

July 1 marks Kent County's new fiscal year

Happy New Year!

Fiscal Year 2020 started July 1, 2019, which means the new Kent County budget is in effect. The new financial plan adopted by Levy Court in early May looks a little bit different than 2019, with two new maintenance/custodial type positions added in anticipation of completion of a paramedic station west of Dover.



All full-time County employees received a 2% cost of living adjustment this fiscal year and most employees with an effective or better performance appraisal also received a full step (2%) increase. Full-time employees hired during the previous fiscal year and working more than 3 months and less than 9 months received a half step (1%), while those hired in April, May & June 2019 received no step. Former employees retiring from active service and receiving a County pension received a 1% cost of living adjustment effective July 1. No increase was given to regular "pensioners" (*former vested employees that did not retire directly from Kent County service*) and beneficiaries.

On the benefits side, Levy Court increased the County's pension contribution by \$383,502 to \$3,408,084 as recommended by the pension actuary. The annual retiree benefits contribution increased by \$787,816 to \$2,154,449 as a result of the biennial actuarial valuation. For healthcare, Commissioners increased the employee cost share (7%) for individual only high plan health insurance from \$74.72 to \$79.98 per month consistent with DVHT/Aetna's overall premium increase, with dependent health insurance cost share (20%) also increasing about 7%. The budget retains the employee/eligible retiree premium for dental insurance at \$3.10 per month and the dependent premium at \$42.00 for a monthly premium of \$45.10 combined with a calendar year maximum benefit of \$2,000.

Due to payroll's one week lag, the full benefit of the wage increase will not be reflected on the electronic pay stub until July 26, since the July 12 pay advice also includes June 23-30, which is paid at the FY2019 rate. Be advised that individual hourly and salary rates extend for several digits past the decimal point for tax reporting purposes, the figures shared with employees reflect rounding and the application of percentages by the New World payroll software program.

The \$31.6 million general fund budget and the \$20.2 million sewer fund budget includes 303 County positions in FY2020 including the addition of a new Maintenance Worker and a new Custodian in the Facilities Management office, reclassification/retitle of the former Systems Analyst Administrator position to Programmer Analyst in the Information Technology Office, transition of the Wills Clerk and Utility Locator positions from 35 to 40-hours per week, and reallocation of positions between work areas within other Departments.

In addition, numerous ongoing and future capital projects were funded or partially funded through an installment allocation including an I.T. Enterprise Solution for Countywide services, a pole building, console replacements and Fire/EMS system replacement for the Department of Public Safety, new carpet for the County Library, and various County parks improvements, among others.

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