

Board of County Commissioners

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C. Richard Weaver, Vice President
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board of County Commissioners Gives Staff Direction on Recommended Budget

Westminster, Tuesday, March 22, 2016 – The first of two Recommended Budget Sessions was presented today to the Board of County Commissioners by Ted Zaleski, Director of Management and Budget. The budget information presented today is a work in progress and contains only staff recommendations for FY17. The budget process has several more steps before the final Budget is adopted in May.

Mr. Zaleski stressed that the budget presented today is the starting point in the budget process. The Commissioners all agree that education funding is a critical part of the budget, with Commissioner Weaver expressing the Board's concern that "Education must be a top priority in our budget." The Commissioners all agree that funding salary increases for teachers and support staff is critical. Commissioner Howard noted, "The \$4 million proposed by Governor Hogan is believed at this time to be one-time funding, but it is hoped this additional state funding will continue until the antiquated state funding formula is changed." He also outlined a plan that could help use this money in an ongoing way to fund teacher salaries with a guarantee by the board if the state funding didn't continue.

At the commissioners' request staff presented the board with three options for funding the Board of Education above that which is contained in the current FY16 Operating Plan. The funding options included \$2.5 million more, \$5 million more or \$7.55 million more in education funding than currently shown in the FY16 Operating Plan. The \$7.55 million dollars would fully fund the Board of Education's budget request for this year. This information provides the commissioners with a better picture of the funding challenges facing the board.

Commissioner Frazier expressed concerns about the funding levels for Carroll Community College. He noted the work that Carroll Community College is doing in providing specialized courses related to Cyber Security and the need for IT to support the curriculum.

In addition to salary increases for education, salary increases are recommended for several other agencies. Commissioner Frazier observed that the proposed salary increase for county staff is below that of allied agencies. He recommended a similar 4% increase for county employees. The 4% increase in the salary line item would be used for a combination of step increases, COLAs, and reclassifications that have been deferred for several budget cycles.

CARROLL COUNTY

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Based on the information presented in today's session, the Commissioners asked Management and Budget to incorporate several scenarios into the Staff Recommended Budget. These requests include:

- Fully funding the Board of Education at the requested \$7.55 million level.
- Increase funding to Carroll Community College by \$1.25 million.
- Increase the salary county employees from the proposed 2.5% to 4%.

The next step in the budget process will take place on Thursday, March 24, 2016 when Management and Budget presents the FY17-21 Community Investment Plan (CIP) and Enterprise Fund proposals. This is the continuation of today's Recommended Budget Session.

The public is reminded that information presented in today's session as well as information posted on the county's [web site](#) reflects the Staff Recommended Budget. This is not the final budget; changes will be made before the Proposed Budget is presented to the county during the scheduled Community Budget meetings in April and May.

Commissioner Rothschild, although unable to attend in person, did participate in today's session via the live stream of the session and conference call.

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Upcoming Budget Sessions

3/22/16, 3/24/16	Recommended Budget Sessions	10:00 am
3/29/16, 3/31/16, 4/5/16, & 4/7/16	Agency meetings with the Commissioners	
4/28/16	Proposed Budget News Conference	10:00 am

Community Budget Meetings

4/28/16	County Office Building – Reagan Room	7:00 pm
5/2/16	Eldersburg Branch Library	7:00 pm
5/3/16	Mt. Airy Branch Library	7:00 pm
5/9/16	Taneytown Branch Library	7:00 pm
5/10/16	North Carroll Branch Library	7:00 pm

*Residents are encouraged to attend the session most convenient for their schedule.

Budge Public Hearing

5/12/16	Scott Center – Carroll Community College	7:00 pm
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Residents are reminded that all budget meetings are open to the public.