



# NEWS

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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KENNETH E. LAWRENCE, JR., VICE CHAIR  
JOSEPH C. GALE, COMMISSIONER

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### Montgomery County Commissioners Adopt No Tax Increase Budget For 2019

**Norristown, PA (December 13, 2018)** – The Montgomery County Commissioners adopted a \$420 million budget for 2019 Thursday with no tax increase for the second year in a row that maintains a healthy fund balance, provides dedicated funding to the community college, leverages federal and state funding to combat the opioid addiction crisis and provides critical human services to our most vulnerable residents. The Commissioners also adopted a five-year Capital Improvement plan that advances the ongoing County Campus Redevelopment Plan and efforts to improve county-owned roads and bridges. Commissioners Arkoosh and Lawrence voted in favor of the budget. Commissioner Gale voted against.

“Montgomery County is on sound financial footing, due to years of adhering to fiscal priorities, investing in long term capital planning, repairing and improving our aging infrastructure, and maintaining an appropriate fund balance,” said Dr. Val Arkoosh, Chair of the Montgomery County Commissioners.

The budget increases the County’s General Fund reserve to \$88.5 million, a full 21.1 percent of the overall budget, which provides a safeguard against revenue shortfalls or unanticipated expenditures, ensuring a stable tax rate.

Among other financial metrics, a healthy reserve fund is directly related to why Moody’s raised Montgomery County’s bond credit rating to Aaa, the highest credit rating a government can achieve.

In recent years, the County eliminated risky swap transactions previous administrations entered into that left the County vulnerable to changing market conditions and seized on other opportunities to refinance debt that will reduce debt service by \$500,000 in 2019 and by \$11.1 million over 20 years.

The Aaa bond rating gives the County the ability to borrow money at the lowest interest rates possible and the reduced debt service provides room to continue investing in critical infrastructure and improve the services offered to Montgomery County residents.

The spending plan also uses County dollars to leverage over \$500,000 in state and federal grant funding to combat the opioid addiction and overdose crisis, as well as other behavioral health issues. Those include the STOP Grant II program to prevent school violence, the Emergency Medical Overdose Surveillance System to collect data on overdoses in real time and quickly develop strategies to combat it, and the Targeted Opioid Program (TOP) to divert individuals into treatment rather than incarceration.

The budget provides funding for core community services to the most vulnerable residents, including seniors, families in need, veterans and children.

The capital budget supports county-wide public safety efforts, including upgrades to the Public Safety Training Center and the 9-1-1 system, provides \$23.6 million over the next five years to maintain and improve parks, trails and historic sites, and funding to replace the County’s aging voting machines next year.

The 2019 operating and capital budgets are posted online on the County website’s finance page:

<https://www.montcopa.org/93/Finance>