



NEWS

MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS
COURT HOUSE, NORRISTOWN, PA., BOX 311, 19404-0311

Frank X. Custer, Communications Director

Jessica Willingham, Communications Assistant

PHONE (610) 278-3061 FAX (610) 278-5943

COMMISSIONERS: JOSH SHAPIRO, *Chair*

LESLIE S. RICHARDS, *Vice Chair*, BRUCE L. CASTOR, JR., *Commissioner*



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 20, 2014

Montco Ended 2013 with \$1.6 Million Surplus; It Was the First Surplus Since 2007

Norristown, PA (March 20, 2014) – Just two years after inheriting a budget that had a \$10 million deficit, Montgomery County announced Thursday that it finished 2013 with a \$1.6 million surplus, the first surplus the county has enjoyed since 2007.

Chief Financial Officer Uri Z. Monson presented his fourth quarter report to the commissioners at their bi-weekly meeting and that report contained several good news items. In addition to the surplus, Monson also noted:

- That the 2013 Fund Balance of the county ended the year at \$23.7 million, an increase of \$6.7 million from 2012. That represents a 40 percent increase over 2012 and is nearly six percent of revenues. Ten percent is the recommended reserve level.
- The county contributed nearly \$3.4 million to the county pension fund. This was the first payment to the fund since 2007.
- That county-wide cumulative comp time balances fell by over 5,400 hours in 2013, a decrease of more than eight percent.

Josh Shapiro, chair of the county commissioners, praised Monson and his staff for their efforts in turning the financial tide in the county, but Shapiro pointed out that it was a broad-based effort. "It's all coming together. The data is clear and our county government is now on a solid foundation," Shapiro said. "We had a committed crew essentially asking two fundamental questions throughout the entire process: is this a core function of county government, and how can we do it in the most effective and efficient manner?"

One troubling aspect of the budget was the fact that the county had to transfer \$2.3 million to Emergency Communications due to the continuing growth in costs associated with maintaining the county's 9-1-1 system. The funding system for the 9-1-1 system was designed by the Commonwealth

to be a fee-based system. However, despite increased costs for the systems, the General Assembly has declined to increase the fee levels, which has resulted in more local dollars having to be put into the system. Monson said the situation would continue to put pressure on local and county budgets unless the legislature moves to increase the fees.

Shapiro and fellow commissioners, Leslie Richards and Bruce L. Castor, Jr. have had two meetings with the county legislative delegation on the issue, and plan to continue to seek additional help from the state on the issue.