

**VENANGO COUNTY
2024 BUDGET
11/14/23**

2024 VENANGO COUNTY BUDGET NARRATIVE

The Venango County budget consists of approximately 70 funds which roll up in the following categories:

- General Fund: to include County General Fund operations, Human Services Fund and Operating Reserve Fund.
- Special Revenue Funds: to include major funds such as Liquid Fuels, Airport Special Funds, 911 Special Funds, Workforce Development, and CDBG Funds.
- Capital Reserve Fund: consists only of the Capital Reserve Fund, designated for capital use only.
- Debt Fund: to include the Debt Funds from where all County Debt is recorded and paid.
- Fiduciary Funds: to include major funds such as: Early Head Start, Domestic Relations IV-D Fund, Capital Transit Fund and Rural Operating Assistance Fund.

Total revenue for all funds is projected to be \$65,454,599 in 2024 which represents a slight increase of approximately 5.00% from the current 2023 \$62,062,308 revenue budget. The County General Fund revenue budget, excluding Human Services, is projected at \$21,305,295 or an estimated 33% of the entire revenue budget.

Total expenses for all Venango County funds are projected to be \$77,587,182 in 2024 which represents an increase of 18.9% from the 2022 \$62,906,111 expense budget. The County General Fund expense budget, excluding Human Services, is projected at \$21,305,295 or an estimated 27% of the entire budget.

Although the largest portion of the County's overall budget is the Human Services Fund, this review will place emphasis on the General Fund, non-Human Services portion of the budget. This is where all expenses are reported which are funded utilizing the county assessed millage thus funded by county taxpayer dollars.

I. General Fund (Excluding Human Services) 2022 Budget Review

Revenue Analysis:

Taxes

Taxes are the total amount to be raised by property and per capita taxes for the support of County operations. The County is permitted to levy taxes up to 25 mills on the assessed value of real estate for general purposes and without limitation as to debt service.

The 2024 budget estimates that the assessed value of approximately 36,000 taxable parcels is \$1.930 billion which will result in gross billings of approximately \$11.6 million. The County also offers a homestead exemption of \$10,000 for all who apply and qualify. There are approximately 14,700 who qualify for this exemption which is budgeted to cost the County approximately \$855,000. The County's non delinquent collection rate on billed taxes is approximately 89%.

The total millage rate for 2024 has been budgeted to remain at 6.00. It will be used entirely for general fund purposes. The County does not officially designate millage for capital reserve or debt service purposes. The millage rate has been allocated to each general fund functional group. The general fund departments break into functional groups as follows:

- **General Government:** Commissioner's, Fiscal, Tax Claim Bureau, MIS, Assessment, Maintenance & Custodial, Garage, Public Defender, Human Resources, Voter Registration, Tax Collectors, Treasurer, Auditors and Planning.
- **Judicial:** Courts, Domestic Relations, Law Library, District Justices, Jury Commissioners, Register & Recorder, Coroner, District Attorney, Prothonotary and Sheriff.
- **Public Safety:** Prison, Court Supervision Services, Juvenile Court Supervision Services, EMA and 911.
- **Public Works:** Airport.
- **Human Services:** Veterans, Older Adult Services, Children & Families, Mental Health/Developmental Services, Substance Use Disorder, and Community Supports and Nutrition.
- **Culture and Recreation:** Park
- **Conservation and Development:** Conservation and Economic Development Activities.
- **Other:** Property Insurances
- **Debt:** Debt Service.

In 2023, the median value of a parcel in Venango County is estimated at \$56,402; therefore, the County's annual real estate taxes for an average home amounts to approximately \$338.

The 2023 General Fund budget for taxes of \$11,895,000 represents an increase from the 2023 budget. Approximately 55% of the general fund budget is funded through tax revenue.

Licenses & Permits

The 2024 General Fund budget for licenses and permits of \$39,500 represents a slight increase from the 2023 budget. The fees for licenses and permits are largely generated from the Treasurer's Office.

Federal Revenue

The County receives revenue from the federal government in the form of specific purpose grants. These monies are designated as federal and tracked via the C.F.D.A. (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance) number to ensure the monies are used for the purposes that are allowable under the grant.

The 2023 General Fund budget for Federal Revenue of \$636,201 represents a large decrease of approximately \$582,768 (47.81%) from the 2023 \$1,218,969 budget.

State Revenue

State revenue represents the funds the County receives from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and these funds are designated for a specific purpose. These funds are tracked using a project number and the grant number when applicable. State Operating Grant revenues are completely different from Federal Operating Grants.

The 2024 General Fund budget for state revenue of \$1,617,698 represents a decrease of approximately \$41,110 (2.48%) from the 2023 \$1,658,808 budget. With respect to some of these grants, Should they not be obtained, the expenses associated will not be expended.

Also included in State revenue are state entitlements which are funds provided by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to the County for the State's portion of specific expenses. The primary entitlement the County receives is the reimbursement of Judges' expenses.

Fees for Services – General Government

These are monies received by the County for a variety of services. They include specific charges assessed members of the public for services rendered. One example of Fees for Services is the monies received by the Recorder's Office for recording a deed.

The 2024 General Fund budget for Fees for Services of \$2,396,641 represents a slight increase of approximately \$20,374 (0.86%) from the 2023 budget of \$2,376,267.

Other Revenue

These are various sources of revenue received by the County. Included in this grouping is revenue generated from the sale of county assets and monies generated by the rental of County property leased to outside entities. It also includes the revenue generated from the investment of cash. The 2024 General Fund budget for Other Revenue of \$277,630 represents a slight increase of approximately \$39,180 (16.4%) from the 2023 budget of \$238,450.

Inter Fund Transfers – Revenue

These are various monies received in the General Fund from other County funds. One example is the Domestic Relations and Human Services Direct and Indirect Cost Reimbursement.

The 2024 General Fund budget for Inter Fund Transfers – Revenue of \$4,442,625 represents an increase of approximately \$39,180 (0.75%) from the 2022 budget of \$4,409,383.

In 2024 the total amount to be transferred from the Operating Reserve Fund is projected to be \$2,867,111 to balance the 2024 budget.

Expense Analysis

Salaries

These are monies spent on the payroll of County General Fund elected officials and employees. This excludes any salaries paid for Human Services or 911 employees. The 2024 General Fund budget for Salaries of \$8,718,099 represents an increase of approximately \$438,107 (5.29%) from the 2023 budget of \$8,279,992. Increases in salaries are projected and consistent with contracts as applicable. Increases and decreases to the complement factor into the overall increase or decrease to salary expense.

Benefits

These are monies spent on FICA and insurance costs for County General Fund elected officials and employees. The 2024 General Fund budget for benefits of \$2,952,423 represents an increase of approximately \$317,389 (12.04%) from the 2023 budget of \$2,635,034. For 2024, the Annual Required Contribution of \$300,000 for the pension fund has been budgeted. In addition, Commissioners are working to negotiate changes to the health insurance premiums. Changes to the complement are also directly proportionate to the change in benefit amount.

Other Personnel Costs

These are monies primarily spent on training and workshops for County elected officials and employees. The 2024 General Fund budget for Other Personnel Costs of \$658,395 represents an increase of approximately \$104,874 (13.74%) from the 2023 budget of \$763,269. This decrease is directly related to the County's fiduciary function for the Northwest PA Emergency Response Group as well as slight decreases in training costs among County departments.

Fees-Professional

These are monies spent on professional fees contracted by the General Fund as well as money provided to other agencies to support their operating costs. The 2024 General Fund Budget for Fees-Professional of \$1,913,348 represents a decrease of approximately \$134,704 (6.58%) from the 2023 budget of \$2,048,052. This increase is directly related to the County's fiduciary function for the Northwest PA Emergency Response Group.

Occupancy

These are monies spent for all costs associated with building occupancy to include utilities, insurance, and rental of space, ground/building maintenance and repairs. The 2024 General Fund Budget for Occupancy of \$1,513,348 represents an increase of approximately \$90,440 (6.36%) from the 2023 \$1,422,908 budget.

Communication

These are monies spent for costs such as telephone, postage, internet, and advertising. The 2024 General Fund budget for Communication of \$446,666 represents a slight decrease of \$36,195 (7.50%) from the 2023 \$482,861 budget. This is representative of our department heads and Elected Officials holding the line anywhere possible.

Supplies

These are monies spent on supplies required for all county departments to operate. The 2024 General Fund budget for Supplies of \$1,553,462 represents an increase of approximately \$21,590 (1.41%) from the 2023 \$1,531,872 budget. This increase is directly related to slight supply cost increases among categories.

Transportation

These are monies spent for travel costs to include vehicle leases, repair, insurance and supplies. The 2024 General Fund budget for Transportation of \$312,528 represents a slight increase of approximately \$8,187 (2.69%) from the 2023 \$304,341 budget. The increase is namely due to fuel costs and vehicle repairs as needed.

Other Expenses

These are monies spent on all other expenses to include books, memberships, subscriptions, insurance for public officials, other court related costs and contingencies. The 2023 General Fund budget for Other Expense of \$325,130 represents a decrease of approximately \$23,724 (6.80%) from the 2023 \$348,854 budget.

Capital

These are monies spent on capital equipment and projects. The 2024 General Fund budget for Capital of \$1,581,706 represents a decrease of approximately \$788,698 from the 2023 \$2,118,888 budget. Budgeted capital items for 2024 include minimal computer replacement, plaster repairs in the Courthouse and needed bathroom repairs to our Courthouse.

Inter Fund Transfers – Expenses

These are various monies provided by the General Fund to other County funds. One example is County's responsibility to fund the 911 special revenue fund.

The 2024 General Fund budget for Inter Fund Transfers – Expense of \$1,581,706 represents a decrease of approximately \$22,700 (1.41%) from the 2023 budget of \$1,604,406. The inter fund transfer expenses include:

- The General Fund anticipates a total of \$15,833 to be funded to the Airport Project Fund to cover grant march.
- The County match to the Human Services Funds is also reflected here totaling \$1,565,873 in 2024.

II. Operating Reserve Fund

The 2024 budget uses \$2,867,110 of the Operating Reserve Fund to balance the General Fund Budget.

III. Human Services Funds

All Human Services Funds actually operate on a fiscal year of July 1 through June 30. They are required to budget on a fiscal year basis; therefore, the County's calendar year budget for 2024 is expected to be their July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 budget. Since this fiscal budget has not yet been created, Human Services uses their 2023 calendar year budget as a basis for the 2024 calendar year budget. Once the 23-24 fiscal year budget is completed during 2024, budget amendments will be done to adjust the calendar year 2024 budget accordingly. This budget is balanced at \$25,978,193.

IV. Special Revenue Funds

Special Revenue Funds are used to account for the proceeds of specific revenue sources that are legally restricted to expenditures for specified purposes.

The total 2024 budgeted revenues total \$20,914,720 which is an increase from the 2023 \$13,814,256 budget.

The total 2024 budgeted expenses total \$20,903,638 which is an increase from the 2023 \$11,742,342 budget.

The results of the special revenue funds are namely attributable to an increase in Workforce Development Fund and the inclusion of the Opioid Settlement Funds and Infrastructure Bank Fund as well as our radio project for 911.

V. Capital Reserve

Capital Reserve Funds are used to account for financial resources to be used for the acquisition or construction of major capital facilities or maintenance to existing facilities and equipment. The Commissioners have tentatively earmarked \$500,000 in capital dollars for use in future years.

VI. Debt Service Fund

Debt Service Funds are used to account for the accumulation of resources for, and the payment of, general long-term debt principal, interest, and related costs.

The County has no debt payments currently.

VII. Total Fiduciary Funds

Fiduciary funds are monies which are used to account for assets held by the County in trustee capacity or as an agent for individuals, private organizations, other governments and/or funds.

The 2024 budgeted revenues and expenses for the fiduciary funds are \$1,807,770 and \$1,812,560 which is relatively consistent with 2023 at \$1,466,818 and \$1,471,608, respectively.