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March 24, 2025

Westmoreland County

Office of the County Administrator

FY 2026 Proposed Budget

Dear Westmoreland County Residents,

I am pleased to present the Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Budget for Westmoreland County. This budget reflects our commitment to fiscal responsibility while maintaining and enhancing the high quality of services our residents deserve. I am proud to announce that we have developed a balanced budget that requires **no tax rate increase** for our residents and businesses.

Fiscal Responsibility

The FY26 budget demonstrates our continued dedication to prudent financial management. Through careful review and prioritization, we have identified areas where we can decrease expenditures without compromising service quality. These reductions allow us to address rising costs in critical areas while maintaining our current real estate tax rate.

We fully recognize that every dollar in this budget represents the people's money, entrusted to us by the citizens of Westmoreland County. Our Board of Supervisors and County staff are committed to being good stewards of these resources, ensuring they are allocated efficiently and effectively to serve the needs of our community.

Investing in Our Workforce

Our County employees are our most valuable asset. This budget includes:

- Competitive compensation adjustments to retain and attract talented staff
- Targeted market adjustments to ensure that our salaries are competitive in the region
- Continued funding for professional development and training programs
- Maintenance of our comprehensive benefits package

These investments ensure that Westmoreland County can continue to provide excellent service to our residents through a skilled and dedicated workforce.

Prioritizing Public Safety

The safety and security of our community remains a top priority. The FY26 budget includes:

- Full funding for our Sheriff's Office and emergency services
- Continued funding for our Fire stations to support our volunteers with operating, equipment, and testing needs
- Resources for equipment upgrades and technology improvements, including emergency communications equipment
- Continued investment in critical infrastructure to improve response times

Supporting Westmoreland County Public Schools

Education is the cornerstone of our community's future. This budget maintains our strong partnership with Westmoreland County Public Schools by:

- Providing stable funding to support educational excellence
- Investing in school safety and security measures
- Supporting initiatives to recruit and retain quality teachers
- Collaborating on capital improvement projects to enhance learning environments

Enhanced Customer Service

Our commitment to serving Westmoreland County residents is reflected in several key investments for FY26:

- Launch of a new, user-friendly county website that improves access to information and services
- Adoption and implementation of our planned strategic plan that places citizen needs at the center of all county operations
- Modernized processes and systems to increase efficiency and reduce response times
- Training programs to ensure staff excellence in customer service

These initiatives represent our dedication to making county government more accessible, responsive, and efficient for all residents and businesses.

Buildings and Grounds Improvements

Maintaining and improving our county facilities is essential for efficient operations and preservation of our community's heritage. The FY26 budget allocates funding for critical infrastructure projects including:

- The completion of a major HVAC repair and upgrade project at the Judicial Center to ensure proper functioning of this vital facility
- Preservation and restoration work on several of our historic county buildings, protecting these irreplaceable community assets
- Grounds improvements to enhance public spaces and create welcoming environments

These investments demonstrate our commitment to responsible stewardship of public facilities while preserving Westmoreland County's rich architectural heritage.

Economic Development

To strengthen our local economy and expand our tax base, the FY26 budget includes:

- Continued funding for a Director of Economic Development position, expected to be filled soon
- Increased focus on attracting new businesses and support existing ones
- Investment in infrastructure improvements that make our county more attractive to businesses
- Marketing initiatives to promote Westmoreland County as an ideal location for business growth

Land Use and Customer Service

To improve service delivery and ensure responsible development, the budget includes:

- A new position in the Land Use department to enhance customer service and maintain community standards
- Support for erosion and sediment control programs to protect our natural resources
- Improved processes to streamline permitting and development reviews

Supporting Community Partners

Westmoreland County thrives because of our strong community partnerships. This budget continues to provide support for:

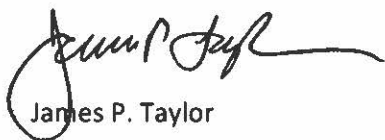
- Local non-profit organizations addressing critical community needs
- Libraries and cultural institutions that enrich our community
- Recreation programs that enhance quality of life
- Health and human service agencies that support our most vulnerable residents

Looking Ahead

As we look to the future, this budget positions Westmoreland County for sustainable growth and continued prosperity. By investing strategically in economic development, maintaining our commitment to education and public safety, and enhancing our service delivery, we are building a strong foundation for our community's future.

I invite all residents to review the detailed budget document available on the County website and to participate in the upcoming public hearing on April 14, 2025. Your input is valuable as we finalize this budget for adoption.

Sincerely,



James P. Taylor

County Administrator