



COMMISSIONERS OF CUMBERLAND COUNTY

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November 9, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Commissioners Authorize Laying 2016 Preliminary Budget on View

Cumberland County, PA – At their public meeting today, the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners authorized laying the County's 2016 Preliminary Budget on view for the public. The 2016 Preliminary Budget will remain on view in the Commissioners' Office and online at www.ccpa.net from November 9, 2015 – December 3, 2015. Commissioners are scheduled to take action to approve the \$229,703,678 budget for 2016 at their public meeting on Monday, December 7, 2015 at 2:00 p.m.

There is no tax increase in the 2016 Budget despite modest revenue growth and increased operational costs fueled in part by unfunded mandates for child protective services; aging bridge infrastructure in need of repair or replacement; and the ever increasing cost of medical benefits. This is possible due to prudent fiscal policies coupled with aggressive cost containment measures that have mitigated the gap between costs and revenues. These steps have had a positive impact to the 2016 Budget process enabling the County to sustain its AAA bond rating; a rating the County has held since 2008 - a rating that few other Pennsylvania Counties hold.

In 2015, the County underwent a comprehensive review of its compensation system that included benchmarking of all positions. The Cumberland County Salary Board approved a new job classification and employee compensation system for all non-bargaining unit employees. The reclassification, including benchmarking County salaries to the market, was necessary to transition to the new merit-based compensation system, scheduled to go into effect in 2016. All positions were reviewed and ranked to set a consistent and defensible standard based on scope of responsibility. The benchmarking process ensured the County's ability to remain a competitive employer in the local market and to recruit and retain a quality workforce to better serve our residents. Money allocated for compensation adjustments made, based on the benchmarking results, was derived from a portion of the savings achieved through gainsharing, a voluntary separation plan, and other cost savings measures. The changes to the compensation system will also allow the County to realize significant savings in overtime and on-call costs that will accrue over the next 3 – 5 years.

Cumberland County continues to demonstrate fiscal accountability to the taxpayers while providing efficient and cost effective services to the public. As the fastest growing county in the State, the County continues to pursue opportunities to lower costs and modernize the delivery of services.

As the 2016 Budget goes on view there is growing concern over the State's budget impasse suspending funding to the County's Human Services Agencies. These agencies provide vital

services for our most vulnerable citizens. The County is currently able to withstand this financial strain as a result of its existing reserves and emergency policies designed to lower the County's rate of spending during the impasse. The County's leadership is closely monitoring cash flow to continue to provide services as close to normal levels as possible. Should the State's budget impasse continue into 2016, the County will be faced with borrowing funds through a tax anticipation note and the possibility of additional cost saving measures.

For more information about Cumberland County Government visit www.ccpa.net.

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