2025 GCEMS SSD Budget Highlights

This year's budgeting process was particularly challenging. While I aimed to align the budget with our strategic initiatives and plans, the limited revenue made this task increasingly difficult.

Income

- Flat Projections: 2025 income is expected to remain consistent with 2024 levels.
- Patient Billing Revenue: A modest increase is anticipated.
- Sales Tax Revenue: Growth is expected due to the newly negotiated 50/50 split.
- TRT Funds: Although we requested $350,000 in TRT funds from the County, this was excluded from the budget due to historical denial of similar requests.

Expenses

- Employee Compensation:
    - A 1.5% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is proposed for all employees.
    - An additional 1% COLA may be considered mid-2025 if TRT funds are secured.
- Retirement Plan:
    - Includes costs for transitioning to the Public Safety retirement system.
- Employee Benefits:
    - No changes to existing benefits.

Cost-Saving Measures

- Temporary reduction in uniform allowances.
- Significant cuts to inventory purchases, such as computers, furniture, and radios.
- Postponement of building updates, including landscaping improvements.
- Removal of funds for repairing and updating the backcountry ambulance.
- Reduction in educational opportunities and conference attendance.
- Elimination of funding for other capital needs.
- Reduction in third ambulance staffing by 45 days annually.

- Budgeted for a significant increase in bad debt.
- Removed a request for an additional full-time position.

These measures strike a balance between financial prudence and maintaining essential services, with contingency plans for potential TRT funding.

TRT Funding Priorities

If TRT funding is approved, I recommend prioritizing the following needs in order:

1. Employee Compensation: Implement the additional 1% COLA.
2. Uniform Allowance: Restore full uniform allowances.
3. Capital Investments: Purchase a vehicle and address other capital expenses.
4. Ambulance Staffing: Return third ambulance staffing to regular levels.
5. Fund Balance: Allocate remaining funds to the PTIF account to rebuild the reserve balance.

In preparing the 2025 budget, we faced significant challenges due to flat income projections and underwhelming revenue growth. While we anticipate modest increases in patient billing and sales tax revenue, historical denial of TRT fund requests led us to exclude $350,000 from our budget. To balance financial constraints with maintaining essential services, we propose cost-saving measures such as reducing uniform allowances, third ambulance staffing, and capital expenses, while including the cost for transitioning to the Public Safety retirement system. If TRT funding is approved, priorities include additional employee compensation, restoring uniform allowances, addressing capital needs, and rebuilding reserves to ensure long-term financial sustainability.