

**MINUTES OF
PUBLIC HEARING**

The Public Hearing for 2002-03 Proposed Budget was called to order at 4:10 p.m. on Monday, July 8, 2002 in the Commissioners' Room at the Niobrara County Courthouse. Present were Commission Chairman, Donna I. Ruffing, and Commissioners Richard L. James and Richard A. Ladwig. Also present were Sheriff Bebe Reed, Clerk of Court Linda Fosher, Deputy Clerk Becky Freeman, Extension Coordinator Denise Smith; representatives of the Library Board: Lynn Carlson, Chairman; Wanda Lorenzen, Treasurer; Leslie Hammond and Keni Cundall, Past Chairmen; and Friends of the Library representative Linda Decker.

Ruffing reviewed the final figures on the ad valorem, the short-fall on anticipated revenues for 2001-02, the unknown cash carry-over which will be a negative figure, and known changes to the proposed budget. Ruffing also reviewed the necessity of limiting the Library and Fair Board to two (2) mills and dipping into the reserve to balance the budget. The requirement to set the elected officials salaries for the next four (4) years prior to having knowledge of revenues created some problems. Mandates from the State and Federal governments to provide certain services also plays a role in setting the budget. The Legislative action which put a cap on mineral severance to the counties is starting to have a huge impact, i.e., \$174,000 actually received in 2001-02 is now being projected at \$33,000 for 2002-03.

The Library Board expressed concerns that they would not be able to keep the Library open five (5) days per week and would be closing on Fridays if additional funds were not provided. Discussion and ideas were presented on possible ways to solve the problem. Discussion also involved custodial and yard care.

The Public Hearing adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

NIOBRARA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Donna I. Ruffing
Donna I. Ruffing
Chairman

ATTEST:

Becky L. Freeman
Becky L. Freeman, Deputy Clerk

