

BOROUGH OF WEST READING
BOROUGH COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP/COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 28, 2019

West Reading Borough Council held a Budget Workshop and Council Meeting at Borough Hall on Saturday, September 28, 2019 with the following persons present: Council President Philip Wert, Vice President Christopher Lincoln (by phone); Council Members Jennifer Bressler, Patrick Kaag, Suzanne Thompson; Mayor Andrew Kearney; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Public Works Director Dean Murray; Borough Manager Nicholas Imbesi; and Treasurer Jeanette Rentschler.

VISITORS	James Rogers	Resident
	Oswald Herbert	Resident
	Nathalie Kulesa	Resident (on behalf of Recreation Department)

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Philip Wert called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m., which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

PUBLIC COMMENT

James Rogers inquired as to further discussions surrounding the Business Privilege Tax. Mr. Wert indicated that this would be discussed later on in the budget session.

BOROUGH MANAGER

Mr. Imbesi asked for council to adopt Ordinance 1115 – Accepting Dedication of Roads within the Villas at Narrow Subdivision.

Motion to adopt Ordinance 1115 accepting dedication of Barnhardt Way, Cashmere Way – South Portion, Walnut Way, Silk Drive and Chiffon Way. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Mr. Imbesi requested council to approve the advertisement of the trash/recycling request for proposal.

Motion to advertise a request for bids for collection, transportation, marketing and processing of municipal solid waste, recyclable materials and yard waste. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 4-0.**

RECREATION

Helen Moyer, Recreation Director was absent and Mrs. Kulesa presented the department budget. The following were changes and discussions about the proposed budget:

- 90-367-105 Bicentennial Rental is now open to non-residents and has a year-end-estimate of \$8,000 dollars. Therefore, the proposed income is being increased to \$6,000.
- It was noted that attendance to the water classes have really increased.
- Mrs. Kulesa noted that registration fees for playground has increased, therefore the income projection was increased to \$20,000.
- 90-367-400 Pool Concessions are being increased to \$21,000 from \$20,000. Mr. Wert noted that the prices at the concession stand are fair, and that this year the service was much better.
- Discussion took place concerning the 4th of July fireworks display and whether the event should be canceled since Community Days fireworks fall on the same day. It was decided that the fireworks at the park will be cancelled in 2020. Therefore, line item 90-367-815 will be zero, and line item 90-451-113 will be reduced from \$10,000 to \$2,500 to cover expenses for extended pool hours, games, etc.

- 90-380-100 Misc. Recreation Revenue was increased by \$500 dollars because the prior year revenue from events such as the Easter egg hunt was placed in the wrong line item.
- It was noted that items for the Father/Daughter Dance, Mother/Son Dance, and Harvest Hayride are recycled from previous years, which helps to keep the costs down for these events.
- Discussion took place for line item 90-452-022 Maintenance/Repairs (pool) and whether \$750 dollars was the true cost for the paint needed. Discussion took place about a proposed project to repaint the pool, Mr. Murray stated that the pool was painted approximately 10-12 years ago and that is the usual lifespan for pool paint. Mr. Wert mentioned that he noticed the peeling paint in the pool. The treasurer then found that the painting of the pool was budgeted in line item 30-450-000.
- 90-452-023 Equipment was increased to a proposed \$3,100 for an Aqua Chair and a Message Center for the pool. The aqua chair is needed to be ADA compliant, while the message center is being requested to post messages outside the pool.
- 90-452-370 Repairs & Maintenance of Buildings and Supplies was increased to a proposed \$43,500. This amount would include \$10,000 to repaint the pavilion; \$1,500 for pool mats in the bathhouse; and \$32,000 is for the regular budgeted amount. Discussion took place about how important it is to repaint the pavilion for the safety of guests and children. Mrs. Kulesa noted that the current pool mats have been there for nearly 30 years.
- After adjusting different line items, the overall shortfall went from \$189,040 to \$186,040.
- The Recreation Capital Expenditures line item was discussed at great length. Currently, a proposed \$139,000 is being requested for the following projects:
 - \$19,000 to finish the sections of fencing surrounding the pool;
 - \$60,000 towards a pedestrian bridge;
 - \$60,000 towards pool painting and resurfacing repairs.
- Mr. Herbert suggested that a way to increase revenues was to have naming rights at the pool, pavilion, etc.

The Recreation Department budget portion of the meeting ended at 10:55 a.m. and a break in the meeting took place until 11:03 a.m.

PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Murray began presenting his budget at 11:05 a.m. The following were changes and discussions that took place for the Public Works proposed budget:

- Mr. Murray increased the projected revenue for 01-362-500 Public Works Request for Assistance line item to \$10,000 because of the number of events taking place in the borough.
- 01-391-373 Sale of Public Works Vehicles, Mr. Murray noted that the bucket van isn't doing too well, and proposed to sell it. He believes the 1997 van could be sold for \$2,000.
- 01-409-373 Maintenance and Repairs, Shared Buildings Expenses: The proposed \$58,500 was reduced by \$13,500 to \$45,000. The new grand total for Shared Building Expenses went from \$64,200 to \$50,700.
- Mr. Murray noted that part-time help was increased to \$7,000 to try to obtain better coverage.
- Health and Accident insurance is projected to increase 2.8% in 2020.
- 01-430-336 Vehicle Replacements is being proposed at \$130,000 for a new bucket van. Mr. Murray noted that a lease option is possible. The cost would be \$28,000 for five years; however, this option added an additional \$10,000 due to interest. Mr. Murray also noted that the WRCRF is willing to contribute funds toward a bucket van.

- Mrs. Rentschler stated that vehicle insurance is increasing by an estimate of 8% due to high claims throughout borough departments in 2019.
- 01-430-740 Major Equipment is being increased to a proposed \$8,200 to add a drag box to maintain the fields and track. Mr. Wert noted that a drag box might lower insurance rates, but Mrs. Rentschler thought it was unlikely because of the way the borough policy is setup.
- Mr. Murray noted that traffic signals and street signs was being reduced from \$12,000 to \$7,000.
- Penn Avenue Maintenance and Repairs: a lengthy discussion took place concerning the granite street corners and who should pay to have granite repointed and re-grouted. The sidewalk, along with the granite is the responsibility of the property owner. However, it was decided that the borough would split the cost with the property owner. The cost is \$900 per corner and includes four intersections. The total proposed budgeted amount for 01-465-370 is \$17,800.
- Mr. Murray moved onto water expenses: \$15,000 is being proposed from this fund for a vehicle replacement. A new pickup truck would be assigned to the borough mechanic.
- Capital Water Projects: \$91,500 to repave Pine Street and \$36,000 to repave South 5th Avenue from Pine Street to Oak Terrace. A discussion took place about curbing. Mr. Lincoln noted that property owners should be fixing curbing before we pave. It was noted that the borough in the past has done the work and billed the property owners their portion of the work.

Andrew Kearney departed the meeting at 12:26 p.m.

- Mr. Murray moved onto sewer expenses: 1/3 of the cost to purchase a pickup truck is being proposed at \$15,000.
- Mr. Murray noted that estimates came back for the Linden Lane sewer project at \$425,000. It was noted that the small water/sewer system grant is open again and that SDE is working on it. Mr. Imbesi noted he is having lunch with representative Mark Rozzi and will discuss the grant with him.
- Building Capital Expenditures is broken down in the following manner:
 - \$12,000 for borough hall windows
 - \$6,000 for blocks at the end of Linden
 - \$6,000 for borough hall alarm system
 - \$15,000 for gas piping at the Public Works Shop
 - \$5,000 for A/C repairs
- Highway Capital Expenditures is broken down in the following manner:
 - \$53,000 for street sweeper (two years remaining)
 - \$204,000 to repave S 7th Avenue
 - \$144,000 to repave Sycamore Road from the Fieldhouse to Linden Lane
 - \$50,000 to repave the 400 block of Grape Street
 - \$40,000 for handicap ramps (8 of them) at Linden Lane and Sycamore
 - It was noted that out of all the projects, Sycamore Road was the priority

The Public Works portion of the budget meeting ended at 12:50 p.m.

BUSINESS PRIVILEGE TAX

Mr. Imbesi provided a recap on the entire BPT history and the communications with attorney Joan London on how to repeal the portion of the tax that was lowered. After discussion, Council directed Mr. Imbesi to begin the repeal process with Joan London.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council recessed to an executive session at 1:15 p.m. to discuss personnel matters. Council reconvened at 1:38 p.m. and no action was taken.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:40 p.m. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Kaag.

Motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicholas Imbesi
Borough Manager