

## FY19 Draft Budget includes Benefit & Compensation Adjustments

The annual budget process, which begins in September with departmental budget request submission, came to a close on April 3, 2018 as Levy Court put the final touches on the Fiscal Year 2019 budget document scheduled to be introduced on April 24 for public hearing on May 8, 2018.

The \$31.1 million general fund budget and the \$18.6 million sewer fund budget include a number of items important to Kent County employees and retirees. Commissioners have incorporated a 2% cost of living adjustment for active employees plus a 1% step increase for employees receiving an “effective” performance evaluation and not topped out on their pay grade. A 1% COLA was approved for former employees receiving County pension benefits.

On the benefits side, Levy Court increased the County’s pension contribution by \$281,422 to \$3,024,582 as recommended by the pension actuary. The annual retiree benefits contribution remained at \$1,366,633. For healthcare, Commissioners switched the program effective July 1, 2018 to DVHT (Aetna) and increased the employee cost share for individual only health insurance from \$60 to \$74.72 per month (7%), but decreased the cost share for dependent health insurance from around 30% to 20%. The budget retains the employee/eligible retiree premium for dental insurance at \$3.10 per month and increases the dependent premium by \$7.00 to \$45.10 combined, but also increases the annual maximum from \$1,500 per calendar year to \$2,000. Commissioners also funded an increase for the tuition reimbursement program by raising the annual reimbursement maximum from \$750 to \$1,000 for undergraduate degrees and \$1,000 to \$1,300 for graduate degrees.

Other budget related items include addition of a new a Database Administrator position in the Information Technology office, transfer of Facilities Management responsibilities from Public Works to the Administration Department, realignment of 3 divisions with individual assistant directors under a single assistant in the Planning Services Department, defunding the Economic Development Office Director position and two GIS vacant positions, merging several cost centers, and funding for Sit-to-Stand desks.

In addition, numerous ongoing and future capital projects were funded or partially funded through an installment allocation including exterior lighting upgrades and audio/visual system replacement at the County Complex, pole building and generator replacement at Emergency Services, window tinting at the County Library, various County parks improvements, a comprehensive I.T. enterprise solution, among others.

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