NEWS

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Montgomery County Launches New Website

Norristown, PA (March 6, 2013) – Montgomery County today officially launched its new website, which features exciting new graphics and significantly improved accessibility and interaction for county residents and businesses and anyone else wanting to learn about the county.

Commissioners Josh Shapiro, Leslie Richards and Bruce L. Castor, Jr. joined staff today in unveiling the website at a press conference in the commissioners' offices, and gave those assembled a demonstration of the new facets of the website.

"This new website is another important step in making our county government the most interactive, accessible and transparent in Pennsylvania," said Shapiro, chair of the board of commissioners. "This new site will be a valuable tool for county residents and businesses that need information, services and interaction with county departments."

The former website was designed in 2005 and had become outdated, cumbersome and difficult to navigate over the years.

"The previous website had over 4,300 pages and more than 5,000 documents, many of which were outdated," said Richards, vice chair of the board. "This site is extremely user-friendly and people will be able to access the information they need much more easily."

Castor pointed out that through the competitive bidding process, the hard work of the county's IT staff and CivicPlus, the website designer and consultant, the nine-month project came in significantly under budget. "The cost of the website was $267,199 and was budgeted for $600,000," he said. "The cost includes the design and implementation, one-year free maintenance and maintenance and

support for years two through four. The cost of the website was paid for out of the County's Record Improvement Fund (CRIF), and not the general fund budget."

Some of the highlights of the new website are:
- A "How do I…" icon that gives people directions on how to do nearly 40 different things including How do I apply for a job, get a passport, grow my business, report child abuse, find my polling place, find recycling information, etc.
- A "This just in…" icon that will be continuously updated with the latest county news and will always include a calendar of events, emergency alerts, employment opportunities and RFPs.
- A greatly enhanced search engine
- Additional and more easily accessible information on county parks, trails and historic sites.
- Links to Montgomery County's Social Media Feeds (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, Paper.li)
- myConnection
  - With myConnection, the profile you create allows you to set up a unique starting point for the tasks and transactions that you want to complete in your time on this website. Use myConnection to gather the information that you most care about from across this website into one central location, giving you greater control over how you connect with your community.
  - Allows the user to customize their online experience
- Translation services using Google Translation for 65 different languages

Shapiro pointed out that "one of the goals of the county administration is to communicate with residents, employees and businesses in as many ways possible in today's diversified communications world, and to that end the county has utilized social media a great deal in addition to traditional means of communication."

In addition to the website, he said the county uses Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, Pinterest and Paper.li as means of communicating. All three commissioners use Twitter to keep followers up to date on what is happening in addition to the county's official tweets and Facebook postings.

Here is a list of the county's social media outlets:
- County Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/montgomery.county.pa
- County Twitter: https://twitter.com/MontCoPA
- County YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/user/montgomerycountypa?feature=mhee
- County Pinterest: http://pinterest.com/montcopa/
- County Paper.li: http://paper.li/MontCoPA/1330360051#

Please visit the new site at http://montcopa.org/