

Wolf Township

2014 OPERATING BUDGET

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF WOLF TOWNSHIP IS PLEASED TO PRESENT THE 2014 BUDGET. IT IS AN INDICATOR OF THE ANTICIPATED FUTURE ENVIRONMENT AND GROWTH THAT WILL BE EXPERIENCED IN WOLF TOWNSHIP OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS. THE PURPOSE IS TO REMAIN FISCALLY STRONG WHILE MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE RESIDENTS OF THE TOWNSHIP.

CAPITAL RESERVE

The Capital Reserve Fund is used for major projects that would benefit a majority of the residents of the Township. The deposits made to this account are payback features set in place by investments in waterline extensions made possible by the Township's original investment along Rte. 405. The payback amount is currently \$84,480.00. The deadline for residents along Elm Drive to hook up to the waterline is August 16, 2014. The payback amount to the Township with 100% participation will be \$9,500.00.

The Township Planning Commission continues to support efforts dealing with safety concerns on the US 220/PA 405 intersection. The Township submitted a Project Abstract to the State Transportation Commission for the 2013 Transportation Program. The estimated total cost of the project is \$6,000,000.00. Neither Wolf Township nor Hughesville Borough can possibly afford this type of project, thus the need to participate in the Transportation Program.

PennDOT hired Gannett-Fleming Inc., to conduct a congestion relief study on the intersection to determine the best method to improve traffic flow. During the kick-off meeting, held June 20, 2013, it was emphasized that the Counties Impact Fees could be used for this project but, it was important that the local municipalities show monetary support.

Wolf Township has set aside \$200,000.00 for potential maintenance in the 2014 Budget. This is a gesture by the Township to show our commitment and need for an improvement at this intersection.

The Hughesville Volunteer Fire Department attended the July 8, 2013 regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors to show plans for a rescue engine to replace the 1990 engine. This is an effort to rotate equipment and keep up to date to provide the best services to our residents. The cost is \$614,505.00, with \$300,000.00 coming from grants. Mr. Barto is suggesting that a

third of the remaining cost be provided by Wolf Township, \$25,000.00 each year for five years.

ACT 13 - IMPACT FEE

In December 2012, the Township received their first Impact Fee. The impact fee money is to be returned to municipalities to meet local needs that are a direct result of the Marcellus Shale Industry. A separate account is being set up to keep the accounting records correctly. The expenditures will be reported by the County on a website. The Governor is asking the public to scrutinize the use of funds.

\$101,386.00 has been designated this year as an expense in account 433.20 Signal Lights & Signs. Public infrastructure is a general term often qualified to refer to needs of a municipality to solve safety issues. The additional traffic using the Rte. 220/405 intersection due to the Marcellus shale exploration is a priority and the Board of Supervisors feels this is good project for the impact fees.

HYDRANT FUND

Based on actual figures the Real Estate Tax budget figure has been increased to \$4400.00. The increase is due to steady growth in Wolf Township.

The Lycoming County Assessment Bureau is responsible for flagging the parcels that are responsible for the tax. We have sent numerous requests with listings of all the new properties to be added, from Elm Drive, Tagge's Development, Trinity Estates and any other new buildings that have been added over the last few years. Our latest request was sent August 2013.

The fund is used exclusively to pay the bills received from the Hughesville Borough Water Authority and deposits come from property owners with structures located 600 feet from a hydrant. The calculation from the Hughesville Water Authority is \$30.00 per hydrant per quarter – 49 hydrants.

GENERAL FUND

Fiscal responsibility dictates that Wolf Township provide for the general safety and well-being of our residents at the least possible cost. This budget reflects the board's commitment to provide outstanding and up to date services at an affordable cost.

The General Fund is used for the day to day operations of conducting business by the Board of Supervisors. Fiscal years 2007 through 2012 and Actual Year-To-Date figures for 2013 were used to determine budget figures, along with information from the Road Crew, Planning Commission, Code Inspections and Office Staff. Subdivision and Land Development

plans, building and zoning permits, hearings and general gossip help all departments sift out the future needs and area requiring financial support.

Income:

Income is made up of taxes, service fees, fines and interest. Wolf Township collects real estate tax, real estate transfer tax, occupation privilege tax and earned income tax. The total face real estate taxes due in 2013 is \$13,410.72. We anticipate no increase in the Real Estate Tax Rate of .0875%.

Lycoming County has initiated a reassessment in order to ensure that all taxpayers are paying their fair share of the tax burden. A reassessment is needed when the property values that are used to make up the tax base become inconsistent, unfair, or too old to reflect the current trends and changes in the actual value of real estate. State law requires that after the tax base has been equalized and brought to current market value, the millage rate must be reduced in order to collect the same amount of revenue as the previous tax year. Notification of the new fair market value will be mailed to property owners on or before July 1, 2014.

The real estate transfer tax was determined by reviewing the history of the tax. Like so many of the income accounts, human nature enters into the amount actually received. In 2013, there have been huge fluctuations in the amount received and the regularity of payments from the Register and Recorders Office. There were no transfers from the end of November 2012 until February 2013. Sales and building really didn't pick up until May 2013. The summer months were similar to other years.

The main source of income for the Township is earned income tax. Last year a conservative figure of \$23,333.00 was used to calculate the 2013 budget. In reality deposits were a low of \$25,338.10 for February and a high of \$35,303.26 for April. Wolf Township is lucky to have people working and this growing stable source to provide services to the residents.

Wolf Township has not increased the OPT; it remains \$10.00 per worker. The reasonable rate makes collection relatively easy. Employers cooperate willingly. We have not seen many new businesses but, the one we have seem to be doing well and growing. Along with the steady growth, we continually have deposits come in from various companies that have employees working from their home.

The County Liquid Fuels grant is \$4347.00. The rate remains the same from year to year.

Fines are received from the PA State Police, District Justice 29-3-03 and Lycoming County Court of Common Pleas. In the past most of the fines were for disorderly conduct, criminal trespass or mischief, bad checks, public drunkenness, DUI and purchase of alcohol by a minor. District Justice Kemp feels that citations work well in Williamsport and he prefers that

enforcement of our ordinances be done by the citation process. So included in Fines – Local are items such as failure to remove rubbish, sewers & sewage disposal and failure to control vegetation. Again this year the Board of Supervisors finds the police protection provided by the State Police to be adequate.

Expenses:

Several of the accounts have changed values due to Jennifer Mausteller's change in status to full time. Values for part time have been added or switched to full time categories. Her hours were increased due to the increased demands of unfunded mandates, growth, planning responsibilities and new regulations and procedures. PennDOT, DCED and other state agencies continue to change their websites often and more sites each year are making it mandatory that all forms are submitted electronically. Jennifer is a big help in this area as well as constantly keeping the website updated.

The road crew, due to virtue of our topography deals with suburban as well as rural character neighborhoods. Both have their own specific set of needs and requirements. The Roadmaster focuses on roadwork planning and preventive maintenance. He is well aware of what is in the Township due to 20+ years of working experience in Wolf Township. Each year the road crews schedule is set by prioritizing the needs and keeping up with unexpected maintenance due to use and weather conditions. All equipment is in good shape. There are no plans for any major purchases.

Donation to the East Lycoming Recreation Authority, SPCA and the Hughesville Public Library will remain the same.

Fees paid to professionals, for example, Consultants, Solicitors, Engineers and Auditors have all been nominally increased, not necessarily because rates have been increased but because all may be affected by the cost of living.

The Township is a PIRMA member and it was structured with three principal features. First, PIRMA is a non-profit association of Pennsylvania public entities formed to provide liability coverage for its Members. Secondly, in addition to the cost efficiencies gained by serving one group, the program contains other features designed to significantly reduce overhead costs. Finally, PIRMA puts its member in control. Each member has the ability to influence their future cost of coverage by controlling losses.

The auditors asked that we separate the cost of Workman's Compensation insurance from account #404.35 INSURANCES and create a new account #404.34 Other Insurance/WC. PIRMA changed their Workman's Comp. provider to American Health Casualty Services. Act 46 of 2011 provides workers' compensation benefits to volunteer fire fighters who contract cancer as a result of their firefighting activities. During the summer of 2012, several municipal trusts dropped workers' compensation coverage for firefighters due to the cost and liability imposed by Act 46. This is an ongoing issue monitored by PSATS and for budget purposes could tend to be volatile over the next few years.

Advertising prices from the Sun-gazette continue to increase Advertising requirements and where they may be placed is a big issue for most municipalities and an issue PSATS is trying to change. Again this year there is no legislation pending to correct the situation. The

Township does have a website and a facebook page, that are being used whenever notifications legally do not have to be in paid daily publication.

The Signal Lights & Signs budget was decreased. The Sign Inventory and Management (SIM) Program which is a Federal Highway Administration mandate, no longer is requiring all the signs be changed by a specific date. And many of the deadlines have been postponed to several years from now.

The Municipal Building was purchased in 1971 and modernized in 1973. The traffic flow in the office has increased with the collection of real estate taxes, building and zoning permit requirements and the increase in population. Due to prevailing wage, updating the building will take several years with only one or two projects per year. In 2013, the carpeting in the new Community Room was replaced with Vinyl Tile. The staff switched sides locating the office in the old Community Room within a day's time, never shutting down or losing any time. The windows will be replaced for heating and cooling efficiency in 2014. The long term goal is to stay at 695 Rte. 405 Hwy. and take care of the current property. This is the Wolf Township Municipal Building; it should be a landmark that residents are proud to identify as the hub of local government.

STATE FUND

The Township receives an annual allocation of Liquid Fuels Taxes from the State's Motor License Fund. The funds come from the taxpayers and are spent to insure safe roadways. House Bill 248 increased funding for the Turnback Program from \$2500 per mile to \$4000 per mile. Wolf Township has 34.68 miles of road and 9.990 miles in Turnback roads. The Township population per the 2010 Census is 2907. Wolf Township is fortunate to have enough general funds to cover operating cost and have the capacity to use the entire amount received from the state to maintain are local roads.

FIRE PROTECTION

This tax is calculated on the value of real estate in the Township. The amount collected is totally distributed to those fire departments servicing Wolf Township. Currently, 80% is paid to the Hughesville Volunteer Fire Department and 20% is paid to Picture Rocks Volunteer Fire Department. The Township is simply the agent collecting the funds and has no jurisdiction on how it is spent. This contract was set up with the fire companies several years ago and they agreed at that time they would not solicit the residents of the Township for funds because of the tax. The Ambulance Funds are not included in this agreement.
