

TEXARKANA, Ark. -- With the way Miller County's current projected 2022 budget is shaping up, there's one definite reality that has emerged: No new jobs will be added.

"One thing we know is that there will be no new employment positions added," Ernest Pender, the county's Budget and Finance Committee chairman said at the start of committee's meeting, Monday. "If county offices have some existing vacancies that need filling, that could handled, but we can't add any new positions this year at all."

Committee members spent more than a hour trying to squeeze nearly \$8 million in anticipated county office operating expense requests, for next year, into a tighter budge.

Initially, county finance planners worked with a county general fund forecasting \$7,996,758 in anticipated expenditures, but even after trimming those requests down to \$7,981,470, the current estimation of anticipated income to cover that projected wound up coming in at just \$7,908,903.

Of the 26 county offices collectively making the financial requests, for next year's budget, the Sheriff's Office request --which is one of the largest requests -- increased slightly from \$2,275,301 to \$2,324,933.

Committee members plan to meet again, Nov. 29, to continue budget work on trimming down departmental costs. They will eventually look at the Road Department, which is asking for more than \$4.2 million, while the jail maintenance office, could hold steady at \$3.6 million for next year.