

Budget

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less than \$1.8 million. That is not a problem, since a new state mandate against excessively large savings accounts takes effect July 1, 2005. That regulation limits the reserve to 8 percent of the total budget.

Property taxes will increase next year by about \$85 for the average homeowner in the district. Palfev said the average tax bill is now \$1,119, well below the average in Luzerne County, but the return is higher.

"Man, look what you're getting for less money," he said, remarking that he moved to Dallas in large part because of the quality school system.

While revenues are projected to rise by more than \$1.1 million next year, to \$23.2 million, expenditures are nearly flat. The largest increases, in salaries and benefits, are offset by declines in purchased services. Some of them are:

- A nearly \$100,000 reduc-

tion in building improvement services. Palfev said that item was in prior budgets to cover unanticipated, one-time damage or repairs. "There doesn't appear to be any need to have that," because the budget has a \$500,000 reserve anyway, and it is seldom fully used.

- Tuition paid to West Side Tech will fall by nearly 15 percent because 46 Dallas students will be attending versus this year's 59.

- Professional services are expected to be lower. Palfev said the budgeted amounts were not spent in prior years, and the yearlong leave of absence taken by Assistant Superintendent Michael Speziale, who supervises curriculum matters, would reduce the number of offerings.

- Significant savings have been found in the cost of building services and supplies. Palfev said fuel for the senior high school had been overbud-

geted by \$50,000 and a new contract for copier service would save \$37,000. Other services will be "shopped around" for the best price.

The teachers' contract calls for a salary increase of 2.5 percent next year, but the projected expenditure is up only 1.6 percent, since new teachers will come in at lower pay rates than the experienced teachers they replace.

While he is pleased with the new budget, Palfev is concerned about the future cost of all-day kindergarten and proposed renovations to the senior high school, particularly with the district carrying a smaller reserve. That situation, he says, will require an increasingly businesslike approach.

A final budget must be adopted by June 30. Copies are available for review at the district administrative offices, in the Wycallis Elementary building.

Retirees

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fund to which teachers have contributed, so there will be no additional cost to the district.

In estimating the effect on the district's finances, Palfev projected that nine replacement teachers would be hired at or near entry-level, with an average salary of \$30,678; two would be more experienced, with salaries of \$35,199; and a director of technology would be paid \$47,000, the current salary for the position.

With between 33 and 36 years of service, all of the retiring teachers earn the maximum annual salary of \$66,937.

The net effect will be an additional expense of \$359,000 next year, as the payout is partially offset by salary savings. Each year thereafter, the district will save money. Palfev projects savings of \$256,000 the second year, \$237,000 the third, \$216,000 the fourth, \$173,000 the fifth, and so on.

"At year 10 it turns around," he said, assuming the teachers progress up the salary scale. There could be some added ex-

Early retirement at Dallas

Teachers and administrators who retire before age 65 and who have 25 or more years of service are entitled to a one-time payment. Teachers with 25-28 years of service receive 75 percent of the last full-year salary. For each year of service beyond 28, the payout drops by 1 percent. At least 10 years must have been full-time at Dallas.

Also, the district will pay for the retirees health insurance until age 65. Retirees can purchase coverage for a spouse by paying the full cost of the additional premium.

pense as new teachers are reimbursed for advanced courses, and if they take family health insurance coverage.

The retirees will all have single health insurance coverage, and will be able to add on a spouse of other family member by paying the full cost. The district pays for coverage of spouses and families of employees.

Sam Barbose, principal at Dallas Elementary School, also announced his retirement at the May 10 school board meeting. Paul Reinert, presently assistant principal at the middle school, was appointed to replace Barbose, who is paid

\$74,970. Reinert's new salary was not discussed at the meeting. "I couldn't tell you for sure where it would fall," Palfev said, although he guessed it would be somewhat lower.

This year's retirees represent about 8 percent of the entire Dallas teaching staff. Palfev anticipates 15 early retirements each of the next two years, with payouts each year of about \$675,000.

"It's really a shame to think of the talent and experience you're going to lose," he said. But that is offset by the infusion of new energy and ideas.

Lions seek members

The Dallas Lions are looking for new members. Anyone interested in joining the club should contact any club member or they can contact Frank Rollman at 675-4485.

Send your news to The Post by e-mail.

thepost@leader.net
Digital photos welcome, too!



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Dallas Borough Farmers Market Survey

The Borough of Dallas, in cooperation with the Back Mountain Memorial Library and the Penn State Cooperative Extension Program, is working to establish a Farmers Market this summer on the Back Mountain Memorial Library grounds. Please complete the following survey to help us determine how best to provide this Back Mountain Area community event for you:

- 1. What day of the week** would you prefer for a farmers market? (Check one response):
 Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday None
- 2. What time of day** would you like to see the market in operation? (Check one response):
 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. 2 - 6 p.m. 4 - 8 p.m. 6 - 8 p.m.
- 3. What kinds of growers, produce, or types of vendors or crafts** would you like to have at the market?

- 4. How many times** during a month would you be willing to visit a local farmers market? (Check one response):
 Once per week Twice per month Once per month None

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions and providing information for this important community service and event.

Please return this survey by mail to:
Dallas Borough
25 Main Street
Dallas, PA 18612

Or, by placing in a drop box located at one of the following locations:


- Sheetz, Rt. 309, Trucksville
- Back Mountain Memorial Library, Huntsville Road, Dallas
- Turkey Hill Dairy Store, Rts. 415/118, Dallas
- Lehman Country Deli, Rt. 118, Lehman Center

Bicycle ride from Frances Slocum to Riverfest

The Anthracite Scenic Trails Association, along with the Wyoming Valley Riverfest and Wellness Trails Partnership, will hold a bike ride on June 5 to celebrate National Trails Day. The ride will begin at Frances Slocum State Park and will end at Kirby Park in Kingston. There is no

charge for the ride and those interested may either bike or canoe it.

Those interested are asked to be at the park at 8:30 a.m. at the boat access on Carverton Road, or if that's too early, they can take a separate trip at 1 p.m. into West Nanticoke.



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