

2020 Open Public Budget Meeting



January 30, 2020

Objectives



Overall

- Follow our 5-10 year roadmap for growth and smart development to increase ratables, diversify our tax base, improve infrastructure, traffic flows and safety, mobility and parks to create a vibrant, livable, and affordable town for residents of all ages and abilities

Budget

- Minimize tax burden on residents while investing in people, processes, and infrastructure to establish Westfield as a 21st Century Community
- Create a smarter, more efficient government over the long-term enabling us to “do more with less”

2019 Goals and Key Actions—how'd we do?

Goal 1

Continue track record of strong fiscal management, with an emphasis on managing surplus, investing strategically, and improving cost efficiencies

Goal 2

Continue to invest in technology and automation as a means to improve service and support growth without adding costs

Goal 3

Modernize and upgrade critical Town assets to improve efficiencies and service

Goal 4

Prioritize smart planning and redevelopment as Master Plan and Parks Plan comes to fruition

Goal 5

Expand efforts and opportunities to engage the community

Goal 1

Continue strong fiscal management, with an emphasis on managing surplus, investing strategically, and improving cost efficiencies

- Presenting a 2019 municipal budget with a 0% increase in the tax rate
- Maintain the Town's 'AAA' credit bond rating
- Maintain a healthy \$9.5 million in fund balance
- Continue to evaluate our cash management plan to maximize returns with input from the Investment Council
- Reassess all opportunities to grow non-property tax revenue sources while ensuring alignment with Town objectives and quality of life initiatives

Goal 2

Continue to invest in technology and automation as a means to improve service, convenience and support growth without adding costs

- Introduce new, interactive advanced website
- Implement and enhance online features of our expanded SDL platform to enable online permitting, property searches, and payments
- Launch new “Westfield Connect” app for online reporting and tracking of public works issues
- Fund codification of our Town Code with implementation of eCode360, enabling search functionality
- Initiate a body-worn camera system for all patrol officers to better serve community and increase transparency in police interactions

Goal 3

Modernize and upgrade critical Town assets to improve efficiencies and service

- Evaluate key Town Hall meeting areas in anticipation of renovation and technology upgrades
- Expand support of sewer cleaning program in the downtown as a means to support and attract businesses
- Install EV charging stations in municipal parking lots and future development projects
- Continue investing in Public Works and Public Safety equipment to modernize fleet and reduce maintenance costs

Goal 4

Prioritize smart planning and redevelopment as Master Plan and Parks Plan come to fruition

- Fund a unified Land Use Element and Transportation Plan as companion documents to the Master Plan Reexamination report to proactively address changing trends and new developments
- Anticipate potential recommendations from both plans and prepare to move forward expeditiously
- Leverage recently awarded grants for walkability and bicycle/pedestrian planning assistance to implement various pedestrian enhancements across the Town to align with the “Year of the Pedestrian” initiative

Goal 5

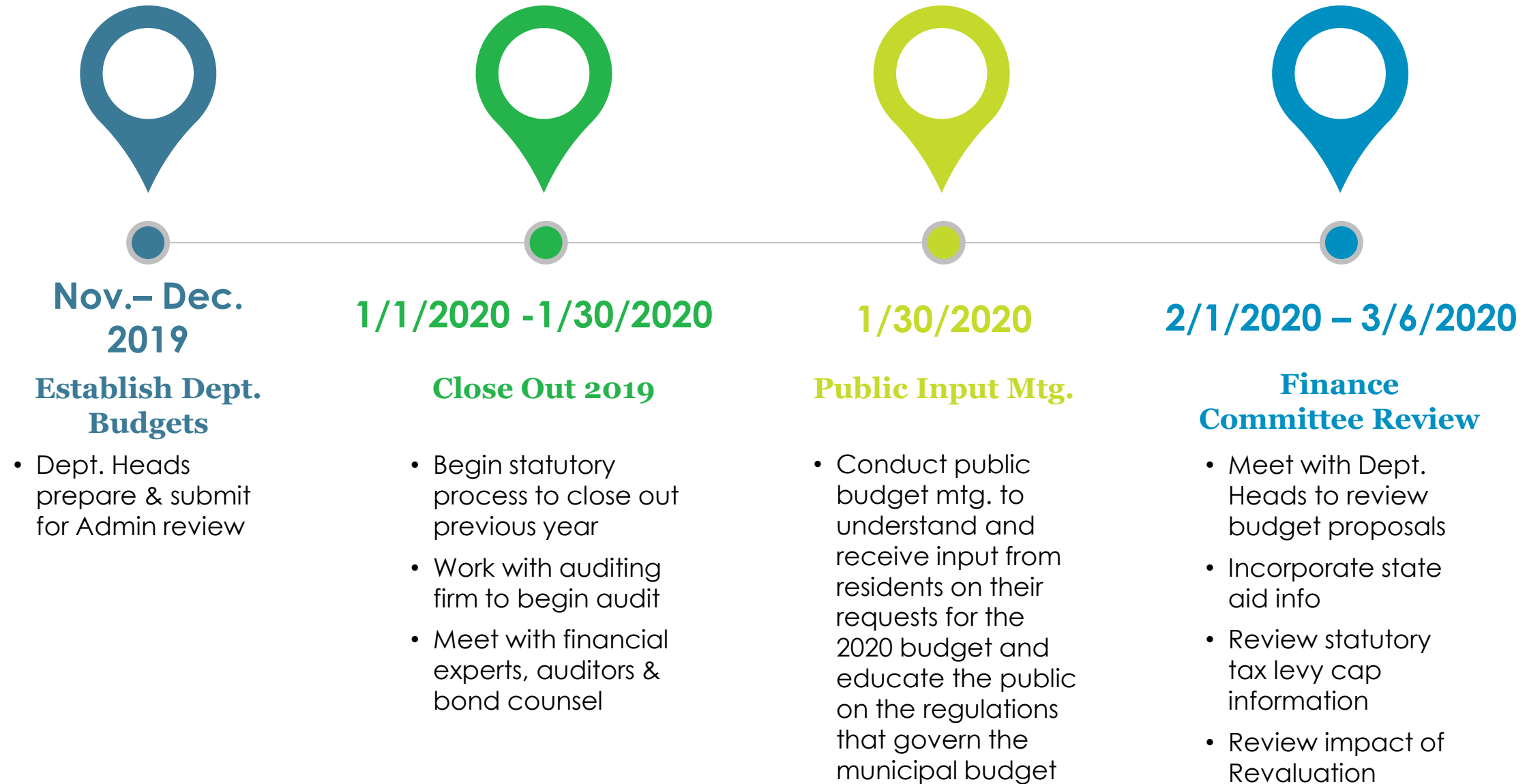
Expand efforts and opportunities to engage the community

- Continue our partnership with the Board of Education to provide School Resource Officers to enhance safety and renew positive police relationships with students, staff and parents
- Fund new Health Educator position in the Board of Health to assist in implementing proactive public health programs and support relevant advisory committees
- Support town wide special events such as Addamsfest, Green Team & Historic Preservation initiatives, Memorial Day parade, etc. Continue to partner with DWC to support and enhance downtown events

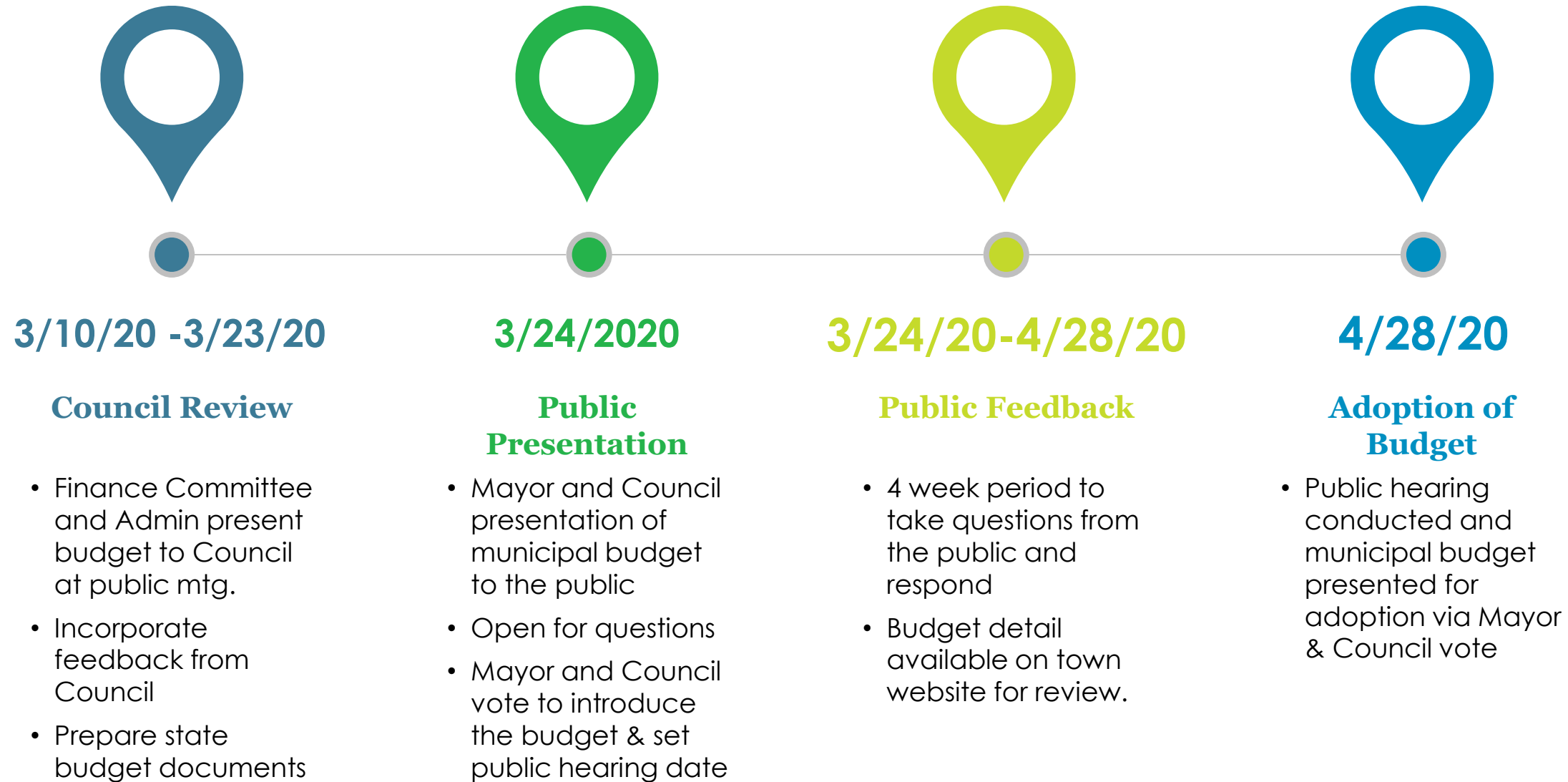
2019 Results

- Zero % Municipal Tax Increase in 2019
- Revaluation complete
- Revenues collected slightly under budget (0.73% less than anticipated)
- Surplus replenished up to \$11.5 million
- Fiscally smart use of surplus. Putting “savings” to work to stabilize the tax rate and continue to invest in the Town’s future
- Significant road paving completed (~20 miles) due to partnership with public utilities reducing Town cost for these capital improvements

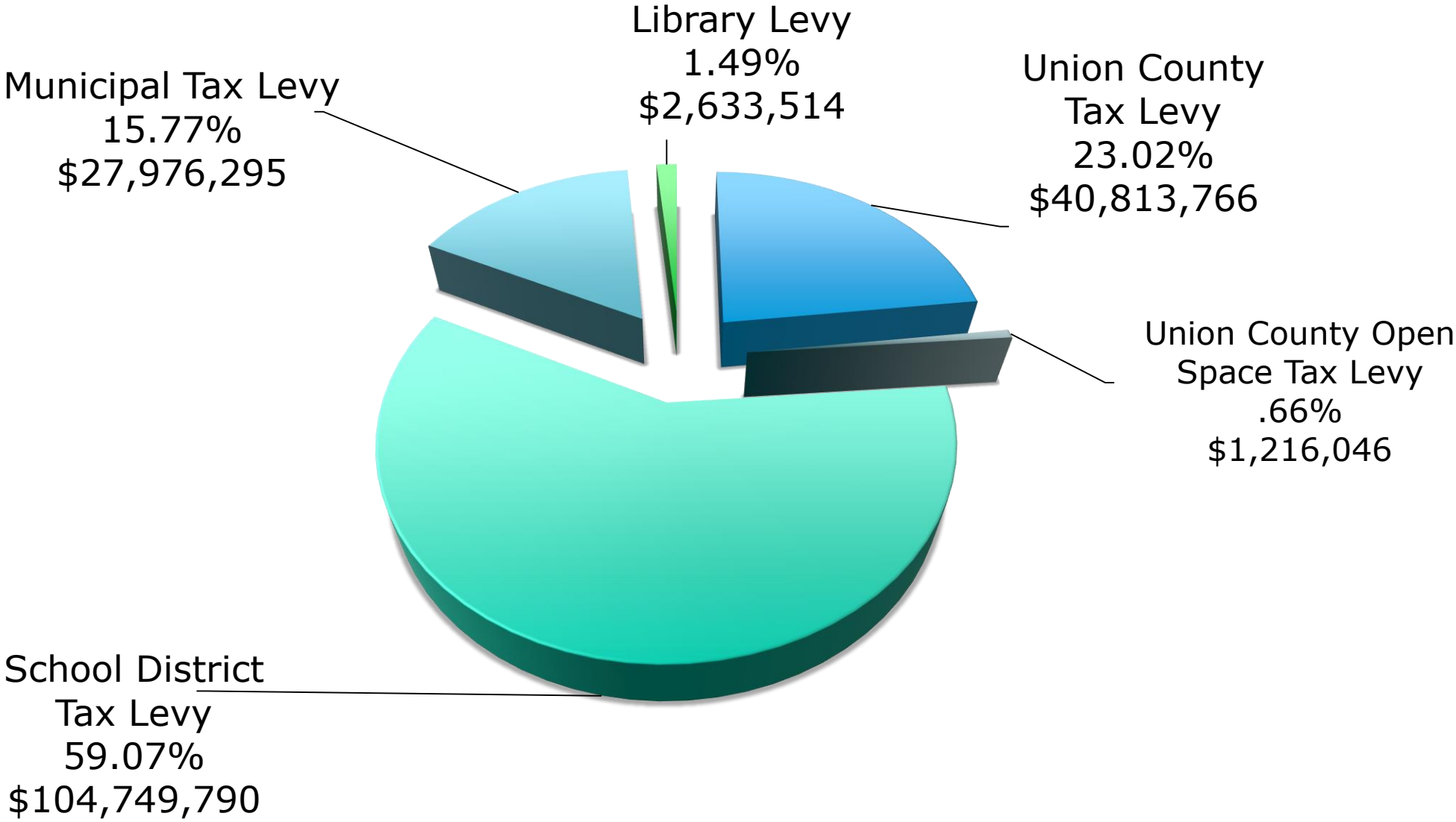
Budget Process and Timeline



Budget Process and Timeline



2019 Tax Collections= \$177,389,411



Westfield relies disproportionately on residential vs. commercial property taxes to fund all services (Town, BOE, County)

	<u>Vacant</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>Commercial</u>
County Wide Average	1.83%	76.09%	22.07%
Westfield	0.71%	89.67%	9.62%
Summit	0.38%	82.45%	17.17%
Cranford	0.42%	83.10%	16.47%

Historical Surplus. (\$11.5 million balance as of 12/31/19)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Balance Available Jan 1</u>	<u>Balance Appropriated</u>	<u>Balance Remaining</u>	<u>Amount Generated</u>
2009	\$2,848,423	\$2,700,000	\$148,423	\$1,907,122
2010	\$2,055,545	\$1,840,000	\$215,545	\$1,627,557
2011	\$1,843,103	\$1,719,000	\$124,103	\$74,391
2012	\$198,494	\$0	\$198,494	\$1,431,303
2013	\$1,629,798	\$750,000	\$879,798	\$3,840,667
2014	\$4,720,465	\$906,023	\$3,814,442	\$2,776,449
2015	\$6,590,891	\$167,172	\$6,423,719	\$3,159,303
2016	\$9,583,023	\$974,344	\$8,608,679	\$3,800,986
2017	\$12,409,665	\$2,174,344	\$10,235,321	\$4,275,196
2018	\$14,510,517	\$4,200,000	\$10,310,517	\$4,200,840
2019	\$14,511,357	\$4,994,000	\$9,517,357	\$1,990,335

Expected statutory/required expenses in 2020

Debt Service + \$88,453

Reserve for Uncollected Taxes + \$50,000

Group Health Insurance + \$720,000

Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority + \$210,000

Pensions/SS/Unemployment + \$64,000

2020 Budget Priorities

- Responsible fiscal management - strategically utilize the surplus to continue essential services and manage the final tax levy.
- Continue to aggressively look for new recurring revenue streams.
- Increase & diversify tax base leveraging the powers of redevelopment and tax abatements
- Increase parks and recreation opportunities
- Fight for RVL peak one-seat ride service
- Automate services to enable scale without adding costs
- Establish circulation and traffic management plan
- Continue to focus on traffic safety
- Maintain and protect roads
- Become a leader in sustainability
- What are your priorities??



Questions? Comments?

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Thank you !!