

# Letter of Transmittal

**October 25, 2019**

**To:** New Hanover Township Board of Supervisors

## **Introduction**

I am pleased to submit the proposed 2019 Budget for your consideration. The budget document consists of three sections:

### **Letter of Transmittal**

The Letter of Transmittal is an overview of the budget in commentary form, generally referred to as the Budget Message. It is prepared to provide the Board of Supervisors, administrative staff, and Township residents with a narrative review of significant trends and factors affecting the proposed budget and highlight areas of importance in the financial section. It also contains a summary of program and service delivery, cash position, and revenue and expense projections.

### **Operating, Capital, Enterprise and Trust Funds Budgets**

The proposed 2019 Budget consists of 13 funds detailing the projected revenues and proposed expenditures for the coming year in line item format. A three-year history of actual (audited) revenues and expenditures and year-end estimates for the current year indicate trends and beginning and ending fund balances show cash position. A separate summary for the General Fund by revenue and expense category provides a snapshot of the Township's largest operating budget, and a summary of the 13 funds provides a broad financial picture of the organization.

### **Supporting Data (Budget Schedules)**

The Supporting Data (Budget Schedules) offer an additional level of detail for specific line items in each operating budget. This information provides the Board of Supervisors and administrative staff with a detailed understanding of specific budget appropriations. Where supporting data is available, an alphabetical index provides easy reference to the supporting details. This information assists in further understanding the cost of Township services and provides more meaning to the budget projections, particularly when considering cost-cutting alternatives or forecasting revenues.

The proposed budget results from an analysis of trends in revenues and expenditures from prior years, a detailed review of individual line item projections, an evaluation of programs and services, and current economic conditions. Allocating resources in the most efficient manner is also important in maintaining accustomed service levels and providing needed capital improvements.

This budget design provides information at various levels of detail as described above to promote an understanding and evaluation of Township services from a financial perspective.

## **The Budget Format**

The budget is prepared in a line item format using the Pennsylvania Chart of Accounts for local governments published by the state Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). This format provides uniformity of account numbers and titles across department budgets and operating funds. Uniformity in the budget format and consistency in posting revenues and expenditures to the line item accounts allows the Administration and Department Directors to monitor variations in budget appropriations during each fiscal year and from year to year. It simplifies review of monthly financial statements and translates to improved accuracy in accounting and budgeting.

The proposed budget continues the practice of separating operating and capital funds. Detailing these services in separate funds allows the costs for these government functions to be easily identifiable, providing the Board of Supervisors and Township residents with a clear picture of how the Township allocates resources for its program of service delivery. Separating capital appropriations from operating revenues and expenditures also eliminates variations in government operating appropriations from year to year caused by one-time capital expenses.

Operating Funds included are for general government (General Fund), fire and rescue services (Fire Protection Fund), open space preservation (Open Space Fund), parks and recreation services (Recreation Fund) and state highway aid allocations (Liquid Fuels Fund). Capital Funds are outlined per the following detail:

- Capital appropriations for general purposes are budgeted in the Capital Reserve Fund. Interfund transfers from the General Fund and other revenue dedicated for capital projects provide funding for proposed capital purchases or improvements.
- Capital appropriations for road equipment purchases are budgeted in the Road Equipment Capital Fund. Funding for these appropriations is funded through a dedicated millage.
- Capital appropriations for parks and recreation purposes are now budgeted in the Recreation Capital Fund. Funding for these appropriations can be from a variety of sources including interfund transfers, grants, and impact fees.
- Capital appropriations for transportation improvements are budgeted in the Transportation Impact Fund. Funding for these appropriations occurs primarily through impact fees and grants.

In the General Fund, the *Result from Operations* (page 3) represents the difference between annual revenues and expenditures before interfund transfers for capital appropriations or appropriations to other operating budgets.

This budget format has standardized the accounting function and simplified the budget preparation process. I believe our budget format provides sufficient detail for readers to understand revenues and expenditure appropriations from year to year and the broad overview of Township government financial operations necessary for contemplative analysis.

## **Budget Highlights**

Following are highlights of the proposed 2019 Budget:

### ***The proposed budget includes a 5% tax decrease.***

There is a proposed real estate tax decrease for the 2019 fiscal year. This would be the 14th year in a row that taxes have not been increased; the General Fund millage has not been increased for more than 25 years.

At the current tax levy of 1.6800 mills, real estate taxes for a home assessed at the average value of \$157,546 would pay \$264 per year or \$22 per month for Township services. At the proposed decreased tax levy of 1.5870 mills, real estate taxes for a home assessed at the average value of \$157,546 would pay \$250 per year or \$21 per month for Township services.

### ***There are no new staff positions in the proposed budget.***

Present staffing levels are adequate to maintain Township services and there are no new positions proposed in the 2019 Budget. There are also no proposed staff reductions. Unless the Board of Supervisors adds additional programs or services, additional staffing is not necessary; however, changes or reassignment of duties among existing employees may occur.

### ***The proposed budget maintains municipal services at current levels.***

Operating appropriations in the proposed 2019 Budget will allow the Township to continue its stabilization as a municipality while increasing our standard of service expected by our residents.

The appropriations support accustomed levels of police, maintenance of public roads and rights-of-way, recreation services and programs, park maintenance, and sanitary sewer implementation. Appropriations also include debt payments on outstanding bank notes and funding for certain infrastructure improvements and capital equipment purchases.

### ***Capital appropriations maintain infrastructure and equipment.***

The Management Team revises annually our 10-year capital improvement plan, which serves as a guide when programming capital appropriations. The plan is included under Schedule H of the Budget and forms the basis for proposed capital appropriations.

Proposed capital appropriations under the Capital Reserve Fund include a contracted radio update, vehicle security cameras and a replacement vehicle for the Police Department; and architect design fees for a new Administration and/or Police Department.

Proposed capital appropriations under the Recreation Capital Fund include a possible replacement HVAC unit and a roof replacement project for the Recreation Center; bathroom and pool improvements at Hickory Park; playgrounds improvements at Community Park; and design fees for connecting trails near Windlestrae Park.

Proposed capital appropriations under the Road Equipment Capital Fund include a replacement lawn mower and road mower blades and a new Gator for ease of access throughout parks and events; a replacement heavy-duty dump truck; a new light-duty truck, which eliminates the need to replace two pickup trucks; and a replacement landscape trailer.

The Sewer Capital Fund includes proposed capital appropriations for sewer main repairs and replacements; a project to improve hydraulic capacity; and a new enclosed trailer for the collection system.

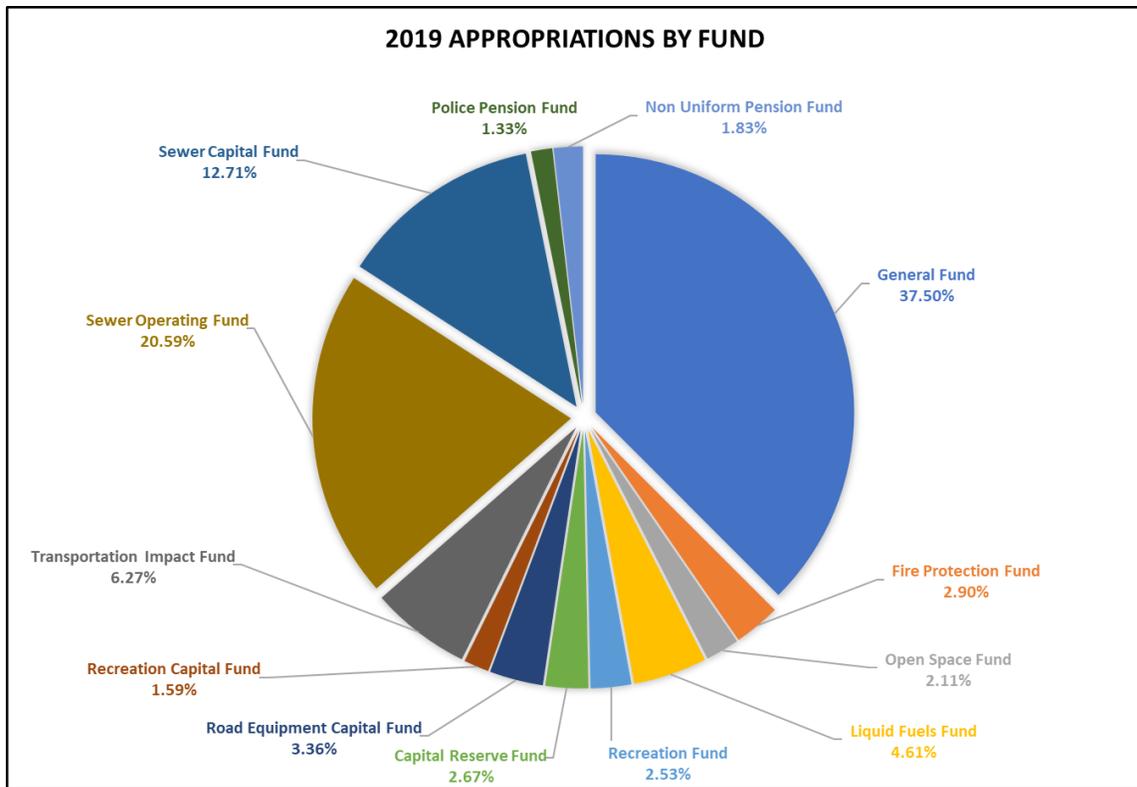
The budget also includes appropriations through other funds (General Fund, Liquid Fuels Fund and Transportation Impact Fund) to help maintain infrastructure and equipment.

- The General Fund includes appropriations for the completion of an update to the Township's Act 209 plan and the beginning of an agreement with Montgomery County Planning Commission to complete an update to our Comprehensive Plan.
- The Liquid Fuels Fund will be used to resurface or treat 2.85 miles of Township roads and complete maintenance on four of our six bridges.
- The Transportation Impact Fund includes appropriations for the completion of traffic engineering and design services for improvements at the southern intersection of North Charlotte Street and Moyer Road and at the intersection of Big Road and Layfield Road. Also included is an estimated cost to implement a preliminary design at the northern intersection of North Charlotte Street and Big Road.

## Budget Overview

There are 13 Funds in the proposed budget (5 Operating Funds, 4 Capital Funds, 2 Enterprise Funds, and 2 Trust Funds). These funds are essentially pots where revenues and expenses pass through for designated services. Each Fund shows beginning fund balances, projected revenues, proposed expenditures and ending fund balances for the new fiscal year and highlights the cost for those separate and distinct government functions.

The General Fund is the largest Operating Fund and accounts for many common local government services, including police protection; planning and zoning; general administration; finances; legal and engineering services; tax collection services; and public works services and maintenance. Appropriations from the General Fund are available for any legal expenditure; however, tax levies for special purposes such as the fire and rescues services, road equipment capital, recreation services, and open space preservation are available only for that purpose.



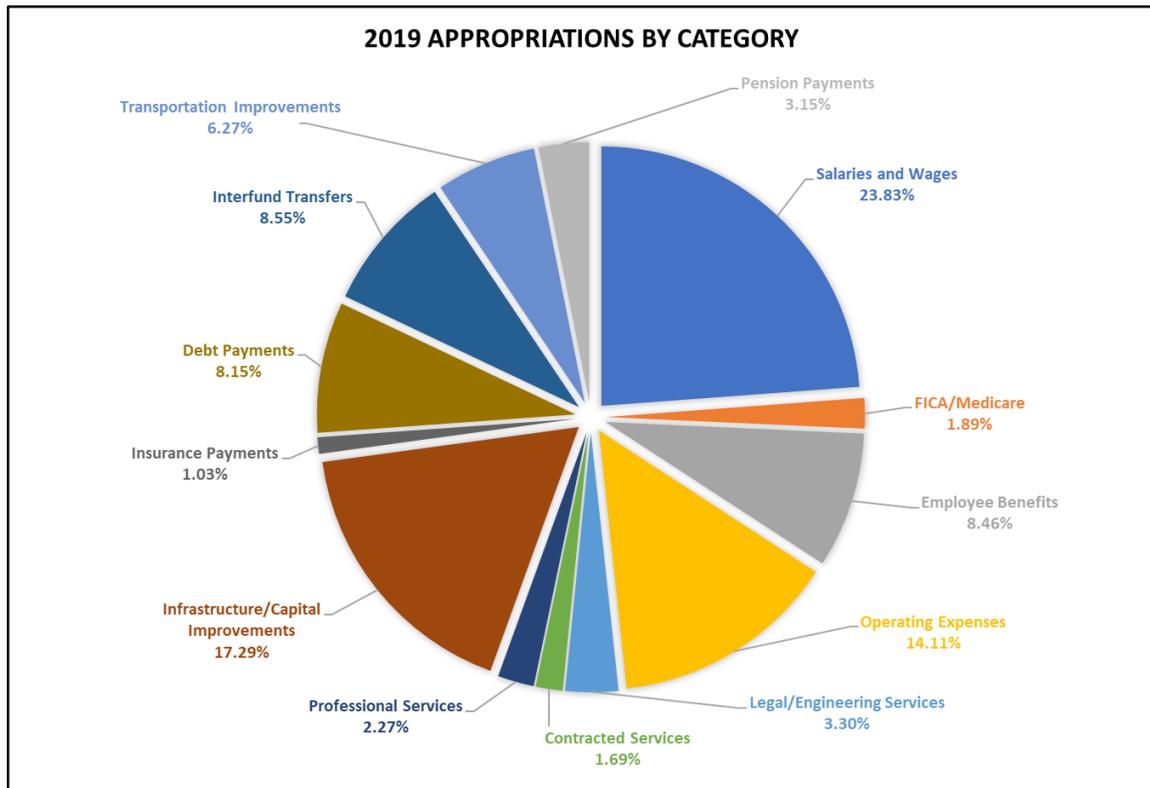
**Total appropriations for all funds is approximately \$10.4 million in the proposed 2019 Budget.**

General Fund appropriations total \$3.90 million. Appropriations in other operating budgets include the Fire Protection Fund (\$301,750), Open Space Fund (\$220,250), Liquid Fuel Fund (\$480,000), Recreation Fund (\$263,500) and Sewer Operating Fund (\$2.14 million). Combined capital appropriations total \$2.76 million and pension funds total \$328,000.

The General Fund, in combination with the Recreation Fund and Sewer Operating Fund, account for all personnel, fringe benefit, insurance, routine maintenance and operational expenditures. Personnel costs remain the largest single expense in the operating budgets representing 34% of total

appropriations in the Operating Funds. Operating expenses, legal and engineering services, contracted and professional services, and insurance account for an additional 22% of budgeted expenditures. These percentages usually combine to be the highest expenses in local governments as public service agencies and demonstrate that significant cost cutting can only occur with staff reductions that directly affect service delivery.

The following chart shows how total appropriations are expensed for all funds by category:



Following is a narrative summary of the financial position of each fund including a discussion about projected revenues and proposed expenditures for 2019:

## ***General Fund (Fund 01)***

### **Revenues**

The General Fund is the operating budget for general municipal purposes and includes appropriations for general government operations such as administration and finance, legal, engineering and other professional services, police protection, code enforcement and zoning, planning administration, technology, highway facilities and fleet maintenance. There are also appropriations to support the work of appointed boards and commissions.

*Tax collection experience, prior year collection history, contract guarantees, state shared revenue, and economic trends are the basis for current and future revenue projections.*

The primary revenue sources for the General Fund are real estate taxes, Act 511 taxes (earned income, per capita, local services, and transfer taxes), business licenses, permit fees, grants, state-shared entitlements, and charges for service.

The Township levies a 1% earned income tax and revenue generated from residents is shared equally with the Boyertown School District. Earned income taxes will generate over \$2 million in 2019, representing 51% of total revenues in the General Fund. Real estate taxes are projected to come in close to \$695,000, representing 17% of total revenue in the General Fund.

Transfer taxes are a tax on real estate sales within the Township. The tax rate is 2% of the sale price. County government receives 1% of the tax proceeds, and the Boyertown School District and Township share the remaining 1% equally. Transfer tax receipts have steadily increased throughout the past several years as the economy is strong and development continues in the Township. Current projections indicate transfer tax receipts in 2019 will reach approximately \$417,000, but this may be higher given increased development activity.

An estimated 334 properties will transfer ownership in 2019, which is conservatively projected to be the around the same number as 2017 and 2018. Six and a half percent (6.5%) of the existing parcel stock (300 properties) typically transfers each year. Construction activity enhances transfer tax revenue and new construction will increase assessed value and real estate tax revenue and minimizes the need for future real estate tax increases.

Earned income taxes, transfer taxes, and permit fees have the most significant fiscal impact on General Fund revenue from year to year. Other significant sources of revenue in the General Fund include cable television franchise fees and pension system aid. Interest earnings are strong due to volume of fund balance reserve.

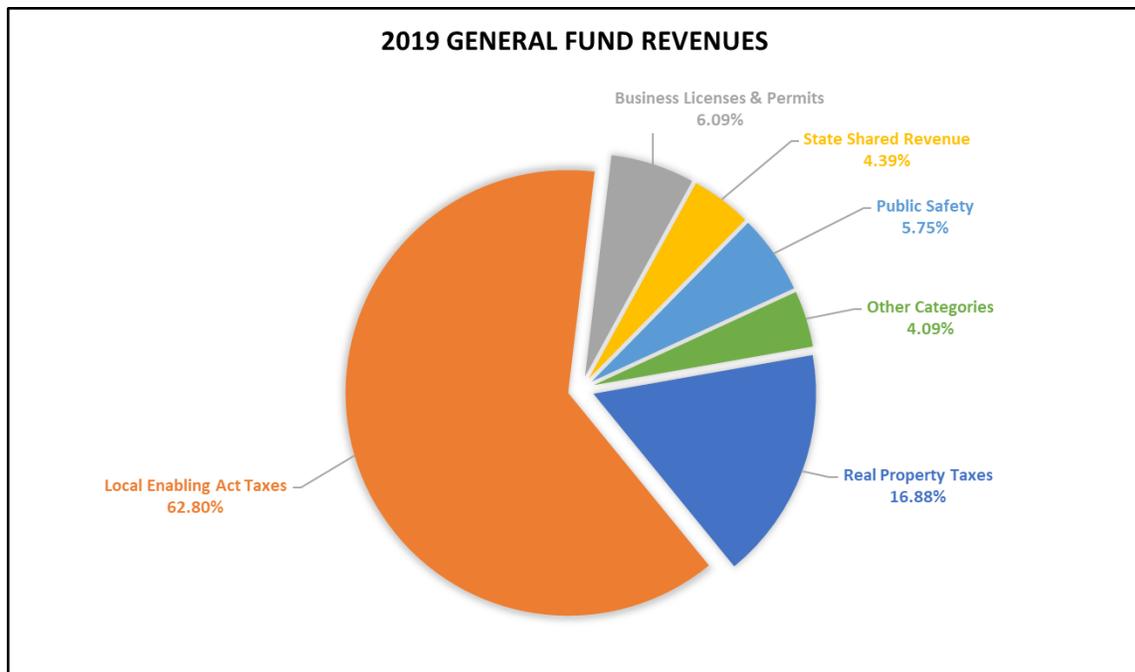
Revenue from permit fees has remained steady since 2014 and will continue to be a major income stream in 2019 as approved developments continue to develop new residential units. Permit fee revenue in 2019 is estimated at \$236,000. The Township has averaged about 85 permits for new homes since 2013 and projects to have close to 90 permits in 2019, producing \$173,000, or 73% of total permit fee revenue. Note that this revenue source will decrease when development ceases, but the effects will be offset by the subsequent increase in real estate and earned income tax revenue.

The Township will receive \$212,000 in state aid for its employee pension plans, representing 111% of the minimum required plan contributions. Both pension plans are well-funded, and in conjunction with 2018's investment gains, we will see future benefits in the reduction of our minimum municipal obligation. Cable television franchise fees have remained steady in the past few years with the 2019 projection at \$245,000.

Total estimated General Fund revenue in 2018 is \$4.51 million or \$210,000 over budget. The additional revenue came from earned income taxes and a one-time transfer (\$245,000) from the Escrow Fund.

Projected revenue in the proposed 2019 Budget totals \$4.1 million and represents a decrease of \$193,000 over the 2018 Budget; the decrease is based on no projected interfund transfers into the General Fund (\$170,000 in 2018) and a tax decrease of 5% (\$60,000). Projected revenue increases include earned income taxes at 2.5% over 2018 projections (\$50,000), real estate transfer tax (\$9,000) and pension system state aid (\$14,000).

The following chart shows the sources of General Fund revenue used for the operation of Township government:



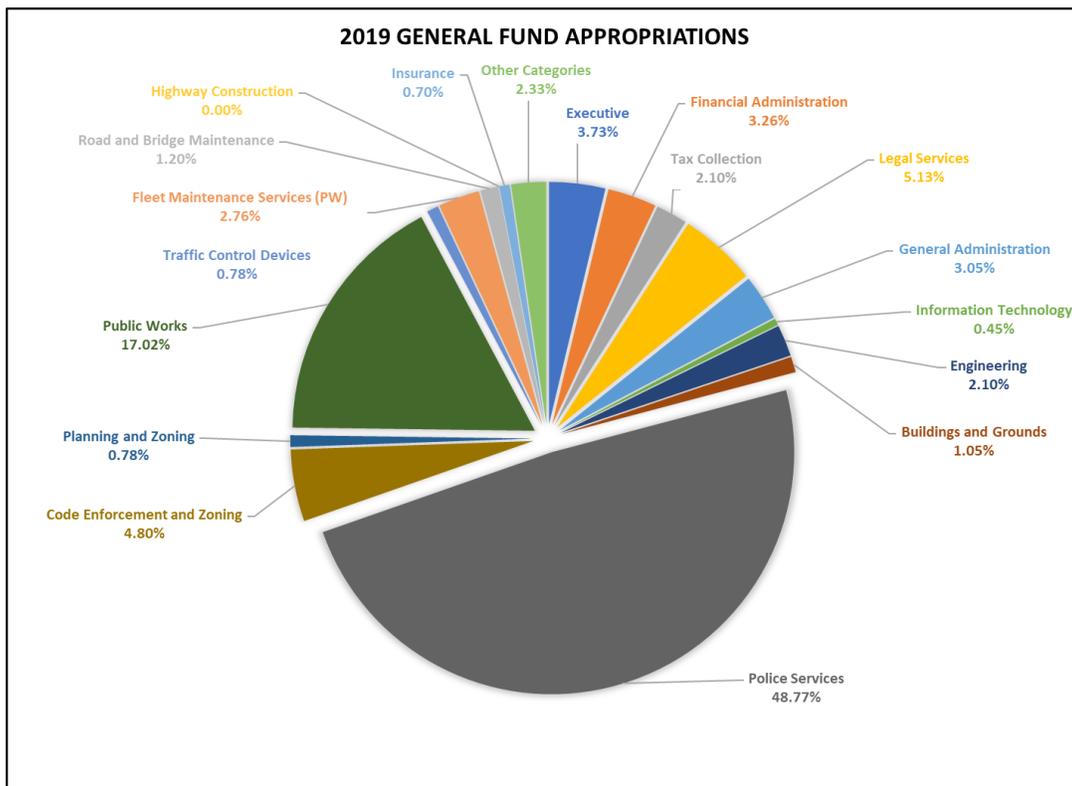
## Expenses

Estimated General Fund expenditures in 2018 total \$4.2 million, or \$265,000 under budget. The General Fund is projected to begin next year with approximately \$2.96 million (Fund Balance Forward).

Proposed General Fund appropriations in 2019 total \$3.8 million without interfund transfers. This represents a \$378,000 decrease (9%) over the 2018 Budget. This decrease is attributed to becoming more efficient in our Finance Department (\$38,000) and not needing to leverage the General Fund for roadway improvements (\$310,000). However, each year does include increases in line items, specifically to wages (uniformed employees are receiving a 3.25% increase, non-uniformed employees a 3% increase) and benefits (healthcare costs increased 3.6%) and one-time projects (Act 209 and Comprehensive Plan updates).

Appropriations also include expenses that may not be realized or surpassed for legal issues (\$115,000 for issues related to Gibraltar Rock) and healthcare (\$476,000 because we budget for utilization at 70%, the industry standard). There are also appropriations for interfund transfers to the Capital Reserve Fund (\$100,000 to support up to five years of capital improvements based on the Capital Improvement Plan).

The following chart shows proposed General Fund appropriations by category:



### *Fire Protection Fund (Fund 03)*

The Fire Protection Fund is the primary revenue source for the operating and capital needs of the New Hanover Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company, a component government unit. The Township levies a .310-mill real estate tax dedicated to fire protection services that generates approximately \$221,000. The maximum allowable tax levy is three mills. The Fire Company also receives about \$72,000 annually from state-shared revenue. The Fire Company places a minimum of 30% of total revenue received into a capital improvement fund for apparatus purchases.

The Fire Company responds from two stations strategically located in different areas of the Township to provide the most effective response to emergency calls. The company has 54 active members that train each week and volunteer their time to support the community. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the fire personnel have attained the nationally recognized Firefighter I Pro Board certification as well as state rescue practices, which exceeds 200 hours of formal firefighter training. Additionally, all the personnel have attained the federally-mandated Hazardous Materials Operations training.

### *Open Space Fund (Fund 04)*

The Township levies a .15% earned income tax that will generate approximately \$626,000 in 2019. The earned income tax was first conceived in 2006 through resolution to “provide for the conservation of open space to control growth and development” and then later passed through referendum to “finance the purchase of open space and development rights.”

Appropriations for 2019 includes paying down debt (\$207,000) associated with the purchase of the Wassmer Tract in 2011. With these appropriations, the Fund is projected to have about \$1.8 million in fund balance at the end of the year.

The Township currently has 1,322 acres of permanently preserved farm land and 594 acres of agricultural security area land, which defers taxes for undeveloped agricultural land.

### *Sewer Operating Fund (Fund 08)*

The Sewer Operating Fund is an enterprise fund, a government-owned fund that sells services to residents in the Township and functions under a lease agreement between the Township and the New Hanover Township Municipal Authority to handle the day to day operations of the plan. The Municipal Board has the right to set sewer rates, but the Board of Supervisors has the right to pass the Authority’s budget. The Township Manager is responsible for overseeing employees at the Authority.

The Sewer Operating Fund is projected to begin the year with approximately \$952,000. Most of the Fund’s revenues will stem from sewer rentals (EDU Rental Billings), projected to net \$2.01 million in 2019, an increase of \$50,000 over 2018 estimates.

Estimated Fund expenditures in 2018 are \$3.44 million, or \$113,000 under budget, and included the transfer of \$2 million to support the Sewer Capital Fund. Proposed Fund appropriations in 2019 total \$1.39 million without interfund transfers, \$160,000 less than 2018 – a 11.5% decrease in projected expenditures. This is primarily attributed to reducing influx and infiltration maintenance and machinery and equipment maintenance, the former replaced by an increase in capital expenditures to

complete sewer main repairs and replacements and the latter since our equipment has been updated. There are also appropriations for interfund transfers to support the Sewer Capital Fund (\$750,000) to support capital improvements and debt payments.

### ***Sewer Capital Fund (Fund 10)***

The Sewer Capital Fund accounts for general capital equipment purchases and infrastructure improvement projects. A ten (10) year Capital Improvement Plan (Schedule H) is revised annually to support the Fund and identifies capital needs on a long-term basis.

Revenues in the Fund results from sewer connections and fees outlined in our lease agreement, which in 2019 will bring in approximately \$54,000 and \$750,000 from the Sewer Operating Fund through an interfund transfer.

Appropriations in the Fund include proposed capital appropriations for sewer main repairs and replacements; a project to improve hydraulic capacity; and a new enclosed trailer for the collection system.

There is \$811,000 in projected revenue and \$1.32 million in capital appropriations in 2019.

### ***Transportation Impact Fund (Fund 13)***

The Transportation Impact Fund was established in 2005 under enabling legislation to fund transportation improvements based on development in the Township. Revenue stems from fees collected from development in designated transportation service areas. Projected beginning fund balance to begin 2019 is \$1.9 million. We have a three-year window to use development fees as they are earned or risk releasing those fees back to the developer.

2019 revenues depend on development, but most revenue is based on interest on the funds. In addition, we seek grants that can leverage our funds to stretch the number of improvements we can perform long-term.

Appropriations for 2019 include funding the improvements at Route 663 and Swamp Pike (we paid for preliminary design work in 2017) and traffic engineering and design services for improvements at the intersection of North Charlotte Street and Moyer Road and at the intersection of Big Road and Layfield Road.

Total projected revenue in 2019 is \$20,000 and appropriations are \$652,000.

### ***Road Equipment Capital Fund (Fund 19)***

The Road Equipment Capital Fund accounts for expenditures to replace Public Works Department vehicles and heavy equipment. A dedicated tax levy of .140 mills will generate \$100,000 in revenue, a decrease of \$13,000 because the millage was lowered. The maximum allowable levy is two mills.

Appropriations include a replacement lawn mower and road mower blades and a new Gator for ease of access throughout parks and events; a replacement heavy-duty dump truck; a new light-duty truck, which eliminates the need to replace two pickup trucks; and a replacement landscape trailer. The

revenue from selling the equipment – projected to net \$50,000 – will go back into the Fund. The Capital Improvement Plan guides this Fund, and project the Fund will be able to sustain itself through the next 10 years without an increase in millage.

Total revenue in 2019 projects at \$156,000 and total appropriations are \$349,750.

### ***Recreation Fund (Fund 96)***

The Recreation Fund is the operating budget for recreation programs and services, including overseeing 302 acres of parkland and open space, numerous buildings and other recreation amenities. A dedicated tax levy of .180 mills will generate \$128,500; the millage was increased to help the Fund remain solvent.

The Fund has two main sections: Recreation Administration and Participant Recreation. The third section from last year, Parks Maintenance, was moved to the Public Works Department. Recreation Administration accounts for general costs associated with the overall management of the department. Recreation Administration costs are budgeted at \$69,250 in 2019. Participant Recreation includes the cost for summer camp operations, instructor fees, ticket purchases, and other program related expenses. Program fees and charges fund the cost of participant recreation services. Participant recreation services are budgeted at \$72,000 in 2019. The cost for these services is consistent from year to year and varies based on program participation.

Current year revenues in the Recreation Fund will be \$21,000 under budget due to a decrease in building rentals and swimming pool applications. However, current year expenditures will be \$41,000 under budget.

Total projected revenue in 2019 is \$220,000 and appropriations are \$223,000. There is also an interfund transfer of \$40,000 to the Recreation Capital Reserve Fund to fund long-term projects.

### ***Capital Reserve Fund (Fund 30)***

The Capital Reserve Fund accounts for general capital equipment purchases and infrastructure improvement projects. Examples of capital expenditures include roadway and drainage facility improvements, equipment acquisition, property acquisition and facilities repair and construction. A ten (10) year Capital Improvement Plan (Schedule H) is revised annually to support the Fund and identifies capital needs on a long-term basis.

Revenues in the Capital Reserve Fund can stem from a variety of sources including grants, loans, developer contributions and interfund transfers. Revenues this year include interfund transfers of \$100,000 from the General Fund.

Appropriations include a contracted radio update, vehicle security cameras and a replacement vehicle for the Police Department; and architect design fees for a new Administration and/or Police Department.

There is \$102,500 in projected revenue and \$278,000 in capital appropriations in 2019.

### *Recreation Capital Reserve Fund (Fund 31)*

The Recreation Capital Fund provides financial resources to maintain and improve recreation facilities and infrastructure. Revenues in the Fund can stem from a variety of sources including grants, loans, developer contributions (fee in lieu of multi-use paths, recreation infrastructure and recreation land) and interfund transfers. Revenues this year include interfund transfers of \$40,000 from the Recreation Fund.

Appropriations include a possible replacement HVAC unit and a roof replacement project for the Recreation Center; bathroom and pool improvements at Hickory Park; playgrounds improvements at Community Park; and design fees for connecting trails near Windlestrae Park.

There is \$44,000 in projected revenue and \$165,000 in capital appropriations in 2019.

### *Liquid Fuels Fund (Fund 35)*

The Liquid Fuels Fund accounts for the Township share of liquid fuels tax dollars provided by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for maintenance of local roadways. The Commonwealth generates funds through a tax on motor fuels. Municipalities receive approximately 12% of the total collected by the Commonwealth and PennDOT uses the remaining funds to maintain state-owned roadways.

A formula using population and qualifying road mileage determines the Township share. The Administration forwards information on any newly dedicated roads to PennDOT, and the additional mileage increases the grant amount. New roads must meet specific design criteria to qualify for funding.

The Township received just over \$412,000 in 2018, an increase of \$17,000 from the prior year. The grant amount will increase steadily over the next couple of years under the provisions of Act 89, which increased the tax on motor fuels to fund road and bridge repairs across the Commonwealth. The 2019 grant amount will increase to \$414,000.

The Township also receives generally \$64,500 each year through a road turnback program, which transfers the ownership of functionally-local state-owned roads, which serve a local traffic purpose, from state government to local government.

The Commonwealth restricts expenditures from the Fund to road maintenance costs such as snow plowing, road striping, guiderail installation, street light electricity and the purchase of de-icing salt and paving materials. The Commonwealth audits the fund annually to ensure compliance with state regulations.

The Township has at least 80 miles of road to maintain in its system, and the rule of thumb is a road should last at least 20 years, so the Township should be fully repairing at least 4 miles of road annually. The Township conducted major improvements to progress on road maintenance for the past several years, but now we are transitioning for preventive maintenance in 2019.

The 2019 Road Maintenance Program includes up to 2.85 miles of milling and resurfacing. Schedule K provides full detail on planned roads. The estimated cost of this work is \$240,000. This year's

program also includes maintenance to four of our six bridges at an estimated cost of \$90,000; the other bridges will be completed in 2020.

Other appropriations in 2019 include de-icing salt (\$75,000), materials for road maintenance (\$75,000). Total projected revenue in 2019 is \$480,500 and appropriations are \$480,000.

### ***Pension Funds (Internal Fund 60 and Fund 65)***

The Police and Municipal Employees Pension Funds are trust funds that provide monthly defined-benefit pensions to retired employees. An ordinance adopted by the Board of Supervisors governs the administration of each pension plan, and two Pension Plan Advisory Committees review investment performance and recommend investment strategies. The Committees meet quarterly with the Township Investment Advisor to review investment performance.

The Pension funds consist of a mixed bond and equities portfolio with asset allocations according to an Investment Policy Statement adopted by the Board of Supervisors. The Township Actuary calculates annual required contributions for each plan (Minimum Municipal Obligation) to fund future retirement benefits.

The plans will have projected combined assets of approximately \$7.3 million at the end of 2018 and \$7.4 million at the end of 2019.

The Commonwealth levies a 2% tax on foreign casualty insurance premiums (insurance policies written by out-of-state insurance companies) to assist municipalities with pension plan funding. The required Township contribution to maintain the actuarial soundness of the plans in 2019 is approximately \$191,000. The Township expects to receive \$212,000 in state aid to offset this amount.

Our last actuarial valuation of the plans was completed for assets dated January 1, 2017. The Police Pension Plan had a 96.0% funding ratio; the Non-Uniformed Employee's Pension Plan had a funding ratio of 112.9%. The ratio represents the difference between plan assets and plan liabilities. The combined ratio is 104.8%, and this number determines our distressed level under Act 44. Since we are above 90%, we are consider not distressed.

## *Future Trends and Outlook*

This is the second year of our new budget template, our road map, which details for the community how we're going to spend taxpayer dollars. Last year we came together to begin creating a collective vision to guide future expenditures. Now we're in a managing success mode, continuing to provide high quality service while tackling the challenge of identifying greater efficiencies.

Overall, Township finances are extremely stable. Not only have we not raised taxes overall in 14 years, this is the first year we're decreasing taxes, which puts us in a unique – and welcomed – position for a municipality in Montgomery County. For example, the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends a municipality to have between 8% and 12% in fund balance reserves. At the end of 2019, the General Fund will have approximately 83% in fund balance reserves.

Financial stability will continue over the next several years as current development is built out and new development is considered. Regardless of additional development, real estate taxes will continue to grow along with earned income tax, adding to a positive fund balance long-term and helping to negate eventual decreases in permit revenue. Also, with dedicated funding for capital appropriations and a 10-year capital improvement plan to identify future capital needs, the Township is positioned to strategically plan future budgets and adjust appropriations to match available resources.

Balancing the needs of a municipal organization and maintaining low tax rates is always a goal but usually a significant challenge as investments in infrastructure and the growth of a municipality occur throughout time. Even though we have solid financial footing, Township employees are always looking for ways to reduce cost and spend resources efficiently. They are professional, courteous, and responsive public servants. Departments coordinate and cooperate in programs and services. Morale is high and there is a clear recognition that our single mission is to serve the public.

We believe Township residents are pleased with our service delivery and with this proposed budget will understand the Township wisely allocates its financial resources for their health, safety, and welfare. The proposed 2019 Budget maintains and streamlines municipal services to continue our trend toward greater efficiency and provides the necessary resources to help the Township achieve its goals and priorities established by the Board of Supervisors. In my opinion, it represents an accurate estimate in dollar terms of the Township's commitment to deliver high quality municipal services to the community.

I am pleased to present the proposed 2019 Budget for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Jamie L. Gwynn  
Township Manager