

TEXARKANA, Ark. -- With courthouse flood damage needing repair, jail space needing expanding and Juvenile Detention Center finance still unsolved, Miller County officials still managed to approve a 2022 budget last week -- the largest one yet.

After more than an hour of discussion, County Quorum Court members wound up approving a \$29.3 million for all of next year, according to finance figures released by the Miller County Judges Office, last week.

Of the amount, slightly more than \$8,500,000 of it is a combination of both federal grant funds and private insurance money -- with \$3,546,000 in American Rescue Plan grant money earmarked for jail expansion. The remaining \$5 million in insurance funds, going toward courthouse flood renovations following the Feb.20 courthouse water pipe burst that damage all five of the building's floors.

Currently, courthouse renovations teams are in the process of leveling uneven floor areas on the building's first, second and third floors, said Miller County Judge's Administrative Assistant Carla Jenkins.

Apart from federal ARP grant money and private insurance funds, the remaining amount of slightly more than \$20,822,000 is covering the county's normal operations and maintenance cost for all of next year, county budget records show. Of this remaining county Maintenance & Operating money, about \$2,293,000 is for the Sheriff's Office, while \$3.6 is being designated for the county's jail maintenance department, along with another \$3.6 million going to the county's Road Department.