



## COUNTY OF AMHERST

### Public Information Officer

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**For Immediate Release**

**March 29, 2018**

#### Updated FY19 County Budget

The following press release is intended to add additional information to clarify the relationship between the School Board and Board of Supervisors.

On March 27, 2018, the Board of Supervisors approved the County's FY2019 Budget for presentation for public comment. Here are the highlights:

- There will be no tax increases.
- Revenues and expenses are balanced with no draw from County reserves, which have been increased by approximately \$200,000.
- Increased revenue from an improving economy will allow the County to address increasing workloads by adding two new full-time positions and converting one part-time position to full time. A full-time position is added at the landfill, a full-time building inspector is added, and a part-time worker in the Registrar's office is converted to full time. The School Division will be able to add two teachers at Monelison Middle School and convert a part-time Math Specialist to full-time. The Division will also be able to equalize pay among its instructional assistants. The Board of Supervisors has no authority to direct how the School Board organizes its budget but is trying to address specific needs. The School Board will determine how and where it spends the local funding provided by the County
- County employees will receive a 2% pay increase which should be sufficient to cover the personal increase they face to the 10.2% increase to their health insurance. The County is providing the School Division funding to provide a 1% salary increase, sufficient to cover the 2% increase to its insurance rates. The Board of Supervisors has no authority to direct how the School Board organizes its budget but is trying to address specific needs. The School Board will determine how and where it spends the local funding provided by the County
- Operational funding for the schools has been increased by \$200K from last year. Additionally, the County is assuming all the School Division's debt payments. Furthermore, the County is paying for two additional busses to help the School Division qualify for an EPA grant program that could result in one or two extra buses for free. In total, the County has again increased its per-pupil funding to the schools, which it has done since FY2016
- Funding for the following new projects is also included in the proposed budget:
  - A new household waste convenience center at the intersection of 60W and Buffalo Springs Rd.
  - Continued replacement of Public Safety equipment.
  - Continued expansion of the Riveredge Park trail.
  - Additional security features at the Courthouse, offices of the Treasurer and Commissioner of Revenue, and main County Administration building.
  - Part-time personnel will be added to the grounds keeping crews.
  - Funding for the Route 29 Beautification Committee and County-unique wayfinding signs is continued.
- A major expense for this year and next will be the cost to prepare for the 2020 Real Property Tax Assessment. The County is setting aside \$250K for this year and \$100,000 for the next year to cover the cost.

The Board of Supervisors has a challenging job to balance all the costs facing local government while advancing improvements to the community and its government. By differing degrees, the Board has attempted to advance, through this budget, progress on specific objectives for each of its strategic goals to:

1. Promote Tourism
2. Promote Business Growth
3. Achieve Education Excellence

4. Recruit and Retain High Quality Staff
5. Promote and Protect County Assets
6. Increase Citizen Engagement

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