

2013 Amity budget keeps police force at same level

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AMITY — Thanks to a recent earned income tax payment of \$200,000, the deficit in the 2013 preliminary budget has dropped to \$10,000 from \$43,000, according to township secretary/treasurer JoAnne Sowers Smith.

Supervisor Terry L. Jones' motion to advertise the \$3.73 million preliminary budget with a one-tenth fire tax increase died without a second on Nov. 7.

He said the \$66,000 revenue generated by the one-tenth tax levy would help fund the seven-year payment on the unfunded mandate by Berks County for all of its municipalities to buy into a new emergency-responder radio system.

"We need to increase the fire tax to cover that unfunded mandate," said Jones. "For three years we've been robbing the piggy bank to pay the bills."

If the budget is approved by the board, the millage rate would increase from 1.8 to 1.9 mills; annual tax payments on a \$100,000 assessed-property would increase from \$180 to \$190.

Currently, 0.5 mills of the 1.8 tax funds the Amity and Monarch fire departments.

The board unanimously approved a total of \$340,581.16 on six promissory notes to acquire the new radios for the fire departments, the Amity Township Police Department and Southern Berks EMS.