

Tax rate won't go up
Walkertown plans for street paving in proposed budget

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WALKERTOWN

The property-tax rate in Walkertown should stay the same in the proposed budget for 2007-08, but residents will see the town doing more street paving.

The proposed budget shows the town taking \$90,000 from a reserve fund dedicated to street work and using that money in the town's repaving program. That way, the town can repave more streets and not raise taxes above the rate of 20 cents for every \$100 of property value.

"It is just a bare-bones budget," Lynn McKinnie, the town clerk, said. "The only thing really different is paving for the streets."

The town council will hold its only public hearing on the budget June 28. The council could approve the budget during the same meeting because the town must have its budget in place on July 1, the beginning of the 2007-08 fiscal year.

The proposed budget calls for general fund expenditures of \$1,480,485 in 2007-08, up from \$1,317,050 in the current year.

The budget calls for tax revenue of \$710,660, up from \$689,430 in the current year. The town's property-tax base increased from \$347.4 million to \$362 million during the year, thus allowing for revenue to increase while the tax rate remains the same.

In addition to property taxes, the town will collect revenues of \$198,000 in utility and beer-and-wine taxes and \$188,500 in sales taxes. Interest payments and business licenses will add \$91,525 in revenue, while state street, tourism and recreation money will come to \$183,800. Cable-television revenue will amount to \$18,000.

With the \$90,000 payment from the street fund, street-repaving and sidewalk-repair expenses are expected to cost \$183,000.

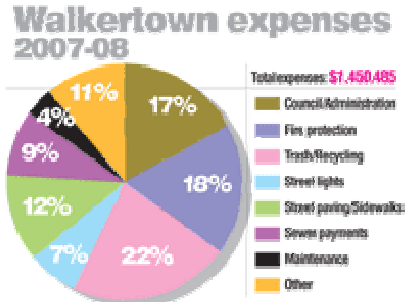
The town would spend \$265,250 for fire protection, \$242,000 for trash pickup and \$70,000 for recycling. Town administrative costs come to \$216,803, with another \$37,130 in council payments and election costs for the 2007 municipal election.

Under the budget, the town would pay \$40,000 in interest and \$86,000 in principal toward sewer-service costs.

The town earmarks \$10,800 for recreation, but Town Manager Ron Bell said that the town wants to stretch recreation spending with state grants. The town recently bought some parcels beside the town hall, and those could be used for recreational purposes, Bell said.

The town has not yet decided how to spend a \$100,000 bequest it received for recreation, but Bell said that the council could change the budget if the town gets grants or decides to do more recreational spending with the money.

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