

Harford County Council
Citizens Budget Advisory Board
FY 2017 Budget Presentation
May 17, 2016

Good evening President Slutzky, Councilmen, and staff of the County Council.

On behalf of the seven members of the Citizens Budget Advisory Board, we thank you for the opportunity to represent the citizens of Harford County and to provide our input into the budget process.

We are a diverse group of individuals with knowledge of Harford County, expertise in various careers and experience with budgets and financial management and most importantly, a deep feeling of responsibility for the task you afforded us.

For our short presentation, we would like to address three important topics:

FY 2016-2017 budget items that we **Applaud**

FY 2017 budget items that we **Recommend**

FY 2017-2018 budget items that we **Foresee**

Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan U. Burdette, Chair

Jerry Lacey

Gloria Moon

Dave Williams

J. Robert Tibbs, Jr.

Andrew Ondish, Jr.

Cynthia Hergenbahn

WE APPLAUD (FY 2016 – 2017)

- “Rightsizing” the County workforce and merit based salary increases which keeps morale high and emphasizes people (operating) instead of buildings (capital)
- Increased funding for the following items: (1) Treatment of heroin addiction and recovery services (2) Health Dept. support for behavioral health and teen programs (3) First responders with the EMS Foundation (4) fire/rescue equipment
- \$3.5 million support for teacher salaries
- Retaining the Triple-A Bond rating
- No tax increases
- Transparent and open budget where every citizen was given the opportunity to voice an opinion
- The excellent analysis of the budget and budget related reports which were presented by County Auditor Chrystal Brooks prior to the budget sessions and were updated regularly which made our job much easier

WE RECOMMEND (FY 2017)

- Fund the three critical library grants to the library: *Living Treasures – Oral Histories, Books Alive* and *Art Friends* (total \$11,600). The library was no longer eligible to receive Cultural Arts Board grants when they were designated to oversee the CAB
- Delete Consultant Services for Master Plan and Comprehensive Rezoning and Engineering Services for assisting 2017 Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan. Take a look at all outside contractors and monitor outside service contracts.
- Use \$1+Million Parks and Recreation land acquisition funds for a Joppa Community Center
- A Provision of four lists: (1) a comprehensive list of grants and contributions that the County gives and receives and updated reporting of the Hotel tax funds and grant recipients. (2) An updated and continuing list of property owned by the County. (3) An updated and continuing list of properties leased by the County. (4) An updated and continuing list of properties which the County leases to others (agriculture ground and buildings, housing, recreation facilities, etc.)

WE FORESEE (FY 2017 - 2018)

- The Detention Center Expansion has been completed but is not being used and the building depreciates with every year that passes. We suggest innovative recruitment (APG partnership, ROTC, veterans, etc.) to fill Sheriff Office vacancies for the Detention Center.
- Technology seems to be the overwhelming talk within the Board of Education for the last two budget sessions. There needs to be collaboration with the County and Board of Education and perhaps local businesses to solve this dilemma.
- Add weekend routes to Harford Transit and work to get more MTA bus routes from Harford to Balt.
- We need to “Grow” the next generation of leaders. Involve County youth and young adults in government and non-profit volunteer positions, decision making and job opportunities.