

# The Ligonier Echo

Voice of the Ligonier Valley since 1888

A Community Paper for Local People. To Subscribe, call 724-238-2111

**NOW ONLINE!**

**LOCAL VEHICLES FROM LOCAL DEALERS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE**

**724AUTOS.com**



## Ligonier Borough projects balanced budget in 2020

By JENNIFER SOPKO  
For The Echo

With consistent income and expenses expected for next year, Ligonier Borough is projecting a balanced budget with no tax increase for 2020.

Council voted 6-0 on Nov. 14 to advertise the proposed \$1.3-million budget for action at its Dec. 12 meeting. Councilman Jeff Craig was absent.

The property tax rate will remain at 24.5 mills, with one mill generating more than \$17,000 for Ligonier Borough, according to secretary-treasurer Jan Shaw.

The draft budget will be posted on the Ligonier Borough website ([www.ligonierboro.org](http://www.ligonierboro.org)) and available at the Town Hall office for public review.

Ligonier Borough is expecting a modest profit of \$280 for 2020. There were no significant changes or cuts from previous years; the finance committee kept the line item amounts relatively similar to 2019 and anticipated additional spending in certain areas, councilwoman Mariah Fisher explained after the meeting.

For example, the Town Hall committee is currently researching a new phone system for the building, so that was built into the budget. The borough is also looking at new computer and security systems, Fisher said.

However, one noticeable increase is in the public works department, whose budget jumped from \$225,945 in 2019 to \$264,744 in 2020. Fisher said that's because council will probably hire a fourth public works crew member sometime next spring.

"We pretty much just evaluated what it was last year and it seemed that it was going to be the same," Fisher said.

Officials will also decide next month whether to adopt a proposed small cellular wireless communications ordinance. Council likewise voted to advertise the ordinance.

The ordinance regulates the location and design standards for networks of miniature wireless antennas in Ligo-

See BUDGET on Page 6

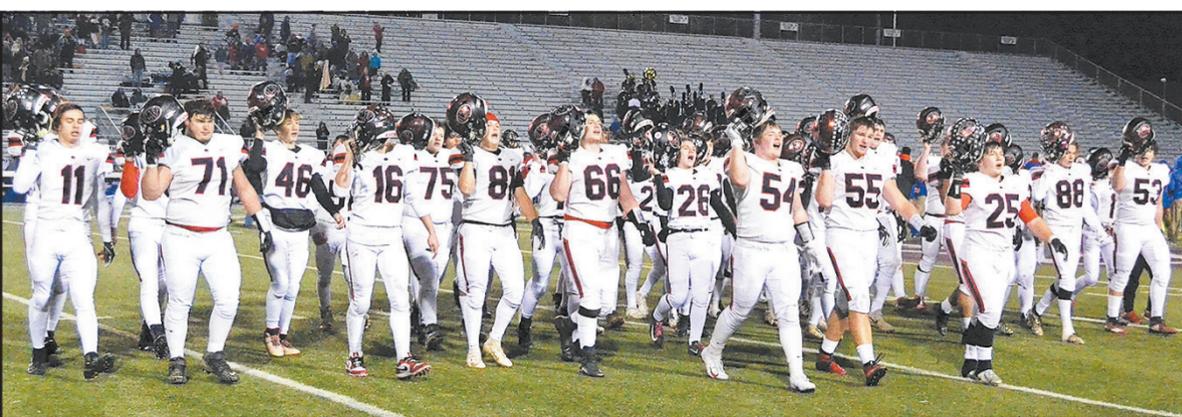
## Getting the Diamond ready to shine



Volunteer Ben Plowman, a sophomore at Ligonier Valley High School, helps volunteer Barb Smith place greens and lights around the Ligonier Diamond bandstand. In the right photo, putting up the holiday lights around the Ligonier Diamond bandstand is longtime volunteer Betty Rushbrook of Ligonier, who loves to see the Diamond all decorated and lit up. The Diamond will play host to Santa's arrival during Light Up Ligonier, the annual light-up night event, at 6:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 29.



Photos: Bill Pribisco | For The Echo



Members of the Ligonier Valley High School Rams football team chant "We are LV" as they head off the field following their 34-6 loss to Richland in the District 6 Class 2A championship game on Friday night at Altoona's Mansion Park Stadium. Additional photos on Pages 8 and 9.

Photo: Bill Pribisco | For The Echo

## Rams can't overcome early deficit to Richland in District 6 title game loss

By NICK CAMMUSO  
For The Echo

ALTOONA — Ligonier Valley's championship dream fell one game short on Friday night.

The Rams, aiming to make history with their third District 6 Class 2A title in four years, faced a rare double-digit deficit in the first quarter and never truly recovered in a 34-6 loss to Richland at Altoona's Mansion Park Stadium.

Richland, the top seed in Class 2A, captured its second straight district title. And it's the second straight championship with Ligonier Valley on the wrong side of the ledger, as the Rams dropped a 21-12 decision last year at the same venue.

Next up for Richland (12-0) is District 12 champ Bishop McDevitt in next

week's PIAA quarterfinals. Bishop McDevitt got past Dunmore, 28-13, in a PIAA first-round game on Friday.

For second-seeded Ligonier Valley, the loss caps another wildly successful season — the Rams went 12-1 and won a fourth straight District 6 Heritage Conference crown and captured the Appalachian Bowl for the fourth time in as many years — but one that ends without a piece of district hardware.

"They had a fantastic season: 12 wins is spectacular and their body of work over four years is tremendous," Ligonier Valley head coach Roger Beitel said. "(For our seniors) to play 55 games in four seasons and be 51-4 is just incredible. There's not a lot of teams in Pennsylvania that can say that and I couldn't be prouder of these kids."

Ligonier Valley never got its explo-

sive offense going on Friday, tallying a season-low six points and just 309 total yards. The Rams scored at least 40 points in 10 games this season.

And the Rams were forced to climb uphill from the start, as Richland marched 61 yards on eight plays during its first drive on the strength of several big pass plays.

Kellan Stahl hooked up with Trevor Tustin for a 35-yard pass play on third and 15 to keep the drive alive, and Stahl later connected with star receiver Caleb Burke on a 12-yard scoring pass in the back corner of the endzone on fourth and eight to make it 7-0 just four minutes into the contest.

Richland got another scoring chance five plays later, as linebacker Lucas Sabol recovered a Kyrie Miller fumble to

See RAMS on Page 9

## Ligonier Township avoids tax increase for 2020

By JENNIFER SOPKO  
For The Echo

Ligonier Township residents will not see a property tax increase next year as originally thought during preliminary budget planning.

The township's board of supervisors on Nov. 12 voted to advertise a \$2.3 million general fund budget for 2020 that maintains a 4-mill tax rate, as recommended by the finance committee. One mill generates more than \$95,000 in revenue for Ligonier Township.

The supervisors will vote to adopt the budget in December.

Ligonier Township avoided raising taxes by cutting some discretionary projects from the budget, for which officials will instead seek grant funds, supervisor Stephanie Verna told the Echo after the meeting.

Chairman Wade Thomas assured there would be no decrease in any services to residents.

Revenue and expenditure levels remain consistent in the budget from year to year, Verna said. Health care premiums and union contract costs typically increase each year and the township usually has to figure out how to counteract that.

However, there were a few

pleasant surprises, including real estate tax transfers, which spiked in 2019. While the township initially budgeted for \$120,000 this year, it has received nearly \$164,000 to date. Those properties will be part of the tax base in 2020.

Ligonier Township also pulls in about \$106,000 per year through a franchise agreement with Comcast, Thomas pointed out.

Although the projected budget includes a deficit of more than \$75,000, the township remains in "financially good shape," Thomas said.

Ligonier Township's current finances show an excess of \$68,000, according to Ligonier Township manager Terry Carcella.

"We anticipate we're going to be in the black when we finish at the end of the year, so we've been very studious in what we're doing and how we're doing things. We've got some good revenue income from some areas that we didn't anticipate and that is the reason for it," Carcella said.

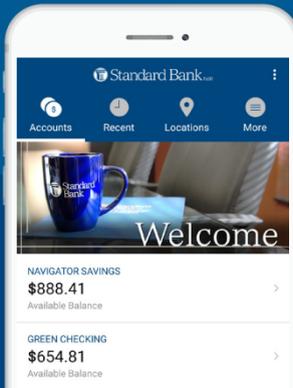
Township officials expect to close the sale on the Ligonier Beach property on Nov. 25, now that they have received

See TAX on Page 6



**Standard Bank**  
PaSB

211 West Main Street, Ligonier  
(724) 238-6655  
[www.standardbankPA.com](http://www.standardbankPA.com)  
Member FDIC



**NOW AVAILABLE!**

## FREE Business Mobile Banking

Designed for professionals on-the-go, Standard Bank's business mobile banking app offers convenience and efficiency to keep your business moving forward.

Third party carrier rates may apply.

