

**Record of Proceedings:  
West Chester Township Board of Trustees  
Work Session - 2020 Operational Budget**

**January 21, 2020**

Convene: Chairperson Becker convened the meeting at 5:08 p.m.

Roll Call: Mrs. Becker, Mr. Wong, and Mr. Welch responded.

Pledge of Allegiance: repeated by those present.

**(FISCAL OFFICER'S NOTE: Much of the following minutes have been excerpted from a prepared outline compiled for the 2020 Operational Budget Work Session. A PowerPoint slide program supplemented the narrative and is available upon request.)**

Mrs. Becker turned the work session over to Mr. Burks.

**Township Administrator Larry Burks:**

Mr. Burks said the 2020 Operational Budget was being presented this evening for consideration by the Board of Trustees, noting the following:

Proposed expenditures for 2020 for the 10 operational budget funds total \$50.7 million, an increase from 2019 budgeted expenses of 3.2%.

Actual expenditures in 2019 were 17.1% less than originally budgeted. This is due to unrealized expenses such as the public safety software (budgeted again in 2020) and West Chester's overall budget practices.

Staff has worked diligently over the past several months to assemble an operational budget proposal focused on keeping the West Chester economy strong by investing in infrastructure; promoting development and retaining a marketable workforce; and preserving property values by encouraging property maintenance, livability and public safety.

At the end of 2019, West Chester collaborated with the National Research Center, Inc. and the Duke Energy Foundation to conduct its first statistically valid citizen survey. The higher-level view of survey respondents shows 95% of respondents find the overall quality of life in West Chester to be either good or excellent. Ninety-six percent of respondents rate West Chester as a good or excellent place to live; 83% call the overall quality of township services good or excellent; and 71% rate the sense of community as good or excellent.

These results and others we gather in the coming year will help guide how we spend taxpayer dollars and how we continue to be a leading edge community.

Mr. Burks then introduced Finance Director Ken Keim to deliver the 2020 Operational Budget in more detail.

**Finance Director Ken Keim:**

Mr. Keim said this was a presentation of the 2020 Operational Budget. Input and further direction from the Board is encouraged; and adjustments can still be made to ensure the budget reflects the Board's direction, but formal approval of this budget is not necessary.

Permanent appropriations **are** the Township's **official budget** requiring Trustee approval.

Permanent appropriations, however, reflect each of the Township's funds and its capacity to spend; not the level of detail presented tonight.

2020 Temporary Appropriations were approved in December by the Board of Trustees; 2020 Permanent Appropriations will be brought to the Board for consideration in the first quarter; and occasionally throughout the year the Permanent Appropriations may be amended by the Board. Permanent Appropriations are a product of the Township and the County Tax Commission and offer little detail regarding budget priorities.

The Operational Budget does not represent individual expenditures or encumbrances. It is a detailed illustration of expected expenditures by account code assigned to specific budget priorities, which the Board of Trustees set.

Controls are in place to prevent funds from exceeding budgeted expenses; and expenditures \$7,500 and more come before the Board for approval in a public meeting.

The 2020 Operational Budget presented this evening does **not** stray from the successful budgeting strategy employed by West Chester for many years.

West Chester revenues come from multiple sources including hotel tax, fuel tax, interest earned, the JEDD, etc.

The ability to use revenue-producing economic development tools such as JEDD, Sustainable Infrastructure Fund and TIF effectively and responsibly have been an important part of West Chester's economic success. Being innovative in next steps for all revenue streams will be critical to our sustainability.

The Township's primary source of revenue is property taxes, giving compelling argument to making preservation of property values in the community a priority.

The Butler County Auditor's value abstract demonstrates a 2.8% increase in West Chester property values. This **does not** necessarily calculate to a 2.8% increase in property tax collections because effective rates adjust downward as appropriate.

Property taxes collected in 2020 are projected to be nearly \$28 million (all funds).

2020 represents the seventh consecutive year with an increase in property values. West Chester has now exceeded its 2009 peak assessed valuation with \$2.1 billion in assessed value.

### **2020 Expenses:**

The proposed operational budget accounts for 10 funds – General Fund, four separate Roads Funds, Cemetery Fund, West Chester Community Television Fund, Police Fund, and Fire and EMS Funds. TIF Funds are not included in the operational budget, but we will talk about them later in the presentation. As indicated, the 2020 proposed expenditures for the 10 operational budget funds total \$50.7 million.

He began the Work Session with the General Fund which includes activities from Administration, Human Resources, Community Development, Community Services, Finance, Information Technology, Parks and Senior Van.

The General Fund carryover has remained resilient despite annual transfers to the Roads Fund to keep up with infrastructure demands. These transfers began in 2009.

The carryover remains well above the \$6 million desired minimum, hovering between \$10 and \$10.5 million since 2014. We recommend continued transfers to the Roads Fund, as long as the General Fund carryover remains resilient.

We continue to balance pessimism with confidence in our revenue categories for the General Fund.

2020 Revenue projections for the General Fund include the anticipated sale of the property on Cox Road (\$1.8 million). While our regular revenue sources have shown a modest trend upward, the sale of property is a one-time event. We shouldn't anticipate this increase in revenue as a trend...

2016 being an anomaly; refunding of Various Purpose Bonds made revenues for that year appear significantly greater than other years. Without the refunding of these bonds and the Capstone Project, revenues to the General Fund would have been just more than \$5.9 million. Again, this is an anomaly and is also reflected in 2016 expenses.

Although the refunding in 2016 was not originally planned, we were able to take advantage of favorable interest rates to achieve a Net Present Value savings of nearly \$2.2M.

Revenues of \$7.6 million are projected; actual revenues in the General Fund surpass budgeted revenues in every year shown.

Actual expenditures are typically less than budget due to unrealized projects. Some of these project costs appear in budgeted expenditures multiple years, until they are actually realized. 2020 budgeted expenses in the General Fund are more than \$7.9 million. This is 2.5% less than budgeted in 2019.

Budgeted expenses include the transfer made to the Roads Funds.

Over the past few years, actual expenses have been tied closely to actual revenue, resulting in the resiliency we noted previously in carryover. The build-up of carryover years ago has proven valuable to our sustainability.

He displayed a graph, and said throughout the presentation, that reflect the carryover plus projected 2020 revenue. Expenditures are well within available resources.

### **Township Administrator Larry Burks:**

Across all funds, personnel consistently represents our greatest cost and our personnel can certainly be represented as our organization's greatest asset.

West Chester strives to operate as efficiently and as leanly as possible without compromising quality and delivery of service, but West Chester's future will require serious discussion and creativity with regard to the changing workforce dynamic and attraction of new quality employees. Fewer professionals are choosing to enter the public sector and West Chester's workforce continues to mature with longtime employees nearing retirement. This loss of institutional knowledge intensifies the need to make critical decisions about the value placed on attracting and retaining the best and most innovative employees to serve the community in all areas of our organization.

In 2020, some funds are set aside to consider opportunities and ways to invest in making West Chester an exceptional workplace of the future.

### **Some notable 2020 expenditures proposed for the General Fund include:**

- As mentioned before, the \$1.5 million transfer to Roads for infrastructure improvements;
- \$250,000 for a U.S. Route 42 corridor redevelopment improvement;
- A \$170,000 estimated payment to Fairfield as part of the JEDD agreement. Fairfield has served as the taxing agent for the JEDD and this payment was anticipated marking the 10th year of the agreement; and

- About \$150,000 for assorted improvements at Keehner Park, Beckett Park and VOA Museum (including new driveway pavement at VOA, a new roof and gutters on the amphitheater, concrete work, shelter roof replacements, baseball backstop and new sign designs for Keehner and Beckett parks)

Next, the Roads and Maintenance Funds were discussed.

**Finance Director Ken Keim:**

The Roads Funds reached a \$3.1 million carryover in 2014. 2019 ended with a carryover of \$2.5 million.

Budgeted revenues have been consistent in recent years and slightly less than actual received revenues.

He noted the \$1.5 million transfer from the General Fund and a one-time \$1 million from SIF, along with the increased collection from the state's fuel tax.

The Sustainable Infrastructure Fund was not represented in his graphic, but for a quick update. In 2019 the SIF received \$1.8 million in interest receipts and finished the year with a balance of \$10 million. For the first time since SIF was established, the 2020 budget proposal includes a one-time \$1 million transfer from the SIF to the Road and Bridge fund to pay for the Tylersville Road overpass project.

Revenues are projected to be about \$5.4 million.

The Roads proposes \$6.6 million in expenses, 29% more than budgeted in 2019.

Mr. Franck then presented more detail about the Roads proposed budgeted program for 2020.

**Services Director Tim Franck:**

Maintaining West Chester's infrastructure is critical to sustaining property values and our reputation as a premier community for corporate and residential taxpayers. Our residents in the 2019 National Citizen Survey, indicated infrastructure maintenance is important.

This Board of Trustees and those before have demonstrated a commitment to infrastructure by supplementing the Roads Funds each year with a \$1.5 million transfer from the General Fund and by creating a Sustainable Infrastructure Fund (SIF) with a current balance of about \$10 million.

Cautious and responsible attention to managing the Township's TIF areas also demonstrates a commitment to maintaining the community's infrastructure by providing innovative funding for infrastructure improvements.

West Chester's expanded partnership with the Butler County Engineer's Office also has a positive effect on how much infrastructure can be repaired or replaced each year.

While county roads within TIF areas are improved using TIF resources, the BCEO funds pavement of some Township roads and contributes equipment, personnel, and other resources to improve Township infrastructure.

The partnership with the BCEO saved West Chester taxpayers an estimated \$3.6 million over the past eight years; and an additional \$400,000 in savings expected in 2020.

This partnership affects work on culverts and ditching, striping of Township roads, as well as approximately \$300,000 in paving on Township roads.

Most notable in the 2020 budget proposal for Roads is the nearly \$3.5 million investment in the annual infrastructure improvement program. This accounts for road, curb, and storm pipe replacement in the Roads Funds and qualifying improvements in the TIF areas.

We rely on cost estimates from the Engineer's Office when predicting paving and slurry work; exact costs will not be known until the bid process is complete.

**The 2020 roadway Infrastructure program includes:**

- \$600,000 for approximately 18,000 lineal feet of concrete curb replacement.
- Approximately 8 miles of road will be repaved at a budgeted cost of \$2.2 million = \$1,000,000 in Roads Funds and \$1.2 million in TIF.
- About 2.3 miles of road will be slurried at an estimated cost of \$150,000
- And 35 sections of storm pipe will be repaired throughout the Township at a budgeted expense of \$500,000

In 2019, we originally planned to repair 15 sections of storm pipe. Throughout the year, 4 additional storm pipe repairs, and numerous catch basin repairs were accomplished.

As discussed the last several years, the number of storm pipes requiring repairs continues to increase each year and greater funding commitment for these repairs will be necessary.

The current \$500,000 - \$750,000 annually budgeted will not meet the demands.

Added investment in storm pipe repair affects road paving as well. It only makes sense to fix storm pipes before investment in new pavement on an affected road.

Balancing the demands of storm pipe with paving will be top of mind in the years ahead as we consider options.

While the Township considers its options for public infrastructure, residents need to know that their properties may have storm pipe requiring replacement.

Pipes on private property are the responsibility of the property owner and residents should plan for these inevitable repair costs.

Other notable budgeted expenses in Community Services include:

- \$950,000 for the Tylersville overpass decorative safety fence
- \$200,000 for purchase of road salt for the 2020-2021 snow season, this is in addition to the money already budgeted and encumbered in 2019 for the current snow season. (\$100,000)

We are also scheduled to replace 4 vehicles in 2020:

- \$30,000 for the purchase of a new pickup truck
- \$300,000 for the purchase of two new salt trucks
- And \$275,000 for the purchase of a new street sweeper, the current street sweeper is a 2009.

Mr. Franck said we try to get 15-20 years out of smaller vehicles if possible. The new pickup truck will replace a 2002 Dodge Ram.

15-20 years is expected from a front line salt truck, and then they are moved to a backup role for another 5 years if possible.

Two 1999 Chevy salt trucks in our front line fleet are planned for replacement in 2020, and then they will be moved to a backup role with a plan to surplus a 1995 & 1996 GMC salt truck from our backup fleet.

To best fund the replacement of 3 large pieces of equipment in a single budget year, the cost of the new street sweeper will be spread over the next 4 years. State bid pricing applies for the purchase of the street sweeper, as well as the two salt trucks.

This allows the township to update several pieces of needed equipment at once while spreading the costs over several budget years.

We have also budgeted for the purchase of a loader in 2020. This has been tentatively budgeted due to the increasing cost of the loader winter rental.

We will continue to review our options this winter and make a determination in the spring whether to continue to rent or plan for this loader purchase prior to next snow season.

These projects and expenditures are in addition to others managed or coordinated by Community Services.....

The Beckett Ridge/Les West Chester roundabout and landscape

The UCB Interchange Landscape

The Beckett Road Drainage Improvement

Construction of the new Fire House 73

Additional planned park improvements for Keehner Park and Beckett Park

And proposed facility improvements at the Administration Building.

It takes more than asphalt and slurry, curbs and culverts to keep the Township looking great. It also takes a hardworking team. Residents can get a closer look at some of the work accomplished by the Community Services team by visiting the Open Data portal on the Township's website.

Mr. Keim then addressed the Police Fund.

**Finance Director Ken Keim:**

The Police Department's primary funding source is a levy approved by voters in 2010. The Fund ended 2019 with a carryover of \$10.7 million.

The carryover is not as robust as hoped, due to the timing of the 2010 levy passage. What many people may not understand is that while property values have finally recovered from the Great Recession, this 2010 levy will never reach the collections anticipated at the time of its passage.

The carryover will continue to deplete over time to meet the annual expenses of the department.

In 2020, we are projecting revenues of nearly \$14.2 million in the Police Fund. This includes the \$750,000 payment by local schools for resource officers.

He then presented a slide with the history of actual revenues and actual expenditures with budgeted expenses in the Police Fund:

The Police Fund proposed budgeted expenses for 2020 are almost \$18.3 million.

(The GAP between budget and actual expense is a bit larger in Police and Fire and that is for a couple reasons. 1) because personnel costs are a larger proportion and there are more possible retirements 2) vacancies 3) Rolling CIPs such as the software means unused budget.)

Mr. Keim then turned the presentation over to Police Chief Herzog.

**Police Chief Joel Herzog:**

West Chester Police Officers take great pride in the positive relationship that exists between police and residents in our community. We serve with honor and are committed to maintaining trust and being responsive to the demands of our community.

We feel appreciated in our community and are grateful for that. As an agency, this positive relationship with the community inspires us to be innovative and compassionate in the way we serve and protect. We aren't perfect, but I share a professional belief with our officers every day – "If you train until you get it right, you're only halfway there. You train until you can't get it wrong."

The future presents some challenges for the department – attracting the best officer candidates to serve, guarding critical institutional knowledge as our officers mature; and providing the best service to our community within budget constraints.

The 2020 police budget maintains a proven approach of intelligence-led policing, using technology and data as a crime prevention tool, a way to deploy resources, and as a method of maintaining public trust.

The presence of officers, however, cannot be replaced by data or technology. Well-trained personnel are the department's greatest asset and also make up the largest expenditure category. About 78% of the police budget.

He said that he and the Administrator would consider several personnel for retire/rehire in 2020. The retire/rehire practice allows the Township to benefit from institutional knowledge of long-time employees, while realizing cost savings of retaining experienced officers at a reduced cost. In 2019, the police department saved over \$150,000 by accepting retire/rehire of longtime officers.

As the Finance Director Keim indicated, Police Department proposed expenditures of \$18.3 million, again this includes the purchase of public safety software. The process to review and consider all the issues of this critical software has been extensive and expertly managed by our Communication & IT director Dennis Dick. We look forward to finding the right tool and putting it to work.

With that being said, I would like to mention some of the larger budgeted items.

- \$1.5 million is budgeted to upgrade the public safety software system (the total cost will be shared by Police and Fire and EMS);
- \$450,000 for vehicle replacements; and
- \$27,600 for police department common areas maintenance and replacement on the 15 year old building

The Police Department also likes to share some details about our service to the community. Some of this data is now easily viewable on the Township's OpenData platform found at WestChesterOH.org.

In 2019 PD responded to 49,701 total Calls for Service.

This is the fourth consecutive year of decreases in reported Thefts from Auto. In 2016, 471 thefts from autos were reported and each year since then we have experienced a decrease in this type of crime. In 2019, 266 reports of items stolen from vehicles were taken from victims. Many of those theft occur during the overnight hours in driveways and garages throughout the community. The police department continues to focus on educating the public about locking their vehicles and not leaving valuables inside the vehicle.

- Social media tools such as Facebook and Nextdoor.com have played a role in this decrease, as neighbors who are victimized quickly share and post warnings to their neighbors, increasing awareness.
- There is also the West Chester Police Security Camera Registration Program that can be utilized to identify suspects.

Part I crimes, the most violent category of crimes, were down 3.7% in 2019. (Murder, Rape, Robbery, Burglary, Larceny)

Part II crimes decreased 4.3% in 2019. (Assault, Drug Crimes, and lower offenses)

In 2019, West Chester Police made 372 drug arrests – more than 1 every day of the year. Drugs continue to motivate crime and bring crime to the community. We are, however, not naïve enough to think we can arrest our way out of the drug crisis. Our officers work with mental health agencies, with our fire department and other agency partners to be agents of change in this area. The partnership with the Lakota School and Butler Tech also help combat the drug issues through awareness education and relationship building. We currently have 8 SROs in Lakota schools and 1 at the Butler Tech Bio Science campus. The school districts pay the entire salary of the officers during the school year, so that is a savings to the Twp.

We also made more than 1,000 arrests related to Part 2 crimes and issued more than 1,571 citations. We issued over 7,000 warning citations. Our goal is to educate and change poor driving behaviors in order to make our roads safer as opposed to penalizing drivers.

Auto accidents numbered 1,495 in 2019 (*1,607 in 2018*) – 323 of these accidents resulted in injury and there were 2 fatal accidents investigated by West Chester Police in 2019.

There were 10 Crisis Response Team (SWAT) missions in 2019 which does not include mini-tactical operations handles by Crisis Response Team officers working: 4 Barricaded Armed Subjects and 6 High Risk Search Warrants. Our Crisis Response Team assisted Hamilton PD, Warren County Sheriff's in the City of Mason, and Monroe PD in 2019. We are constantly exploring ideas for cost saving measures through collaboration with other agencies.

Prevention education and outreach continues to be a key role of law enforcement and our department has remained committed to meeting and building relationship with those who live and work here. In 2019, we reached more than 29,000 people through education programs such as ALICE, Neighborhood Watch, Coffee with a Cop, self-defense classes, etc. The multi-family housing annual meeting is another way we connect with the complexes to hear and address issues. Many times our multi-family housing facilities are victims of concentrated crimes.

These relationships held identify potential problems before a crime occurs.



The police department participated in two Bridge of Life classes in 2019. This is the program officers are paired with a person of African Ancestry for several months. The goal is to preserve life and better understand each other's perspective on situations. Great relationships are formed in this program.

Our officers embrace these opportunities to get to know those we serve, learning from them while we share information that may make their lives safer.

I would like to remind the public that all our statistical information is available on Open Gov at [www.westchestertownshipbutleroh.opengov.com](http://www.westchestertownshipbutleroh.opengov.com).

**Finance Director Ken Keim:**

Mr. Keim then pivoted to Fire and EMS Funds.

The current fire levy was approved by voters in 2006 and since 2014 the carryover generated in the earliest years of the levy has gradually depleted. The levy has been able to sustain fire operations much longer than expected. In this Fund, we see the characteristics typical of an outside millage levy. Carryover grows in the early years and then is depleted as time passes - costs of operations increase and revenue collected fails to keep up with inflation. The robust carryover experienced by the Fire Department dropped to \$12.2 million at the end of 2019. Revenues are projected to be about \$12.5 million in 2020.

The Fire and EMS Funds' proposed budgeted expenses for 2020 are nearly \$16.8 million, slightly less than 2019 budget

Proposed expenses, however, continue to remain within available resources of nearly \$25 million, although the carryover continues to shrink.

Ken then introduced Fire Chief Prinz to present the 2020 budget for Fire & EMS

**Fire Chief Rick Prinz:**

The West Chester Fire Department is committed to providing an exceptional all hazards emergency response service to the community through fire suppression, fire prevention and excellent emergency medical services. The opportunity to provide this level of service is made possible with the support of our community's taxpayers, the Board of Trustees, the Fiscal Officer and our Administrator. While we appreciate the support from our citizens and the Board I would be remiss if I did not mention that providing an exceptional all hazards emergency response is largely due to the professional men and women of the West Chester Fire Department and I thank them for their dedicated service to our community.

Our obligation and promise as a department is to offer this exceptional service through thoughtful, deliberate and responsible allocation of resources – whether that is financial, human resources, equipment, facilities or training.

By continuing to operate efficiently under a levy last approved by voters in 2006, the Fire Department has limited the burden on taxpayers, but budgetary challenges are on the horizon.

West Chester continues to monitor the call volume, residential and commercial growth of the northwest service area and still determines the demand for a sixth fire station does not yet exist. (2019) Data: 577 calls in NW district= 1.5 calls per day.) West Chester's automatic mutual aid

agreements with neighboring communities and the department's efforts to preempt intersections along state route 747 results in quick response to fire incidents and West Chester's response times to emergency medical calls in the quadrant continue to be appropriate.

While call volume and development may not yet justify the addition of a new station in the northwest quadrant of the township, the Township will rebuild Station 73 on Duff Drive in 2020. TIF funds will rebuild the station, so levy funds are not affected.

Originally built in 1970 then remodeled in 1992, the construction of the new building on the same site will go out to bid in the next few weeks. Once a contract for construction is awarded, demolition of the existing station will take place and crews will move into temporary quarters in the same neighborhood. The new fire station, inside and out, will reflect a more modern West Chester and allow firefighters to more efficiently and safely serve the community.

More than 76% of the Fire and EMS Funds expenses go to personnel costs; this includes the Fire Fund's share of Mechanics and emergency communications dispatch costs. This is to be expected in disciplines that operate in an emergency, public safety capacity, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Early in the New Year, the Fire Department looks forward to filling some critical staffing vacancies including an assistant fire chief and administrative assistant. The Fire Department anticipates as many as 10 firefighter and/or lieutenant retirements over the next 5 to 8 years. The Fire Department will continue to work with Administration on innovative solutions for attracting and retaining the best workforce.

Like the Police, the Fire Department has budgeted a share of the cost for new public safety software.

Some other notable items include:

- \$122,000 for additional cardiac monitors to outfit our fire apparatus;
- \$105,000 to replace two staff vehicles; and
- \$26,000 to replace ventilation fans carried on each fire apparatus; and
- \$25,000 for additional pre-emption devices. These Preemption devices are a collaborative cost sharing effort between West Chester Fire, Liberty and Mason Fire to preempt boarding intersections.

Reviewing data from previous years allows the Fire Department to observe trends and measure community impact. We strive to use the data as an indicator of where are greatest challenges are and the best opportunities for growth and improvement. A recent example of this was a six month study conducted to determine the most efficient redeployment of a medic unit is best suited responding from Station 75.

A great deal of our department's data is available to the public on the Open Data portal on [westchesteroh.org](http://westchesteroh.org). We will share a few points with you here tonight.

In 2019, the Fire Department responded to 7,093 total calls for service, 403 more calls than in 2018.

Of these calls, 4,886 were for emergency medical service, an increase of 6% from 2018. Every minute counts when responding to a medical emergency and West Chester's Paramedics are

compassionate and highly trained professionals who provide this life-saving treatment. In 2019 our EMS crews were once again presented the Gold Plus award for their outstanding recognition and treatment of our STEMI patients from the American Heart Association.

2,207 of the calls were for fire response, a 5.9% increase from 2018. Of those calls 233 were actual fires requiring suppression, the remainder of the calls include hazardous materials, service calls, good intent calls and false alarms.

In 2019 the Fire Department responded to and protected \$608 million of property and content value in our community, while the value of property lost to fire was just \$1.6 million.

The quick response of a well-trained professional fire department attributes directly to our low loss versus save ratio and helps to lower insurance rates for those who live and operate businesses in West Chester. The Fire Department takes pride in continuous positive improvement to ensure our residents and businesses get the best all hazards service response as possible.

An all hazards full service Fire Department must also concentrate its efforts on fire prevention and code enforcement. Building plan review, code enforcement and fire prevention can have the greatest impact on fire calls and life safety. Safe buildings are achieved through proper design and construction practices and our Fire Department personnel work closely with the Butler County Building Department, West Chester Community Development and the property owners to ensure their investments are safe from the devastation and destruction from fire.

As some buildings in the Township mature and take on new uses, it has become more important than ever that the fire department review and have opportunity to interject in the discussion regarding redevelopment and building use. In 2019, the Township's Fire Code was updated and the department continues to work alongside Community Development as they update the Township's Land Use and Zoning Resolution. These documents should work together to promote the best, and safest uses for property and buildings in West Chester.

The Fire Department in 2019 conducted 645 blue print reviews, 3,034 fire inspections and 678 follow up inspections to ensure code compliance. All business properties are inspected at least annually to ensure proper fire safety codes and standards are met. In 2019 the WCFD and WCPD worked exclusively with Lakota administration and the Butler County Building Department to implement barricade devices in every Lakota School to enhance safety during a violent event.

Each year, West Chester's fire personnel reaches thousands of our residents to build and foster relationships to educate our citizens with important fire and life safety prevention practices. This includes teaching young children in Lakota Schools learning to stop, drop and roll, closing doors when sleeping to control the flow path of a fire, and crawling low under smoke to escape a fire.

As well as residents of all ages learning to properly use a fire extinguisher, installing and maintaining smoke and CO Detectors, create an escape plan, perform CPR and many other important life-saving skills. In 2019, nearly 51,281 people were reached through this programming.

The West Chester Fire Department is honored to have the opportunity to protect and serve the community of West Chester doing our part to make it the best place to live in Ohio. We truly appreciate the support of the Board of Trustees and our citizens in our commitment to provide a superb all hazards and Emergency Medical response. We look forward to continuing our excellent service in 2020 and beyond.

**Finance Director Ken Keim:**

Mr. Keim noted they had talked about the great work of our public safety departments and the costs associated with providing this exceptional service. In the case of Police and Fire, the effects of aging levies and depleting carryover have been mentioned.

Working with levies that are 10 and 14 years old, the revenues receipted are never as good as they are in the earliest years. The effects of rollbacks and increasing costs of doing business make it essential to build carryover in the earliest years so the levy can sustain beyond the 4-5 years expected levy life. West Chester has not had the appetite to return so frequently to the voters, so West Chester staff has been diligent in finding cost savings to allow for this extended levy life.

He showed a chart that illustrated how there would be funding ramifications to address in police and fire. Staff will work to identify possible solutions to present later this year, but this should be forefront in the minds of Trustees as we move forward.

Mr. Keim summed up his comments by saying the operational budget presented tonight does not include expenses or revenues associated with West Chester's successful TIF Funds, but TIF projects are included in the CIP and we've talked about a few of them tonight.

For 2020, nearly \$12 million, or 58%, of the \$22.2 million budgeted CIP projects are funded by tax increment financing.

TIF money can only be used for eligible infrastructure projects. These projects bring value to the residents and businesses of the community without burdening the residential taxpayer.

TIF funds are generated by the increased value of corporate investment in the community within defined areas. In 2019, Lakota and Butler Tech received more than \$4 Mil in payments from the TIF districts.

A few of the projects funded with TIF in 2020:

- Landscape and hardscape associated with the DDI project at the Union Centre Boulevard interchange;
- The construction of the Duff Road Fire Station;
- Improvements to the entrance of the Safety Services Center;
- Re-development of southeast corner of Cincinnati-Dayton and Station Road intersection as part of the Olde West Chester project
- Security and aesthetic improvements to Township Hall
- And more detailed in the 5-year Capital Improvement Plan

Mr. Keim concluded by thanking Mr. Burks, Barb Wilson, and the Directors for their help in compiling the presentation. Mr. Burks likewise thanked members of staff and the Trustees for their help. He noted what happens behind the scenes and beneath the surface that make everything possible. The Trustees and Fiscal Officer Jones also extended their appreciation for the presentation.

**Adjournment**

**MOTION** made at 6:14 p.m. by Mr. Wong, seconded by Mr. Welch, to adjourn the January 21, 2020 Operational Budget Work Session. Discussion: none. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**



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**Bruce Jones, Fiscal Officer**

**Approved,**



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**Mrs. Becker, Chairperson**