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Pennsylvania lawmakers returned to work in Harrisburg on Monday with just weeks left to avert a repeat of last year's budget fiasco, a process that wasn't resolved until Gov. Tom Wolf let budget legislation become law without his signature in March and April. Wolf, a Democrat, won't predict whether talks with the Republican-controlled Legislature will produce a new budget by the time the coming fiscal year kicks off on July 1. "I wouldn't be someone to make a prediction," Wolf said as he left his Capitol offices. He said negotiators were "moving" and "trying to get things to the point where we're not here for a long time this year."

Wolf has proposed a $33.3 billion spending plan that would increase funding for schools, public pensions, human services and prisons. It would be paid for mostly with an 11 percent increase in the state's personal income tax, from 3.07 percent to 3.4 percent, along with higher taxes on gas drilling, gambling, insurance premiums, tobacco products and cable TV.

Republicans balked at tax increases last year and hope to reap significant savings from changes to the state's two major public-sector pension plans for state workers and teachers. All 203 seats in the House and half of the 50-seat Senate are on the ballot in November. The House late last month voted against two proposals that would have expanded gambling to fund teachers' pensions.

Groups that represent public school administrators and business officials said Monday a survey of their members indicated 85 percent of districts

complaint from her twin sister

plan to increase property taxes, about half expect to cut or scale back academic programs and activities, nearly half plan job cuts and a strong majority will be increasing class size.

The study by the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators and the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials said the 2015-16 impasse forced 48 districts to borrow money to operate and caused more than 140 districts to lower, delay or renegotiate vendor payments.

Wolf said he had not seen the study but recognized the effect state policymakers have had on local schools. "I think there's some real interest in making sure that we do our budgeting so that they can plan a little bit better," he said. The Legislature's independent fiscal agency estimates the deficit for the coming fiscal year at $1.8 billion. – ***Associated Press***

Verizon Communications Inc. on Monday planned to submit a second-round bid of about $3 billion for Yahoo Inc.'s core internet business, said a person familiar with the matter.

The telecom company, seen as the leading contender to buy Yahoo, was expected to meet Monday's deadline for the second round of bids. Yahoo is expected to hold at least one more cycle of bidding, and the offers could change by the final round, people familiar with the matter have said. A Verizon spokesman and a Yahoo spokesman declined to comment.

Verizon indicated it isn't interested in acquiring certain Yahoo assets, such as patents and real estate, as part of the deal, one of the people said. Yahoo said earlier this year it is exploring the sale of non-core assets, including real estate and patents, that could fetch more than $1 billion.

As of late Monday, private-equity firm TPG was expected to submit a second-round bid before the deadline, according to a person familiar with the matter. It wasn't clear if the other suitors that previously participated in the auction submitted new bids. They included private-equity firms Advent International and Vista Equity Partners, as well as a group led by Quicken Loans founder Dan Gilbert. It is possible that not everyone will bid for all of the core business and that proposals will be structured differently.

Last month, The Wall Street Journal reported that Verizon and other potential suitors were expected to bid about $2 billion to $3 billion in the second round. That range is lower than the price Yahoo's web properties were expected to fetch as recently as April, when people close to the process said Yahoo's core business likely would go for between $4 billion and $8 billion.

Some bidders were less enthusiastic about doing a deal after last month's sale presentations by Yahoo Chief Executive Marissa Mayer at the company's Sunnyvale, Calif., headquarters, according to people who attended the meetings. Those presentations revealed the extent to which Yahoo's online advertising business is declining, the people said.

Verizon, which acquired AOL Inc. last year for $4.4 billion, is seen as having the clearest path to turning around Yahoo. The telecom giant likely would combine Yahoo's web properties, which together attract more than a billion users a month, with its growing business in online ads. That would enable Verizon to offer more than at least some other bidders.

In submitting its bid, Verizon told Yahoo it would be willing to pay more or less based on a few lingering questions about the deal, the person said. For example, Verizon likely would pay a higher price if Yahoo agreed to help cover the cost of employee severance payments for any workers cut as a result of the acquisition, the person said. The bulk of Yahoo's roughly $35 billion market capitalization is comprised of its stakes in Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. and Yahoo Japan. – ***Wall Street Journal***

Dish Network is sprucing up its wireless airwaves. That could make them more attractive to a deep-pocketed suitor.

The satellite-TV provider filed a letter with regulators last week outlining its decision to use some of its wireless spectrum, previously designated for uploading data, for downloading data instead. Historically, the Federal Communications Commission has licensed spectrum in paired upload-download bands. But the rise of video streaming—key to wireless companies' current growth strategies—has meant carriers need more download capacity.

Dish also said the global wireless standards body had agreed on specifications for the majority of its spectrum, meaning it will be built into phones as early as 2017. Hidden behind the technical details was the upshot for investors: Dish's spectrum is becoming more valuable.

Indeed, the moves align with Dish Chairman Charlie Ergen's goal of extracting the greatest possible value for the huge trove of airwaves his company controls. At a meeting with analysts last Thursday, he refuted a recent report by a short seller and reiterated his stance that the explosion in data usage means Dish's spectrum will be increasingly valuable to a buyer or a partner.

Of course, some analysts argue there may only be two buyers that could afford to pay Mr. Ergen's price: AT&T and Verizon Communications. And AT&T, which only recently completed a deal to buy Dish's chief satellite rival DirecTV, spent $18.2 billion on licenses for similar spectrum in the FCC's last auction. That leaves Verizon, which has asserted it doesn't need to buy Dish.

Mr. Ergen appears unconcerned—and it seems with good reason. He said that foreign carriers, cable operators and internet companies could also be interested in Dish's spectrum. And he is clearly prepared to wait for the right buyer to emerge. A lot could happen before 2020—the earliest deadline for Dish to put its spectrum to use in a network.

In the meantime, Dish's stock, down 28% over the past year, looks poised for a turnaround. The quiet period surrounding the continuing government spectrum auction will come to a close in the second half of the year, allowing potential deal talks to start up again.

The market has already begun to realize it was placing too low a value on Dish's spectrum, pushing shares up more than 16% over the past month. Dish's closing price Friday of roughly $54 values the spectrum at $21 billion before taxes, assuming a multiple for the core business of five times 2017 estimates for earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization. But if Dish could get a buyer to match the average price paid in the last auction, its spectrum would be worth $65 billion, and its shares would be worth $111. The right price may be somewhere in between. Dish's attractive airwaves are still its ticket to the ball. – ***Wall Street Journal***

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