

## February 18, 2021 – Budget Workshop Session

The Township Committee met on the above date via Gotomeeting.com with Deputy Mayor Panfili calling the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Roll call was taken showing present: Mayor Jeremy Liedtka (6:20), Deputy Mayor Lido Panfili, Committeewoman Denise Koetas-Dale and Committeeman Shreekant Dhopte. Also present Thomas Sahol, Administrator; Wendy Wulstein, CFO and Caryn Hoyer, Clerk. Absent was Committeeman Michael Russo.

Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act was noted.

Ms. Wulstein stated that she and Tom have met with BAC two times. She reviewed the draft budget with the Township Committee and asked for their comments.

Mr. Dhopte asked about the grant for the HPC. Mr. Panfili stated that is for the Chesterfield specific standards.

Mr. Dhopte asked about the CTAA request. Ms. Koetas Dale asked if they gave us justification why they want \$25,000. Mr. Panfili stated that previously it was for specific bills such as insurance. Ms. Wulstein stated they are not paying for the field usage. That offsets costs they have for the field. Mr. Sahol will talk to them about the in-kind services. Mr. Liedtka joined the meeting at 6:20 PM.

DPW and snow removal was discussed. Mayor Liedtka stated we have a snow reserve fund. Ms. Wulstein stated there is a reserve of \$60,000 but that hasn't been used. She has worked with Mr. Sahol and Mr. Ulshafer on the costs and keeping an eye on it. If there is extra money in DPW at the end of the year it could be added to the reserve.

Senior Citizens was discussed since they have not been meeting and we are now sure when they are coming back. It was recommended to reduce to \$500 with the understanding it would go back next year to \$1,000.

Ms. Koetas-Dale asked about the old building cost. Ms. Wulstein stated the money is under property maintenance. That will need to go to \$65,000.

Mr. Dhopte asked about the \$11,000 for the Harvest Fest. Ms. Wulstein stated that is run with a lot of donations. It is unknown if businesses will be willing to donate this year. Ms. Wulstein stated the biggest cost of the Harvest Fest are the rides. Mr. Dhopte believes the last Harvest Fest costs were around \$21,000 which included the donations.

The Drug Alliance Program was discussed. Ms. Wulstein stated that is covered under the grant and has a trust fund for additional costs. The school is non-committal at this time so not sure that is going to happen this year. Ms. Koetas-Dale believed they were looking at some kind of virtual options. Ms. Wulstein stated she is not sure that would work as kids are probably getting sick of online activities. Ms. Koetas-Dale stated the grant also pays for the Music in the Park.

Mr. Liedtka asked about the reserve for uncollected taxes. Ms. Wulstein stated she is looking to probably lower that by \$100,000.

Mr. Panfili asked about the credit from MTAC and is that anticipated. Ms. Wulstein stated it is an unknown and hard to anticipate.

Mr. Dhopte asked about recreation and capital. Ms. Wulstein stated the capital budget is not finished and will send something out in the next couple of days. He asked about the volleyball court and tennis wall. Ms. Wulstein stated the volleyball court has been delayed due to the weather. Mr. Liedtka stated it is getting done we are just waiting for better weather to do final grading. Ms. Wulstein stated the recreation money is not part of the budget. They are spent by Ordinance. Mr. Sahol stated the tennis wall came in over budget. The wall was underestimated. He believes he can get this project under the bid threshold which will be a savings to the town.

Mr. Panfili asked if someone can reach out to the Board of Education for allowing parking for residents at the old firehouse on New Street. Mr. Sahol is meeting with the BOE next week and will ask.

Mr. Dhopte asked about the Bordentown soccer fields and if we are able to utilize them, will there will be additional costs. Mr. Panfili stated that if they want those fields, the CTAA should maintain them.

Ms. Wulstein asked about the revenue side of the budget. She asked for direction on the ABC license fee, and reserve from sale of assets. It was agreed to remain the same as last year, ABC would be waived and reserve utilized would be \$50,000.

There was discussion regarding the billboard revenue. Mr. Sahol stated that it will be about \$8,000. The committee expressed their concern that there would not be much revenue from it.

Mr. Sahol suggested looking to a solid waste franchise tax. Ms. Wulstein suggested a film ordinance. There is no guarantee there will be filming here, but it is better to have an ordinance in place.

Ms. Wulstein asked about a tax rate. Mr. Dhopte would like to see 1-2 point. He does not want to keep the rate flat. Ms. Wulstein stated that 1.6 would be about a \$65 increase for the year on the average assessed home. The entire committee agreed.

Mr. Panfili asked if increasing the recycling center is going to have any additional costs. Mr. Sahol stated the goal is to add staffing to have extended hours as requested by the residents.

Mr. Dhopte asked what additional expenses we would have continuing the virtual meetings once we come back to the building. Mr. Sahol recommended additional licenses for the meetings. There was discussion about use of the tablet and feedback when everyone is in the same room. Mr. Sahol stated we will test and see what is needed. Mr. Liedtka left the meeting at 7:19 PM.

There being no public present, Ms. Koetas-Dale made a motion seconded by Mr. Panfili to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 PM. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Caryn M. Hoyer, RMC  
Municipal Clerk