From:	Julie Edwards
To:	Heidi West; Bryan von Lossberg; Grp. City Council and City Web Site
Subject:	Missoula City Budget
Date:	Monday, July 27, 2020 5:00:26 PM

Dear Missoula City Council, Council Member West, and Council Member von Lossberg,

I am ***deeply*** opposed to using any tax revenue to further militarize the police in this country.

I do not support this budget - it doesn't reflect my values or the values we should hold as a community. I do support decreasing - indeed defunding - the local police budget and funding programs, like the mobile crisis response team, the affordable housing trust, mental health services, emergency and transitional housing, substance use support, and racial equity education and training, that truly reflect our community values.

Imagine - if we had better social supports in place, the need to fund *riot gear* for our little mountain town wouldn't even be a consideration.The fact that the budget allocates so much for the militarization of the police is a disgrace.

Mayor Engen, in his letter about the preliminary budget talks about steering money towards mental illness, hunger, poverty, addiction, and homelessness - all things he notes the police "rightly or wrongly" are first responders for. He goes on to talk about the "basic dignity" of a place to change for the police and the fact that change can't be made "overnight" - but change can be made and our budget should reflect our commitment to this change.

This budget as proposed does not support the health and wellbeing of our community. Again, I am asking the City Council to defund the police. If the city is not willing to do that, I would ask you to at least take the moral step of not continuing to fund them in the face of so much real need in our community.

Regards, Julie Edwards