

*** Press Release ***

Tazewell County on Track to save \$240,000 in Sheriff's Budget

In 2009, I worked with fellow County Board Member Melvin Stanford to begin talking with other Board Members and get their support to lower the excessive Overtime Cost being spent in the Sheriff's Office. At that time, for the three previous years the Overtime Cost of this office had averaged well over \$640,000 with the highest water mark coming in 2006 when it was over \$675,000. We stressed that this much Overtime spending from this one county office was unacceptable and needed to be reduced.

The major issue was the Correction Officers Overtime line of the budget. Starting with the 2010 Budget, we received support from the rest of the County Board and set budget reductions that would correct this. For the 2010 Budget we budgeted a little over \$295,000, which was a reduction of over \$24,000 from the previous year's actual budget number, and set the understanding that this budget number would be reduced by \$50,000 until we could get to a more acceptable number of less than \$150,000.

Sadly, the Sheriff did not meet this budget limit and spent over \$375,000 last year. Even though he failed to meet his budget limit last year, we still stressed what we expected of him and his staff and set the budget limit of \$252,000 for this 2011 Budget. The Sheriff stressed that he and his staff could and would meet this requirement.

I am happy to report that we have recently received a Mid-Year Budget Report from the Auditor's Office that shows that the Sheriff's Office is on course to spend less than \$200,000 this year on Correction Officers Overtime and a little over \$315,000 in total overtime. I want to congratulate the Sheriff and his staff on the progress towards this important fiscal accomplishment. If the Sheriff can keep this progress going, it would be a tremendous savings for the taxpayers of Tazewell County.

If the Sheriff and his staff can keep on track, the effort started by County Board Member Mel Stanford and myself and supported by the rest of the County Board would have resulted in saving the taxpayers of Tazewell County over \$300,000 from the totals of 2006-2008 and \$240,000 from the totals of last year. Unlike other reported savings that are just proposed but not proven to the taxpayers, in this effort we will be able to show the taxpayers a direct savings of a significant amount.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011Budget	2011Current	2011Projected
Deputies Overtime	237895	229106	220783	137481	155427	161000	46931	93862
Corrections Overtime	430055	373931	396953	320168	376548	252000	98783	197566
Clerical Overtime	10682	16477	18877	17111	27020	15000	13309	26618
	\$678632	\$619514	\$636613	\$474760	\$558995	\$428000	\$159023	\$318046

Back in 2009 when this all started, some questioned a Republican County Board questioning and demanding more from a Republican Sheriff and his staff. During the budget discussions, a fellow County Board Member made the statement "Ackerman has gone after the Sheriff and States Attorney. Who's next, the Judges?" Shortly after making the statement, the Judges budget came up for discussion and I had questions for them as well.

I take seriously the responsibility given to me by the taxpayers of Tazewell County to support a Fiscally Conservative Budget, hold the line on spending, and eliminate unacceptable and wasteful spending in all County Offices regardless of their Party Affiliation. I hope the taxpayers are pleased with this savings of over \$240,000 and continue to support the efforts to see this hard work continue into the future.

As always, I consider it an honor and a privilege to serve you on the Tazewell County Board and if I can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

John C. Ackerman
(309) 635-7624
www.JohnCAckerman.com