



# NEWS

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 15, 2016**

## **Montco Passes \$409.5 Million Budget Budget Includes Dedicated Support for Montgomery County Community College**

**Norristown, PA (December 15, 2016)** – The Montgomery County Board of Commissioners today passed a \$409.5 million 2017 budget in support of core County functions and dedicated funding for Montgomery County Community College (MCCC). The budget includes an increased millage rate of 0.39 mills. This translates to about \$66 per year for the average Montgomery County homeowner. This increase is only on the Montgomery County portion of taxpayers’ real estate bill (not the entire bill). Commissioners Arkoosh and Shapiro voted in favor of the budget and additional support for the Community College, Commissioner Gale voted against.

The new budget also includes contributions to the County pension fund, increased staffing for the County’s criminal justice system, maintenance of an 11 percent fund balance, and a 2.75 percent pay increase for non-represented employees.

“The County budget reflects our core values of maintaining our high level of County services, addressing long ignored infrastructure needs, and fiscally responsible approaches to budgeting including maintaining appropriate fund balance reserves and meeting our pension payment obligations,” said Dr. Valerie Arkoosh, Chair of the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners. “In addition, we’ve dedicated resources to the Montgomery County Community College, not only helping those who may not be able to afford a traditional four year college make the dream of a college education a possibility, but supporting a strong economic driver for the County.”

Increased investment in the Community College contributes significantly to Montgomery County’s economic growth and workforce development. According to a recent economic impact [analysis](#) by Economic Modeling Specialists Intl., taxpayers see a rate of return of 7.2 percent on their investment

in MCCC. The 11 percent tax increase (only on the County portion of a homeowner's tax bill) will support MCCC and will amount to \$66 per year for the average homeowner in Montgomery County.

The 2017 budget includes a 5 percent increase in spending and additional funding to the Community College according to Dean Dortone, the County's chief financial officer.

The 2017 budget invests in the core functions of County government and provides dedicated support to the Community College. The adopted budget allows the County to continue to provide core community services to our most vulnerable residents, including seniors, families in need, veterans, and children. The budget also supports county-wide public safety efforts and our criminal justice system.

- Two out of three tax dollars supports human services and the criminal justice function (Corrections, Courts, District Attorney).
- Tax dollars also support the County's public safety, parks and trails, public defender, assets and infrastructure, commerce, and planning.
- The budget supports our Capital Improvement Plan (2017 – 2021), which includes aggressive programs to rebuild our roads and bridges.
- There is a dedicated millage to support the Montgomery County Community College. Research has shown that an investment in community colleges yields significant returns for the community and taxpayers.
- The budget includes a 2.75% pay increase for non-represented employees.
- The budget includes an \$8 million dollar contribution to the County's Employee Pension Fund.
- The budget maintains a fiscally responsible General Fund reserve of around 11%.

The budget also reflects significant revenue loss driven by the Commonwealth – either in reduction of revenues, or in passing on costs for services the Commonwealth would no longer support:

- In 2016, the Commonwealth ended a contract for housing State inmates at the County Prison.
- They passed new regulations reducing Recorder of Deeds fees collected on condos.
- Commonwealth funding for court-related expenses was reduced.
- The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) passed new regulations reducing commissions paid to the County.

With approval of the budget, Montgomery County's real estate taxes will continue to be significantly lower than all the neighboring suburban counties.

The adopted budget is available on the [County website](#).