered when evaluating my compensation request.

Retiree Health Insurance Benefit

Lastly, I am requesting that the County consider providing one year of paid family medical insurance for every three years of service as Sheriff upon retirement.

I recognize that there may be some who believe the fact that I elected not to participate in the County's health insurance program during my first seven years of service should not be considered when evaluating this request. However, I believe it is important for the Board to understand the financial impact of that decision. By declining the County's health insurance coverage during those first seven years, I saved the County approximately $191,000.
I am not presenting that figure as an entitlement or suggesting that the County owes me that amount. Rather, I believe it is relevant information when considering the overall compensation and benefits associated with serving as Sheriff.

Given my age, I recognize that I may not personally need this benefit for an extended period of time. However, I believe it is important to look beyond my own circumstances. This request would establish a retirement benefit that could also apply to future Sheriffs who dedicate many years of service to Goodhue County.

The position of Sheriff carries responsibilities and demands that extend well beyond a traditional work schedule. I believe a retirement health insurance benefit based on years of service is a reasonable way to recognize that commitment and provide some continuity in the compensation package for those who serve in this elected position.

This request is both fair and reflective of the extensive responsibilities and workload inherent to the role of Sheriff, as well as the unique contributions I have made to the Sheriff's Office and the county throughout my tenure. I appreciate your time and thoughtful consideration of this request.

Respectfully submitted,



Marty Kelly
Goodhue County Sheriff