



# Borough of Chambersburg

*A full service municipality in Franklin County celebrating over 65 years of consumer owned natural gas service over 120 years of community electric and a regional wastewater, water, storm sewer and municipal solid waste utility*

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Chambersburg Borough Manager Releases Proposed 2018 Budget

Chambersburg, Pennsylvania – On Monday, November 6, Borough Manager Jeffrey Stonehill released his proposed 2018 Budget for the Borough of Chambersburg. Council voted unanimously to advertise the budget and will receive public comment at their next Council meeting on Monday November 13 at 7 pm in City Hall.

According to the budget document, Chambersburg's goals for 2018 will be:

- Planning, preservation and citizen engagement
- A safe, clean, green and healthy community
- Finishing municipal construction projects; which are reshaping our community
- Controlling the growth in taxes and utility rates

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Chambersburg's fiscal size is the 12th largest in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, they have the 3rd highest revenue over expenditures, and they are the largest Borough in terms of budget; all because of their utilities.

Chambersburg operates a water, sanitary sewer, natural gas, electric, storm sewer, sanitation, and parking & traffic utilities. In 2018, the Borough plans on opening a new \$7.1 million Aquatic Center in Chambersburg Memorial Park.

Chambersburg is the only municipality in Pennsylvania to operate all their own utilities. They are the largest municipal electric utility in Pennsylvania, twice as big as the second largest. Chambersburg is one of only two towns with a natural gas utility; and the other is Philadelphia, which doesn't have an electric utility

The Borough Manager's proposed budget includes no rate changes for sanitary sewer, natural gas, storm sewer or sanitation. For the first time since 2001, a small 1 cent rate increase is requested for the water utility. Chambersburg has the lowest composite utility rates in Pennsylvania.

In 2018, the Borough of Chambersburg will have an all funds budget of \$125,274,598. In 2017, the all funds budget was \$129,150,590. In 2018, the Borough's General Fund budget will be \$14,950,500. In 2017, the Borough's General Fund budget was \$13,960,225.

Borough Manager Jeffrey Stonehill said "the 2018 Budget proposal contains no surprises. The proposed budget includes the new Recreation Bond Tax approved by Council in November 2016 to begin in 2018. The proposed budget includes the increase in the Fire Tax set when the fire union labor pact was approved in May 2017. The proposed budget includes the increase in the Police Tax clearly predicted in the 2017 Budget."

Chambersburg maintains a 35 officer Police Department and a unique 26 firefighter career Fire Department. According to Council President Allen Coffman, "this is the reason for most Borough real estate taxes."

Chambersburg did not raise real estate taxes between 2007 and 2013; then there was an increase in 2014 and a second increase in 2016. Therefore, there have been only 2 previous real estate tax increases in the last 11 years. Chambersburg did not raise the real estate tax in 2017. According to Jeffrey Stonehill, "our citizens pay no dedicated Recreation Tax, no dedicated Highway Tax, and no taxes at all to support any of the Borough's operations, utilities, or utility support departments other than police and fire/ambulance." He went on to explain that the new Recreation Bond Tax was not a "recreation-type tax" as it is earmarked only to pay off the 2016 Recreation Bond, and not the operations of the Recreation Department.

Jason Cohen, Borough Finance Director added "nobody likes to raise taxes. But, Council approved the new Recreation Bond Tax back in 2016 when they decided to sell the Recreation Bond. We knew this was coming in 2018."

In summary, the average single family house will see taxes rise from \$430.18 per year to \$520.06 per year or an increase of approximately 21%. Only non-exempt Borough property owners pay Borough taxes.

This is only a proposal at this point in the process. The Borough Manager thanked his entire staff for working so hard to get this large and complex budget proposal to Council.

A copy of the complete budget document and the executive summary is available on the Borough website A paper copy will be available for review at the Franklin County Law Library.

Go to <http://www.chambersburgpa.gov> and click on Transparency for more budget documents.

For comments and opinions on the proposed budget contact Allen Coffman, Council President at [acoffman@chambersburgpa.gov](mailto:acoffman@chambersburgpa.gov)

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u> <u>Proposed</u>
Police Tax Mil Rate	21	23	23	24
Fire Tax Mil Rate	2.5	2.5	2.5	3
Ambulance Tax Mil Rate	-	-	-	0.5
Recreation Bond Tax Mil Rate	-	-	-	3
Total Real Estate Tax Mil	23.5	25.5	25.5	30.5

Chambersburg is a unique community. Chambersburg supplies more services than any other municipality in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In addition to typical town functions, Chambersburg is Pennsylvania's only municipality supplying electric and gas. Chambersburg is 1 of 35 Boroughs to operate a municipal non-profit electric utility. Chambersburg is the largest municipal electric utility in the State, twice as large as the second largest, Ephrata, Lancaster County; and, the only one to operate generation stations. Chambersburg is 1 of 2 municipalities in PA to operate a natural gas utility. The other is Philadelphia, which does not operate an electric utility. Nationally, Chambersburg is 1 of 2,000 communities to have its own electric system and 1 of 800 communities to have a natural gas system but 1 of only about 50 to operate both. Chambersburg manages a regional water system, a regional sanitary sewer system (not through an independent Authority), and a new storm sewer utility; one of the first storm sewer utilities to form under the new Federal mandate to regulate stormwater.

Chambersburg currently has 20,508 residents (2013). [www.chambersburgpa.gov](http://www.chambersburgpa.gov)