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MATT STENSLAND/STAFF

Routt County Assessor Mike Kerrigan, left, helps South Routt County resident Gerry Miller examine property records Tuesday in the Assessor's Office. County commissioners decided Tuesday not to hire a new deputy assessor because of a hiring freeze.

No thaw on hiring freeze

Routt County assessor warns of challenging times with reduced staff

Brandon Gee PILOT & TODAY STAFF

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

The Routt County Board of Commissioners held firm Tuesday when met with its first request to allow an exception to a hiring freeze adopted two weeks ago.

Assessor Mike Kerrigan made the request in hopes of replacing outgoing Deputy Assessor Cynthia Bedell. Kerrigan said his office already is struggling and that not being able to replace Bedell could affect the quality of appraisals and his personal well-being.

“Not filling the deputy assessor position jeopardizes reliable performance of the property tax function and thus jeopardizes the welfare of all county operations,” Kerrigan wrote in an e-mail to County Manager Tom Sullivan.

Noting that the hiring freeze is a temporary step while the county works on developing a comprehensive strategy for confronting a \$2.9 million shortfall, the commissioners denied the request in a 3-0 vote.

“I don't think the argument has been made that Mike's office is not going to be able to meet their statutory requirements,” Commissioner Nancy Stahoviak said. “I don't see enough here to overturn Tom's recommendation. If we fill this position, we're going to be filling every position.”

Kerrigan said his administrative staff already is down a part-time position vacated in July that he chose not to fill. Bedell's departure will leave the administrative staff short 1.75 out of 3.75 full-time equivalents at a time when Kerrigan said the office is “buried trying to conclude values for the 2009 reappraisal.”

“I sympathize with your position, but we're going to have to buckle down here,” Kerrigan said his administrative staff already is down a part-time position vacated in July that he chose not to fill. Bedell's departure will leave the administrative staff short 1.75 out of 3.75 full-time equivalents at a time when Kerrigan said the office is “buried trying to conclude values for the 2009 reappraisal.”

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SKI TOWN USA SNOW REPORT

Steamboat Ski Area

Table with snow report data: New snow - Mid-mountain* (3 in.), New snow - Summit (3 in.), Base - Mid-mountain (66 in.), Base - Summit (84 in.), Total snow† (291 in.), Trails open (165/165), Lifts open (16/18), Conditions (Packed powder/spring).

*24-hour snowfall as of 12:30 p.m. previous day; † total snow beginning Oct. 21 as measured at mid-mountain FOR UP-TO-DATE ROAD CONDITIONS, INCLUDING RABBIT EARS PASS, call 511 or visit: www.cotrip.org

