

HAMPTON VA

NEWS RELEASE

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City manager proposes FY17 budget that maintains services, reinvests in community, employees

April 13, 2016 - City Manager Mary Bunting previewed her proposed operating budget for next year at an afternoon work session of City Council Wednesday.

The proposed budget totals \$463,091,719, a 2.8% increase from the FY 2016 budget. Of the total, the city's operating portion is \$183,323,388, or 39.6%; the school's operating portion is \$200,450,417, or 43.3%; and other items (debt/capital for city and schools, regional entities, etc.) come to \$79,317,914, or 17.1%.

“The property value improvement has – along with our strong sales and meals tax growth – enabled us to propose a budget that not only maintains current service levels but also reinvests in both our community and our employees, without the need for a tax increase,” said Bunting. Chiefly, those investments are in public safety, education, neighborhoods and city employees.

“I am also pleased to report that this budget proposes no increases in user fees the City controls. There will be no increase in solid waste, wastewater or storm water user fees for residents or businesses this year,” Bunting told Council.

“I am pleased that we have been able to recommend a budget that provides a meaningful raise to our employees, continues our strategic investments, and maintains our current service levels without increasing taxes,” she said. “As with last year's budget, there is reason to be optimistic about next year. Private investment in our community continues to grow as we come out of the recession. ... Much of this new development is the result of investments the city has made to grow our economy and tax base.”

The full budget will be released on Friday, April 15, with copies available in libraries and online. Public hearings will be held April 27 and May 4, with a final Council vote scheduled for May 11.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Here are some highlights of the budget, grouped by City Council's strategic priority areas:

Safe & Clean/Public Safety

- Equip all officers on the street with body cameras and tasers; equip auxiliary officers and police vehicles
- Real-time integrated data center
- 2 family support workers to expand prevention and early intervention efforts in schools
- Funding for 10 firefighters previously funded with grant money
- Neighborhood Development associate to support strong neighborhoods
- Funding for enhanced street lighting to improve the perception of neighborhood safety

Education

- City's contribution increased \$359,193 due to growth in property values
- State contribution increased \$4.8 million after years of decline
- Schools will offer 3% pay increase for teachers and support staff
- One-to-one technology project continues
- \$5.3 million provided for school maintenance and renovation in the capital budget

Good Government

- Establishes a computer replacement program to cover employees and public computers at libraries and recreation centers
- Adds Human Resources Employee Relations Manager to enhance training
- 311 mobile application and Granicus legislative system maintenance
- Continued commitment to maintaining city infrastructure in the capital budget
- Employee compensation increases:
 - 2% general wage increase for city staff
 - \$1 million to address wage compression
 - \$865,000 for employee citizen satisfaction bonus
 - Absorb the employee share of the health insurance increase

Living with Water

- Dutch Dialogues initiative funded in the capital budget
- Stormwater and dredging projects also funded in the capital budget

Economic Growth

- Capital funding for key property acquisitions; Coliseum Drive extension; Hampton Roads Center improvements

Place Making

- Place Making position
- Capital budget includes streetscape projects, multi-use trail project.

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