

BOROUGH OF WEST READING
BOROUGH COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP/COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 26, 2017

West Reading Borough Council held a Budget Workshop and Council Meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, September 26, 2017 with the following persons present: Council President Carl G. Garman; Council Vice President Nathalie Kulesa; Council Members Nicholas Imbesi, Philip Wert, Christopher Lincoln, Suzanne Thompson, Grace Craze; Borough Manager Cathy Hoffman; Treasurer Jeanette Rentschler; and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira. Mayor Valentin Rodriguez, Jr. was unable to attend.

Visitors Present: Oswald Herbert, Karen Livingood and Amber Rambo

CALL TO ORDER:

Council President Carl G. Garman called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m., which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mrs. Livingood noted that as directed by the Police Chief during last week's meeting she reported to the non-emergency Police line cars that were parked illegally this evening.

A.H. MOYER APPLICATION FOR PAYMENT:

Systems Design Engineering has recommended payment of A.H. Moyer's Payment Application No. 1 for the sanitary sewer replacement and paving project of Contract A in the amount of \$72,243.90 for the work that has been completed satisfactorily to date.

Motion to authorize payment to A.H. Moyer for Payment Application No. 1 of Contract A in the amount of \$72,243.90. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

FULL-TIME CLERICAL ADVERTISEMENT:

Council reviewed the Full-Time Police/Borough Administrative Aide advertisement and requested the addition of the benefit package to attract more qualified candidates. The Police Chief, Mayor and Borough Manager will be involved in the interview process along with the Personnel Committee. Mr. Wert requested a job description be provided with the application package.

Motion to advertise for a Full-Time Police/Borough Administrative Aide with noted changes. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

2018 BUDGET

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Chief Burkholder presented the Fire Department budget.

- Ms. Craze inquired as to the number of grants that were applied for during 2017. Chief Burkholder indicated state and federal grants were applied for however he does not have time to devote to researching additional grant monies.
- Mr. Imbesi inquired as to the number of active volunteers. Chief Burkholder indicated there are currently 15 volunteers that need to meet a certain percentage of call attendance to be approved for training. Chief Burkholder also noted that while Jason Witman was recently on medical leave there was no one on call during business hours.
- In addition to annual turn-out gear purchases Chief Burkholder requests purchasing bullet-proof vests for the volunteers which is primarily needed on the dramatically increased number of medical calls.
- The fire tax funds of approximately \$40,000 per year are being placed in the Special Reserve fund in preparation of fire truck purchase and potential full-time fire chief. Chief Burkholder suggested a 20-year cycle to replace the two fire trucks due to the expense and difficulty in repairing older trucks.

- Chief Burkholder explained the expenditure for data pertaining to the i-pads in each of the vehicles; the i-pads provide directions to the call, which is provided by dispatch as well as hydrant mapping and storage of up-to-date building maps.
- Full-Time Fire Chief salary was discussed as well as the addition of health insurance and pension benefits.
- The total requested budget for 2018 with full-time fire chief salary and benefits is \$283,203.

WRCRF COOPERATION AGREEMENT:

With a strong economic rejuvenation program currently in place Council discussed expiration of the Elm Street designation on July 1, 2017 and potentially hiring Mr. Rohrbach as a Borough employee or remaining as a West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation employee. Mr. Wert will obtain an updated list of events requiring in-kind services and Mrs. Hoffman will request updated service hours from the Public Works and Police Departments for these events.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

There were no items for executive session.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mrs. Livingood thanked the Council President for his understanding of the importance of the future purchase of a replacement fire vehicle.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 p.m. **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Madeira
Assistant to the Manager