



Gloucester
County **Times**

Do the right thing

Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Gloucester County's 2007 budget eruption, from \$150 million to \$184 million is up for public review at a hearing at 7:30 tonight in the old county courthouse at Broad and Delaware streets in Woodbury.

The county has provided an explanation for the 23 percent spending increase, which appeared in the Times on Sunday, March 11. A number of projects are driving the costs, including a few one-time financial hits and transfers that skew the numbers.

It is unlikely that the county budget cost run-up will be the same in future years and that this is a one-time, explainable bubble.

Nonetheless, there are few assurances that the budget baseline will retreat or that the county freeholder board will drop future budgets back by amounts that match these one-time financial shifts.

Taxpayers who have heard a lot about property tax relief this year may want to pay attention to the budget the county is proposing. They may want to ask for those assurances now, to get the freeholders' best intentions on record.

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