

BUDGET MESSAGE

Now on this 30th day of January, 2020, comes Pamela K. Grow, Clerk of the County Commission, as budget officer and presents for the records of the County Commission, information and estimates for the year 2020 as required by the County Budget Law (Sections 50.525 to 50.745, RSMo.)

Government legitimately acts only by the consent of the governed. It would be best if the governed gave informed consent. What is meant by “informed consent”?

I actually borrow the term from the field of medicine, with which I have some familiarity. When a patient is to undergo a procedure such as surgery or invasive testing, he must consent. But a lack of understanding on the part of the patient renders the consent of little value. The physician must provide the patient with at least a rudimentary understanding of the procedure being proposed. While it is not possible to “put the patient through medical school”, nevertheless a brief, focused, and careful discussion with the patient can achieve a great deal and the consent granted by the patient is vastly more meaningful.

In the same way, the *governed* give a much more meaningful measure of consent only if they are informed regarding what *government* does. Without the education of the people, the consent is really only imaginary. The people are passively submitting themselves to, rather permitting after consenting to, the actions of their government. This actually causes the relationship to be inverted, with government no longer acting only with the authority and by the command of the people, but under its own direction.

I have worked since taking office in 2015 to broaden the opportunities for the people to become informed. Insofar as possible, Commission minutes, budgets, financial statements, and audits are posted on the Phelps County website. On the following pages will be found the entire Phelps County budget for 2020; I would particularly like to encourage examination of the *Schedule of Expenditure of Federal Awards* (pp. 2a - 2d) and the *2020 Summary of Budgets* (pp. 5a - 5h) as compared to the *Summary of 2019 Actual Amounts* (pp. 6a - 6h).

James Madison said that “A well-instructed people alone can be permanently a free people.” I believe Madison.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela K. Grow