

Minutes
Special Budget Review Meeting- DRAFT 2
Wednesday, October 18, 2023
5:30 PM

The Special Meeting for the 2024 Budget DRAFT 2 was called to order on Thursday, October 18th at 5:30 PM by Council Member Robert Webert. Members in attendance were Bob Weber, Chad Lister, Dee VanGavree, Kelly Williamson, and Barbara Miller. Also in attendance were Mayor Roeting, Borough Manager, Theresa Eberly, Chief of Police, Justin Hess, Public Works Director, Dave Willard, Bookkeeper, Traci Eismann and CPA Allison Burke.

Before budget discussions began Happy Birthday wishes were extended by all to Mayor Roeting.

General Fund Revenue & Expenses

Theresa Eberly highlighted the changes in red made after previous budget meeting:

- Real Estate Transfer Tax was decreased \$5,000 keeping it the same as in 2023 per suggestion from Chris Black. Earned Income Tax was increased by \$50,000 after our CPA, Allison Burke was able to research prior 3 years of taxes collected by the borough as well as Manager Eberly sharing that the collection agency Keystone showed an 11% increase in the collections in Dauphin County. She will request more details from Keystone to determine whether the collections will potential remain at the 2022 and 2023 levels. These changes show a total of \$45,000 increase from Draft #1 revenue.
- General Fund expenses for materials and supplies decreased \$2,000 to \$8,000. anticipated.
- Advertising and Printing were increased by \$3,000 to cover expenses.
- Communications Coordinator was decreased by \$6,600 to \$2,400 and the additional cost will come out of the Capital Improvement Fund using funds from the Tourism Grant.
- Accounting Services for services from CPA, Allison Burke was decreased by \$7,000 in both the General Fund & Sewer Fund budgets after a breakdown of hours needed and accounting projects for 2024 were determined. Council Member Barbara Miller inquired about the hours for the CPA. Manager Eberly explained the process in which Bookkeeper, Traci Eismann, was hired with the assumption that Allison Burke would train her as well as continue to complete certain tasks monthly which were also suggestions from Auditor and STEMP Overview.
- Maintenance and Repairs for Borough Building were decreased by \$1,000 to \$9,000.
- Overtime for the Police Department was decreased by \$5,880 with the anticipation of a new part time officer joining the police force.
- The Police Department was able to decrease the cost of Ammunition & Related Supplies by \$500 now requesting \$5,000 as well as decreasing Education and Seminars by \$620 to request \$4,500.
- Discussion from prior Draft # 1 meeting was had again to ensure that the \$30,000 in expenses for Rental Inspections would be in and out being offset by Inspection fees.
- Planning & Zoning Minor Equipment Purchases were decreased 50% to \$1,000 for items needed while out in the borough on inspections and daily work.
- PW's Minor Purchases decreased by \$2,800 while Council Member Dee VanGavree looks into having a AED donated. Contracted services request of \$5,000 for mowing and removal of snow was removed from Budget for 2024.
- Changes to employee benefits included a decrease of \$4,966 after receiving only a 7.9% increase instead of the anticipated 10% increase in costs. Group Life, Short Term and Long-Term Disability have decreased by approximately \$1,000 for the year 2024, given the recent negotiations with a new provider.

- Council Member Dee VanGavree announced that EMA would be requesting \$4,000 for 2024 instead of the original \$5,000 which will decrease the expense line item “Trans to Other Funds” by \$1,000.
- These changes show a positive adjustment to the proposed budget of \$82,366.00. This improves the current deficit for 2024 by \$263,619.00, which does not include the suggested changes brought forward at this meeting.

Capital Fund Discussion

Borough Manager Theresa Eberly highlighted the following:

- Manager Eberly explained the delay until at least July of 2024 for the funds anticipated from the STEMP study. The Borough also did not receive DCNR grant for the Hummel Nature Trail, and we are awaiting the decisions on the potential Federal funding.
- A brief description of each grant provided and with an indication of when the grant project will be initiated.
- Municipal Facilities includes some renovations and addition to Public Works Shop. Dave Willard from PW’s shared per OSHA at partition is needed for use of breaks/lunch. Also bathroom improvements are needed.
- Park Project expenses included the rollover from 2023 budget of the replacement of the pavilion roof at Alexander Park. Council Woman Barbara Miller asked if PWs could do this work instead of bidding out. David Willard explained the PW crew has experience, however, is planning to manage other projects. A discussion was started by Mayor Roeting as to whether metal vs shingles are cheaper and how our ordinance reads when it comes to covering an old roof. Alternating years for replacing trash cans and picnic tables was also explained.
- Manager Eberly explained the borough is provided \$125,000 annually in Liquid Fuels to complete road repairs. The funds are shown in Capital Improvement Funds for assistance with funding this.
- The discussion about repairing roads and alleys will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting once Manager Eberly has more information. While discussing the replacing of curbs it was noted that with it being such a small job The Borough is having difficulties securing a contractor at a fair price. Mayor Roeting suggested maybe just adding this on to a larger job at some point.
- A side bar discussion was had about the Kinsley Construction changes and quote of \$2,100 to be budgeted out of Stormwater budget.
- The purchase of a new 60” Turn Mower to replace the current mower which has over 3,000 hours of usage was discussed by David Willard as well as Air Compressor in budget from the 1970’s. PW’s is also requesting a Line Painter which also dates to the 1970’s and has operating issues. Chad Lister supports these requests after seeing firsthand all the repairs to equipment that has been made.
- The Police Department is due for a new patrol car to be paid for over a two-year loan agreement. The purchase of replacing assault riffles will be moved to 2025. The plan for camera usage in individual police vehicles was explained by Chief Hess. The Chief also explained a lot of the costs for PD are due to the Evidence Library. The importance of effective night vision equipment was explained to The Board.
- The Economic Development of Downtown includes \$10,000 every other year for tree trimming for nutrition as well as the appearance of Downtown. Manager Eberly suggested the possibility of moving this until 2025 when we receive grant money. A brief discussion was also had as to the age of the trees and replacing them.

- Manger Eberly explained the importance of all the IT items that are essential to the borough in 5-year plan. Borough Council agreed these items should be purchased and their importance to the operations of different departments. Also included in approved purchases were the new server and two switches and UPS (Uninterrupted Power System).
- The Fire Department lowered their increase request from \$100,000 to \$70,000. The need for this increase is to help with the cost of equipment, uniforms, and related items as well as payments due for airpack's and cylinders purchased by joining with other Fire Departments to lessen cost using a FEMA Grant. It was also asked that the accounting line items for hydrant rental be allocated to a different line item to not look as though it is going to fire hall. Fire hall currently does receive about \$12,000 from state grant each year as well as money from Gaming Grant. To date this year The Fire Company announced they have spent \$150,000. Chief Kienzle requested assistance from Manager Eberly to help them research and secure grants for coming years.

Other Business

- Council Member Bob Weber voiced he feels we need to move forward with the 2nd round of STEMP money request.
- Council Member Dee VanGavree inquired about information she had requested breaking down charges for engineering and legal costs. A listing was presented to Borough Council, and they plan to review it in more detail. Quarterly reports will be distributed to Borough Council members beginning in 2024.
- Council Woman Dee VanGavree pointed out Borough's Portion Due from Capital Fund and where these funds would come from. Manager Eberly explained we would need to use reserves and the importance of setting up a "Due to Stormwater from General Fund" line item and utilizing it.
- Council Woman Dee VanGavree expressed her concerns on how the taxpayer's money will be spent and wants the borough council to be careful when making these decisions.
- Kelly Williamson requested a discussion of the MIL Rate and explanation on charts created by CPA, Allison Burke. Currently the average assessed property value in the chart is estimating is \$219,000, The Borough Council and as well as Tax Collector, Angela Durantine feel as though this average is very high. It was noted by Tax Collector Durantine that only 23 properties when delinquent last year and 22% went delinquent for Occupational Taxes.

Manager Eberly reminded everyone present that at the next meeting we would like to have most of the changes finalized so that the Final Draft can be presented at the last scheduled budget meeting on November 14, 2023.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Traci Eismann, Bookkeeper