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The Ozaukee County Board last week restored funding for the University of Wisconsin Extension family living educator and the Railroad Consortium to the 2013 budget — two items that a crowd of more than 50 people lobbied for during a public hearing.

The $78.3 million county budget — which decreased 3.85% from the 2012 budget — was approved by the County Board Nov. 7.

To support that budget, the board approved a tax levy of $19.3 million, an increase of 1% from this year's levy.

Of the total levy, $18.8 million goes to support county operations. This is .95% more than last year's levy of $18.6 million.

To raise that amount, the county set its tax rate at $1.85 per $1,000 equalized valuation, an increase of 4.46% from last year's rate of $1.77.

While this is the tax rate paid by most residents of the county, people living in areas not served by municipal libraries also pay a library tax to support the Eastern Shores Library System.

The County Board set this levy at $532,000, an increase of 2.74%. To raise this amount, the library tax rate will be 27 cents per $1,000 equalized valuation, an increase of 5.66%.

That means property owners living in so-called non-libraried areas will pay a tax rate of $2.12 per $1,000 equalized valuation, which reflects an increase of .93% from last year's tax rate.

At last week's budget hearing, advocates for the railroad funding cited its economic benefits, noting numerous businesses rely on rail to transport supplies and finished goods.

Other residents at the hearing argued that the family living educator provides an important service at a time when families are stressed.

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A number of residents also spoke in support of 4-H programs. While funding for 4-H has not been cut, the county has decided not to renew its contract with 4-H Youth Agent Gail Kraus, County Administrator Tom Meaux said. Instead, the county will recruit a new 4-H youth agent, he said.

“Our intent is to do it quickly so we have a continuation of service,” Meaux said.