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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2020 Levy Pared Down from Preliminary Amount

The Anoka County Board of Commissioners approved a property tax levy increase of 3.97 percent during the board's meeting Dec 6.

In September, the board adopted a preliminary budget that met the county's goals and resulted in a 4.97 percent levy increase. At that time, commissioners directed county management to continue looking for more opportunities to reduce the levy. Staff found creative solutions to lower the levy, and this led to a final amount that is an entire percentage point lower than the preliminary levy.

Budget priorities for 2020 include public safety, cyber security and preserving and maintaining the current level of county services. The levy pays for about a third of the county's operational costs. The rest of the county's budget comes from other sources, such as fees and state and federal grants.

"This final levy is the result of hard work and ingenuity," said Scott Schulte, chair, Anoka County Board of Commissioners. "Staff took what was already a modest preliminary levy and reworked it to lower the amount, which is a testament to their expertise and dedication to serving our taxpayers in a respectful, innovative and fiscally responsible manner."

One of the main budget items in public safety was hiring more 911 operators. This action was in response to the volume of calls that come into Anoka County Central Communications. Anoka County's dispatchers field more than 300,000 calls per year. Having an adequately staffed

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2020 Preliminary Property Tax Levy Approved – add 1

Central Communications center is important to ensure calls are answered in a prompt fashion and emergency services are rapidly dispatched, when they are needed.

Cyber security is of vital importance for every household and business, and Anoka County is no different. Protecting sensitive county data is vital, especially given the amount of intrusions, ransomware and other threats Anoka County faces daily. Every day, the county's firewall blocks an average of 3.68 million access attempts from "untrusted" sources outside of the U.S. and Canada. Keeping up to date with the most recent security software and employing staff who can recognize and eliminate security issues is essential.

You can explore the Anoka County 2020 Budget in detail at www.anokacounty.us/budget.

Note: Anoka County only has authority over the county portion of the property tax bill; cities and school districts have their own taxing authority.