

ISLAND COUNTY CORONER'S OFFICE

2011 BUDGET

AMOUNT REDUCTION

The 2010 budget for the Coroner's Office was \$194,970 (Net Total Current Expenses). A 10% reduction would be \$19,500. I have no control over \$106,535 as this is salaries. I am left with \$88,435 from which to cut \$19,500. This translates into a 22% reduction in the remaining budget.

HISTORY

I have served as the Island County Coroner for 16 years and have not requested an increase in the annual budget workshops for the past 15 years. There has been no increase in Coroner personnel in 16 years. When there was money available in the Current Expense Fund I was not requesting increases.

In the last round of budget cuts the Coroner's Office lost funding for Disposition of Unclaimed Indigent Remains. Island County Code C-80-93 *"It is the policy of the Board of Island County Commissioners that the disposition of unclaimed indigent remains of individuals, who have died within the confines of the County, shall be provided by Island County"*

FUNCTION

The Island County Coroner's Office is responsible for death investigations in which we have jurisdiction. RCW 68.50.010 describes which cases fall within our jurisdiction. Additionally RCW 68.50.104 states that the cost shall be borne by the county. I have no choice in which cases I investigate. To follow state law and not be negligent in my sworn duties I have little flexibility in my caseload.

ADDITIONAL

Emergency response agencies have long used the figure of 5 personnel to maintain one position with 24 hours a day/7 days a week coverage. This accepted figure allows for shifts, vacations, sick leave and holidays. The Island County Coroner's Office stands ready to respond to cases 24 hours a day/7 days a week. This is accomplished by breaking all the rules of employment. I cover the County myself with one additional person who is responsible for an average of 32 hours a week (out of 168 hours in a week). This leaves me responsible for 136 hours a week (without accounting for any overlap). It would be an extremely unhealthy situation to consider any personnel cuts.

SUGGESTIONS

I have no input as to where to make further cuts. If I knew how to fulfill my sworn duties with a smaller budget I would have already implemented those measures.