

2022 Budget Highlights

There are a number of changes to the Penobscot County Budget in 2022 from 2021. Overall the budget shows an increase of 6.948% over the 2021 budget for a total increase of \$1,275,015 to be raised by taxation. Our LD1 tax cap for 2022 is 7.02%, so the increase is under our LD1 tax cap for 2022. The largest driving forces in the increase from 2021 to 2022 are two-fold: one is an increase in our health insurance rates to 10.25% (in the past the increase has been approximately 5% each year; the second is the request for additional personnel in order to perform the increasing tasks that some of the departments are experiencing. The COLA wage increase is 2%. Below are the changes for each department for 2022. Each department head with review the changes in their respective departments on the evening of the budget committee meeting.

Department 2 (Human Relations):

There is an overall decrease of -4.47% or -\$8,857

Department 3 (Emergency Management):

There is an overall increase of 48.84% or \$108,419. This increase is largely due to the addition of a new GIS position and is partially funded through state and federal funding and transfer of a small amount of funding from another department. The GIS position is primarily for geospatial contingency planning for natural hazards mitigation (floods, drought, wildfires, remnants of hurricanes, snow/ice storms), disaster response, mass gathering events, commodity flow routes, hazardous material facilities flume scenarios, municipal and private sector infrastructure and various other open-source data supporting emergency management. This will also include support for all municipalities in any projects they may need and can provide municipal support through geospatial mapping of tax parcel adjustments, zoning, historic/cultural assets, public works projects, E-911 address mapping into the public safety dispatch system, snowmobile trail mapping, broadband mapping, etc. The revenue is reimbursement from Maine Emergency in the amount of approximately 50% of expenditures and is expected to increase by \$29,000.

Department 4 (Penobscot Regional Communication Center):

There is an overall increase of 7.86% or \$270,707. The increase is due to an additional dispatch position in 2021; dispatchers are also eligible for a different Maine State Retirement Plan, which is the same as law enforcement. They voted in their contract to opt into the new plan, which has a county-cost increase from 10.1% to 10.8%. The new contract for this department provides a 5% increase in pay for 2021 beginning in mid-August 2021 and then a 5% increase for the year 2022. Revenue for PRCC is expected to increase by \$5,588.

Department 5 (District Attorney):

There is an overall increase of 12.6% or \$139,889. Because of the volume of cases the victim-witness staff has to handle, there is a request to promote one of the long-time victim-witness employees to supervisor and to change the part-time victim-witness advocate to full time in order to better serve the people of Penobscot County who need this service. The revenue for the DA's office is expected to decrease by \$8,000. The revenue they receive is from deferred disposition defendants.

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Department 6 (Commissioners):

The overall increase is 4.35% or \$15,158. There are no significant changes in this department and the increase is largely due to the increased cost of benefits. Revenue is expected to decrease by \$4,148 due to projected reduction in “other revenues” based on prior collections in that line.

Department 7 (Finance Office):

The overall increase is 5.5% or \$16,808. There have been a number of changes in the finance department over 2021. In an effort to centralize tasks more, a payroll clerk’s position that was budgeted in the Jail department in 2021 was transferred over to the Finance Department. The increases, however, are due more to the increased cost of benefits.

Department 8 (Buildings and Grounds):

The overall increase is 2.26% or \$22,753. Even though the increase is not significant there is a request for a new position for a maintenance technician. The new position will largely be utilized for the increased demands of an aging jail facility. There was a part-time custodian position which will not be requested to be funded in 2022; otherwise no significant changes.

Department 9 (Jail):

The increase is 4% or \$293,850, which is the legislatively allowed increase in the amount to be included in the County tax bill. In looking at the jail budget itself, it should be noted the increase in the entire budget is \$1,232,421. This increase is largely due to a projected increase in boarding from \$650,000 to \$950,000 as well as an increase in our medical contract from \$1,350,000 to \$1,686,080. The amount that is anticipated to be received from the Maine Department of Corrections is \$2,755,424.

Department 10 (Deeds):

The Deeds Department has an overall decrease of -3.21% or -\$13,693. The only significant changes are a reduction in the computer services line from \$50,000 to \$20,000 and the computer equipment line increased from \$10,000 to \$20,000. The Deeds Department revenue projects an increase by \$70,000.

Department 11 (Probate):

Probate has an overall increase of \$9.62% or \$48,805. The changes are due to benefits. New staff members enrolled in the family plan as the previous employees were enrolled in single plans. The Probate Department revenue projects an increase by \$25,000.

Department 12 (Sheriff’s Office):

Sheriff’s Office overall increase is 5.47% or \$289,349. There were no significant increases except in the request for motor vehicles. A \$30,000 increase is requested due to rising motor vehicle costs. There is also an increased request in public safety equipment from \$90,000 to \$120,000 for body cams – the body cams will be partially funded with grant funds. There is a projected revenue increase in the amount of \$47,097.

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Department 13 (Civil Process):

There is an increase in Civil Process in the amount of 7.06% or \$25,133. There are no significant changes in the expenditures for civil process. There is a projected decrease of revenue of \$30,000.

Department 14 (UT Administration):

UT Administration is showing an increase of 15.1% or \$25,249. There are no significant changes in expenditures and projected revenue remain the same as the 2022 level.

Department 15 (Information Technology):

There is an increase in Department 15 in the amount of 13.71% or \$100,203. The increase is due to a request for an additional tech position. The position is necessary in order to fulfill the ever-growing needs of the County and the entire jail and sheriff's department has been added to the duties of our IT department. The revenue projections remain the same for 2022 as 2021

Department 18 (Maine State Retirement):

No changes – this is the amount the County pays for our retirees' life insurance.

Department 19 (Health/Safety):

No Changes

Department 22(Retiree Insurance):

Increase of 34.42% or \$17,000. The increase is due to the increased cost of our health insurance plan.

Department 23(Employee Benefit Fees):

This is a monthly fee we pay to our health savings account carrier.

Department 24(Bridges):

No change.

Department 30 (Eastern Maine Development Corporation):

Although this shows a decrease in funding, the funding level will remain at the 2021 level of \$65,000. This reflects \$63,000 coming out of the County Budget and \$2,000 will be paid from our PILT funds.

Department 31(Loan Costs):

Loan costs are projected to be 2.72% or \$23,542 higher than 2021. The increase is a net figures of what is projected to be the interest on the bond voted on by voters in the amount of \$6M, as well as a decrease in the amount of interest anticipated on our TAN.

Department 32(Building Improvements):

A requested increase of 12.5% or \$25,000 over the 2021 approved budget amount. We are escrowing funds to replace our 30+ year old boilers which are showing signs of failing.

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Department 34 (Program Donations):

There is an increase of 1.11% or \$910. There were modest increase requests made.

Department 35 (Penobscot County Extension Service):

The Penobscot County Extension Service has requested an increase of 4% or \$3,148. The increase is due to increased operating costs.

Department 36 (Penquis):

Penquis has not increased their request for 2022.

Department 38 (Soil Conversation):

Soil Conservation requested an increase of 6.63% or \$4,679. The increase is due to increases in benefits.

Department 39 (Labor Negotiations):

There is a decrease of 50% or \$4,000. Because all contracts are expected to be settled in 2021 for 2022, there is no anticipation of expenses as the same level as in a contract negotiating year.

Department 40 (Wage Adjustment):

There is no increase for this department in 2022.