

Board of County Commissioners

Stephen A. Wantz, President
C. Richard Weaver, Vice President
Dennis E. Frazier, Secretary
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board of County Commissioners Receives Additional Information on the Staff Recommended Budget

Westminster, Thursday, March 24, 2016 – The second of two Recommended Budget Sessions was presented today to the Board of County Commissioners by Ted Zaleski, Director of Management and Budget. Once again, the public is reminded that 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.

The focus of today's presentation was on the CIP – Community Investment Plan. These are the items which fall into the Capital side of the budget equation. Like the Operating Plan, the CIP is balanced for the current fiscal year and for the next five fiscal years.

The majority of the projects in the CIP focus on maintenance and not on creating new projects. One area which received a good amount of discussion was the paving of unpaved roads. Commissioner Frazier expressed a desire to develop a plan that would eliminate unpaved roads over the next six years. Public Works is a solid spot within the capital program, however without state Highway User Revenue funds this project is not likely to take place.

Much of today's discussion focused on education funding. The Commissioners expressed great concern about the continued decrease in the amount of state funding. Carroll County receives one of the lowest per pupil funding from the state. The effects of any revisions to the Thornton formula will not be known until later this year and will not be effective until 2018.

Commissioner Weaver expressed the Commissioners' desire to see salary increases at the instructional levels, and not necessarily across all categories. The Commissioners were reminded that although they set the funding levels for the various categories of the Board of Education's budget, the Board of Education determines how the money is spent within the category. Salaries for the Board of Education are further complicated by contract negotiations.

Commissioner Rothschild expressed concern that spending by the Board of Education is increasing while the student population is declining. Commissioner Howard explained that this is due in great part to the school system being "upside down" in terms of fixed costs, stating you cannot remove an eighth of building simply because the student population has declined by that much. Commissioner Rothschild suggested a comprehensive redistricting study to "right-size" some of the schools.

CARROLL COUNTY

The Americans with Disabilities Act applies to the Carroll County Government and its programs, services, activities, and facilities. Anyone requiring an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication or who has a complaint should contact The Department of Citizen Services, 410.386.3600 or 1.888.302.8978 or MD Relay 7-1-1/1.800.735.2258 as soon as possible but no later than 72 hours before the scheduled event.

However, additional steps will be required to address the ongoing shortfall in the Board of Education's budget. The Commissioners are committed to ensuring that funding for the Board of Education is sustainable in the current fiscal year and in the out years.

Although unable to attend in person, Commissioner Rothschild 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.