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## **County Paying Over \$2 Million for Services to Poor**

Kootenai County Clerk Cliff Hayes announced that “citizens need to know that property taxes are paying for more than \$2 million in indigent claims this year. State law requires the County to pay these claims, which are for doctors, dentists, hospitals & medicines; for rent and utilities and even burials. This is an unfunded mandate from the State. People need to talk to their legislators if they want to rein in this type of spending”, Hayes concluded.

Hayes also said the State Controller’s audit report of the County’s fiscal processes was received last week. The auditors reviewed the County’s internal controls over cash receipt and disbursement activities in March. “Almost all the Controller’s improvement suggestions had been previously identified, and several have already been implemented,” said Hayes. “However, the report is still being reviewed by staff.”

Hayes noted that the County is continuing its emphasis on cost controls, and will implement ‘paperless paychecks’ for 85% of County employees who have direct deposit starting Friday, May 27. Instead of getting a piece of paper in an envelope, about 600 people will now view their pay & withholding information online, in a secured portion of the County’s website.

“This paperless paycheck suggestion came from Shane Harmon, an employee in the Assessor’s office”, Hayes said. “We expect to accrue sizeable savings in paper & printing costs, plus staff time” over the course of a year. “Dawn Mitchell, Records Department supervisor in District Court, found a less expensive shredding service vendor as well”, Hayes said. “We appreciate all employees offering ideas to reduce costs.”

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