

Commissioners, good evening. My name is Gregory Sampson of La Plata. First, I would like to thank you and your staff for compiling the proposed budget. I would like to state up-front, that except for one area, I have no real concerns about the budget. However, with rapidly deteriorating revenues projected for the next few years and mandated requirements and services increasing, I believe it is prudent to begin to make difficult decisions now rather than wait till later.

Therefore, I am putting forth the 4 following recommendations as amendments to the budget. I firmly believe that the budget is not just a plan but is an illustration of our community's values. Therefore, I propose the following :

- 1.** Relook the proposed revenue projection for property taxes. Increasing revenues in this area is adverse and harmful to both the elderly and young families.
- 2.** Delay spending increases in the following areas until FY26 pending fiscal conditions at that time:
 - a. Recreation, Parks and Tourism: All new positions should be put on hold, increases should only be for the ADA Accessibility study at Ruth B. Swann, Restroom Trailer for Turkey Hill, and furniture for the new La Plata Building
 - b. Fiscal & Administrative Services: No spending increase for the new position of Deputy Director

c. Circuit Court: No spending increase for the new position of Special Projects Manager

d. Economic Development: No new spending for the new position of Senior Commercial Development Manager for the Western Technology Corridor

e. Administrative Services: No spending for peer review of Internal Audit Division

f. County Commissioners: Reduction in budget for conferences, conventions, seminars etc from \$4,600 to \$2,300, Reduction in travel budget (i.e. mileage reimbursement) from \$2,200 to \$1,000, and a Reduction in Special Projects budget from \$4,000 to \$2,000

3. Modest Revenue increases should be in the areas of Alcohol License, Fines & Forfeitures

4. Savings from these actions should be funneled to the following areas: Education, Law Enforcement, Social Services (specifically the Charles County Charitable Trust), Community Services, and a study on future needs/costs in addressing the growing homeless and housing insecure population

I would also like to say we need to address poverty. Poverty is rapidly becoming a major problem that will ripple throughout our community and directly impact teachers and law enforcement. They will be the ones who will be tasked to

deal with it. Finally, at some point in the future we must admit that, even though it was a good idea with good intentions, we will not be able to fund the Blueprint and we should not expect in the future for the state to fulfill its funding levels.