



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

OFFICE OF THE CHAIR

November 20, 2014
MCPB #2

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 18, 2014
TO: Montgomery County Planning Board
VIA: Casey Anderson, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board 
FROM: Joyce P. Garcia, Special Assistant to the Montgomery County Planning Board 
SUBJECT: Approval of the Commissioners' Office FY16 Proposed Operating Budget

Action Requested: Approval of the FY16 Commissioners' Office Proposed Operating Budget funding and staffing levels.

Background

On, October 23, 2014, the Planning Board held a worksession on the Commissioners' Office Proposed FY16 Operating Budget, during which they provided guidance and direction.

FY16 Proposed Budget Overview

The Commissioners' Office FY16 Proposed Operating Budget reflects the base budget with mandatory commitments plus essential needs. This total reflects minor changes from the memo presented on October 23, that are due to new numbers received from CAS regarding benefits, retirement, chargebacks, and other operating budget changes. The FY16 proposed budget is an increase of \$17,997, or 1.45%, over the FY15 adopted budget for a total request of \$1,257,274.

As a reminder, the FY16 personnel costs do not include any assumption for a salary adjustment. Budget amounts for FY16 salary adjustments and OPEB costs are included in a Non-Departmental Account. The Department has projected costs associated with personnel that will increase the budget.

Staffing Request for FY16

FY15 staffing in the Commissioners' Office includes five Planning Board positions (1 full-time Chair and four part-time Commissioners), six full-time career staff positions, and one part-time term/contract position for a total of 12 positions. For FY16, the Commissioners' Office is requesting that the current part-time term/contract position be converted to a part-time career position. The minimal cost of \$2,509 for increased access to benefits would be associated with that conversion. The total staffing request for the Office would remain the same as for FY15, for a total of 12 positions and 9.50 workyears.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE POSITIONS/WORKYEARS
POSITION DETAIL BY DIVISION BY FUND

	FY 14 Budget		FY 14 Actual		FY 15 Adopted		FY 16 Proposed	
	POS	WYS	POS	WYS	POS	WYS	POS	WYS
ADMINISTRATION FUND								
<u>COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE</u>								
Full-Time Career	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
Part-Time Career	4.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.50
Career Total	11.00	9.00	11.00	9.00	11.00	9.00	12.00	9.50
Term Contract	-	-	-	-	1.00	0.50	-	-
Seasonal/Intermittent	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal Commissioner's Office	11.00	9.00	11.00	9.00	12.00	9.50	12.00	9.50

Work Program Overview

Staffing in the Commissioners' Office consists of two major units: the Chair's Office staff positions (four full-time and one part-time) and the Technical Writers Unit (two full-time positions). Major staff responsibilities include: coordinate and provide administrative, technical, and public support at Planning Board hearings; develop and manage the Board's meeting agenda; receive, acknowledge, and disseminate correspondence to the Board, Planning Department, and Parks Department; webpost the Board's meeting agenda, meeting minutes, and Resolutions; serve as official recordkeeper for Board meetings; and manage the electronic database of homeowners, civic, and community association contacts. A more complete list of work program responsibilities is included in the attached October 23 Memorandum.

Base Budget/Essential Needs

There is a minor change request for the Commissioners' Office to convert a current, part-time term/contract position to a part-time career position at a cost of \$2,509. Below is a Summary Budget Chart, modified from the one presented in the October 23 Memorandum to the Planning Board:

Summary Budget Chart

	FY15 Adopted	\$1,239,277
FY16 BASE BUDGET		
Major Known Commitment Changes		
Salaries and Health Benefits		\$22,488
Retirement		(\$7,000)
Cost of Converting Term/Contract Position to Career		\$2,509
Subtotal changes to the FY16 Proposed Budget		\$17,997
Subtotal Base Budget FY16		\$1,257,274
Estimated Percent Change in FY16 Base budget vs. FY15 Adopted budget		1.45%
FY16 Proposed Base Plus Proposed changes		\$ 1,257,274

Conclusion

The Commissioners' Office continues to provide a high level of support to the Planning Board, Departments, and the community. Staff is mindful of the cost pressures of benefits, retirement, and mandated obligations, as well as the need to continue to provide the highest level of service. The FY16 Proposed Operating Budget request demonstrates our commitment to continue to provide the best services possible to County residents with a 1.45% increase request over the FY15 budget.

Staff is requesting approval from the Planning Board to proceed to finalize the FY16 Commissioners' Operating Budget at the Base Budget plus Essential Needs level.

Attachment: Memo presented to the Board at the October 23 Planning Board Meeting



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB Date: 10/23/2014
Agenda Item #

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Casey Anderson, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board

FROM: Joyce P. Garcia, Special Assistant to the Planning Board

SUBJECT: Commissioners' Office FY16 Operating Budget Planning Discussion

DATE: October 16, 2014

Staff Recommendation

Staff is requesting the Board's approval to prepare the FY16 Commissioners' Office Operating Budget at the level of Base Budget, plus known operating obligations and a proposed staffing category change that includes a modest funding request for the conversion of the position.

FY16 Operating Budget Preparation

At its September 18 meeting, the Planning Board received a presentation from the Department of Human Resources and Management (DHRM) on the FY16 budget process including key trends and the budget outlook, strategy, and timeline.

DHRM reported that the assessable base for Montgomery County grew a modest 2% in FY15 after falling for several years, and that, in February, 2014; the Montgomery County Office of Management and Budget (OMB) estimated that the assessable base will grow by 4.25% in FY16. This growth would provide an approximate increase of \$1,049,700 in property tax revenue for the Administration Fund without an increase in the tax rate. The County Council reduced the tax rate last year in favor of using more of the fund balance to balance the expenditure budget. The tax Rate was reduced from 1.8 cents to 1.7 cents, and \$1.1M of fund balance was transferred to the Park Fund with most of the remainder utilized to balance expenditures for the Administration Fund in FY15.

With acknowledgement of the mandated requirements and essential needs required to maintain the Commissioners' Office work program, the Planning Board provided general guidance to develop the FY16 Operating Budget.

The chart below gives a historical perspective on the Commissioners' Office appropriation and career positions for the adopted budgets for FY14 and FY15 and includes the proposed budget for FY16. In FY15, the Commissioners' Office request was approved to restore a part-time position that was eliminated in FY11, and that position is now filled. A request is made for FY16 to convert this current part-time term contract position to part-time career. A minimal funding increase for this position in FY16, associated with the conversion for additional access to benefits, is included in the chart below.

History of the Commissioners' Office Budget Changes FY14-FY16

	Adopted FY14	Adopted FY15	Proposed FY16	Change FY16 over FY15
Budget	\$1,142,601	\$1,239,277	\$1,261,650	1.83%
\$ Change				
% Change				
Career Positions	11	11	12	1
# Change				
% Change				
Funded Workyear	9	9.5	9.5	0
# Change				
% Change				

Known Operating Commitments

Known preliminary increases in the Commissioners' Office for salaries, benefits, retirement, and other post-employment benefits (OPEB), were reviewed by DHRM at the Board's September 18 meeting. Known operating commitments, mandated, contractual, and inflationary increases for the Commissioners' Office is provided below.

The information in this memo does not include adjustments in expenses such as risk management, long term disability payments, and unemployment. The Department of Finance expects to provide this information by the end of the October or early November in the Schedule of Fees and Charges. As a result, the Commissioners' Office has not yet included any increases for these expenses in the proposed FY16 budget.

	FY15 Adopted	\$1,239,277
FY16 BASE BUDGET		
	Major Known Commitment Changes	
	Salaries and Health Benefits	\$26,864
	Retirement	(\$7,000)
	Cost of Converting Term/Contract Position to Career	\$2,509
	Subtotal changes to the FY16 Proposed Budget	\$22,373
	Subtotal Base Budget FY16	\$1,261,650
	Estimated Percent Change in FY16 Base budget vs. FY15 Adopted budget	1.83%
	FY16 Proposed Base Plus Proposed changes	\$ 1,261,650

Base Budget: Essential Needs Work Program Overview

The Commissioners' Office consists of the five-member Planning Board and seven staff positions. For FY16, the Commissioners' Office is requesting that one existing part-time position, .5 workyear, be converted from a term contract to a part-time career position. No additional funding is requested for this position in FY16 beyond the required known mandated obligations associated with the conversion of this position.

The two major staff units in the Commissioners' Office are the Chairman's Office Unit and the Technical Writers Unit.

Major staff responsibilities for each unit are as follows:

Chair's Office Unit (Four full-time staff positions and one part-time position)

- coordinate and provide administrative, technical, and public support at Planning Board hearings
- develop and manage the Planning Board meeting agenda, including collection of documents and distribution of packets
- receive, acknowledge, and distribute correspondence directed to the Chair and Planning Board members for hearings
- webpost the Board's meeting agenda, meeting minutes, and Resolutions
- manage the electronic Correspondence-Tracking (C-Track) system and ensure timely response to written and verbal inquiries concerning Planning Board, Parks, and Planning issues
- serve as contact for county, state, regional and federal officials and agencies
- act as intermediary with the resolution of various issues
- manage the electronic database of homeowners, civic, and community association contacts and distribute to the public, officials, and internal staff, as requested
- develop and manage the budget for the Commissioners' Office
- represent the Commission on internal and external committees related to outreach, diversity, and special events
- manage the human resource functions for the Commissioners' Office

Technical Writers/Editors Unit – (Two full-time staff positions)

- serve as official recordkeeper of Planning Board meetings, producing regular and closed session meeting minutes
- coordinate transcription and certification of specific Planning Board meetings as requested by the Office of the General Counsel
- certification of Planning Board Resolutions
- provide CD and audio tapes of Planning Board meetings to staff and the public
- edit certain Commission documents, including master and sector plans and other documents, as requested
- provide Spanish and French translation of public documents, as requested by communications staff
- participate on internal committees specifically related to archival of documents

Summary

Staff is cognizant of the costs associated with mandated obligations including retirement and benefit costs. The modest FY16 budget request demonstrates the Commissioners' Office continued efforts to provide the best services and support with a 1.83% increase over the FY15 budget.

Additionally, the Commissioners' Office would benefit from requests included in the Planning Department's proposed FY16 Operating Budget, particularly those related to IT services including the request for website upgrade/redesign and the initiation of desktop virtualization.

Staff is requesting the Planning Board's approval to prepare the FY16 Commissioners' Office Operating Budget at the Base Budget plus New Initiatives level. The next session before the Planning Board is scheduled for October 30 for a second work session, if needed, and on November 20 to seek approval of specific funding levels for the FY16 Proposed Operating Budget for the Commissioners' Office.