

TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON
BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

PUBLIC BUDGET MEETING

April 1, 2017
Saturday

The Township Council held a Budget Meeting in the Municipal Building, 350 Pascack Road. The meeting was called to order at 8:07 a.m. by Council President Robert Bruno, with the Council President leading a salute to the flag. Members present: Peter Calamari, Steve Cascio, Tom Sears, Michael Ullman and Robert Bruno. Also present: Janet Sobkowicz, Mayor; Mary Anne Groh, Business Administrator and Susan Witkowski, Township Clerk.

This Special Meeting was called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Notices of this meeting were emailed and provided to The Ridgewood News, Pascack Press, The Record and Community Life on March 29, 2017. In addition, copies of said notices were posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Complex and filed in the office of the Township Clerk on the aforementioned date.

GENERAL PUBLIC DISCUSSION

A motion was made by Councilman Cascio, seconded by Councilman Sears to open the general public discussion.

Ayes: Councilmen Calamari, Cascio, Sears, Ullman, Bruno.

Nays: None.

Seeing none, a motion was made by Councilman Cascio, seconded by Councilman Sears to close the general public discussion.

Ayes: Councilmen Calamari, Cascio, Sears, Ullman, Bruno.

Nays: None.

2017 Budget Review

The plus's and minus's will be distributed to Council Monday night, which is the same night as the budget is being introduced. Tax Impact page was discussed, a decrease of \$56.00 was expected for a homeowner assessed at \$464,000. Other deductions are numbers which are driven off the revenue summary page, if any of those are changed it will affect the amount to be raised by taxation. The amount to be raised by taxation is derivative of what Council intends to spend, less what Council is going fund from revenues, surplus, and taxation. Administrator Groh spoke of the summary of revenue, police outside billing and grant money. Reserve for uncollected taxes was discussed, the library tax and the school budget. Councilman Calamari stated as per Mr. Poller's email of Friday, he would like to add another \$30,000 in line item 155-260, in addition to what was given, under Professional Services Line. Mr.

Sears agrees with Councilman Calamari. Councilman Cascio stated Mr. Poller is obligated by the Charter to do all legal representation for a salary, so he will not agree to the raise. Councilman Ullman stated he does agree with Councilman Calamari and he does appreciate Councilman's Cascio position, although he doesn't agree with the additional \$30,000., he feels more comfortable with an additional \$20,000, since there is an intervener. Mayor Sobkowicz feels \$25,000 would be a good number, that is her recommendation. The recommendation number for line item 7-01-20-146-260 will now be \$125,000.00.

A motion was made by Councilman Calamari, seconded by Councilman Sears to increase of \$25,000.00

Ayes: Councilman Calamari, Sears, Ullman, Bruno.

Nays: Councilman Cascio.

The CAFR numbers were discussed, which together ties back to 1.1 million. Councilman Ullman spoke of the benefit of actual reporting and feedback on the budget by departments. Councilman Calamari suggested doing a review at the end of September. Administrator Groh spoke of the temporary budget versus the actual budget which shows different information. Council President Bruno asked that after adoption, Council be provided with an actual. Capital Surplus currently has a balance of \$514,000, \$200,000 was not used in the appropriations, it will be applied against the 5%, which leaves a balance of \$314,000 in reserve, \$164,000 can be spent, leaving \$150,000 in Capital Surplus. There is approximately \$400,000 of old unfunded ordinances that Ms. Morrone is working on, \$8,000 was used for radios/equipment, leaving \$392,000 to be used as per the ordinances, which Ms. Morrone is looking into. A conversation followed on how far along Ms. Morrone is in this process. Some of these ordinances are 15 years old, money has been borrowed and nothing has been done with the money. A conversation followed on using the monies by matching what is in the ordinance or cancelling them all out and have the monies go into Capital Surplus. Permanent debt will be paid off next year. Administrator Groh stated it was her understanding that the Mayor and Ms. Morrone will be working on this together, she did forward ordinances to both the Mayor and Ms. Morrone. Ms. Morrone will be asked to work on this and forward her findings to Council. At this time there is 4.6 million dollars of existing surplus, 1.9 million was prepaid in school taxes, which was a mistake in the Finance Department. A conversation followed on the 1.9 million which was prepaid in school taxes, how that mistake occurred and who signed off. Council President Bruno is recommending out of the 4.6 million, 1.6 million go into surplus this year, leaving 3 million, there is also a million dollars in another account for the middle school, and there is an overfunded employment fund. He stated he wants financial transparency, he thinks it is very good/positive and Council does need to start using taxpayers money wisely. Councilman Ullman doesn't disagree, but he would suggest out of the Capital Surplus not the \$150,000 but \$200,000. Councilman Calamari he stated he would agree. Councilman Sears agrees with the \$200,000. Council President

Bruno stated we would keep \$200,000, which leaves us with \$114,000. The \$392,000 was discussed, along with the money in the middle school. Mayor Sobkowicz stated she feels the money from the middle school should go into the Road Department building, something that is more permanent nature, something long term. The auditor will be asked on what can be done with the \$140,000. Councilman Ullman questioned the surplus line, is this money that we may be able to use for a signature project? Administrator Groh went upstairs to run some reports, along with the difference between 1.6 and 1.2 in the tax rate. Road Program was discussed, the amount being \$700,000 along with an updated map of what was done/excluded, 30% of the roads were done. A conversation followed on the roads that were done, along with phases of longer roads that were done and completing larger sections at one time. Mr. Statile will be contacted regarding the remaining roads. The intersection was discussed along with putting monies aside for that area and grants that were received for the roads. Increasing the road program amount was discussed to concentrate on certain blocks. Council agreed to increase the line item to \$800,000. Some manholes and catch basins do need to be repaired. The purchase of a new fire truck was discussed at a cost of 1.268 million the department currently has the specs. The Fire Department building was discussed, fixing that first and fitting a standard truck. Truck #41 is operational, except for the ladder, once the pistons are fixed the truck then becomes operational. A conversation followed on the trucks that need to be fixed, one with hydraulics, one with the pump and one with the brakes. Comments were made on why these repairs are not being done, and a schedule of repairs done. Council President Bruno spoke of his conversation with the department on getting a new fire truck and working with what they have. Grant money was discussed, putting money into the line item for renovations to firehouse, an amount of \$1,000,000. Councilman Calamari would like to know the numbers for a renovation along with the numbers for a new building. Councilman Ullman suggested once the budget is in the books, a strategic plan should be put together for infrastructure. Councilman Cascio stated we do have a planner for that. Council agreed to put a one million into the line item of renovations to the firehouse, following with a strategic plan. Councilman Calamari stated for the municipal building, along with DMF he would recommend \$50,000 for computers, he will work with the administration and the IT person (Doug/DART.) There are a total of 22 computers between Town Hall and the DMF, and another 3 were added just in case for the Fire Department. Doug (DART) gave a price of \$1,000 per station, which includes the computer and larger monitor. The laptop for the administrator is about \$2,000, antivirus, Office Suite, one seat per department, and a new fire wall at a cost of \$2,000, along with Doug's labor. The equipment cost of \$32,000/\$33,000 and \$17,000 for Doug's labor in implementing all of these computers. The recommendation of \$50,000 does include a cushion. Administrator Groh printed out 3 pages that were affected in the budget, based on some errors and changes. She also generated a new revenue sheet, which shows if 1.2 million is used in surplus, given the new budget, the total amount to be raised by taxation is \$8,920,925 with a reduction for the average

assessed home of \$183.00, using the 1.6 million in surplus, the reduction to the average assessed home is \$298.00. She provided a Summary of Increases and Decreases, along with a quote for a leaf pusher for \$6,700. Regarding the score board, as per Chris Statile, \$25,000 installed is more accurate number.

Administrator Groh left at 9:47

Leaf pusher will be added to the GMC Dump Truck, making that line item \$82,000. Mayor Sobkowicz stated she did speak with Chris Statile about the DMF building, and they will be looking at another site. A conversation followed on the price of the building, which would be in the area of 1.5 to 2 million. Councilman Ullman spoke of prioritizing projects and coming up with a realistic plan. Councilman Calamari suggested having Mr. Statile look at combining DMF with Ambulance/Fire if the property looked at is large enough. Council agreed they would like a recommendation from Mr. Statile by the first meeting in May. Council agreed to 2 million for the DMF building. Memorial Field grants were discussed and the scoreboard, which is currently not working. The Recreation Department stated if a new scoreboard is provided, they would like to move it to a different location. Baseball is not interested in a scoreboard at Sherry Field.

A motion was made by Councilman Calamari, seconded by Councilman Ullman, to fund \$25,000 for a new scoreboard.

Ayes: Councilman Calamari, Cascio, Sears, Ullman, Bruno.

Nays: None.

Police Department

Council agreed to the following amounts:

\$22,000 Breathalizer
\$21,000 Rolling Signs
\$16,000 E-Tickets

Updating the phone system was discussed. Research does need to be done including the cost. It will be deferred to 2018 capital.

Putting an amount in land acquisition was discussed, which does tie into the intersection. Conducting a traffic study was discussed, and if the County doesn't do one, the Township should.

A motion was made by Councilman Cascio, seconded by Councilman Ullman to put \$300,000 in the land acquisition line item.

Ayes: Councilman Calamari, Cascio, Sears, Ullman, Bruno.

Nays: None.

Council President Bruno thanked WCTV, Council, Township Clerk's Office, and Department heads for their help in the budget process. He also thanked the

Mayor, along with Administrator Groh for all of their preparation and providing documentation.

A motion was made by Councilman Calamari, seconded by Councilman Sears to adjourn.

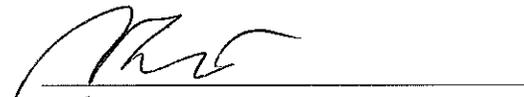
Ayes: Councilman Calamari, Cascio, Sears, Ullman, Bruno.

Nays: None.

Time noted: 10:08 a.m.



Susan Witkowski
Township Clerk



Robert Bruno
Council President

Approved: June 26, 2017

