

# Borough of Tenafly

## MAYOR AND COUNCIL

### BUDGET MEETING MINUTES

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2013**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Peter Rustin and Council members Anthony Barzelatto (arrived at 7:32 p.m.), Barry Honig, Martha Kerge, Nadia LaMastra, Jon Warmes, and Mark Zinna

**ABSENT:** None.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Borough Administrator Jewel Thompson-Chin, Chief Financial Officer Gene Vinci

At 7:05 p.m. Mayor Rustin read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement: "In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act P.L. 1975, chapter 231, the notice requirements have been satisfied. Meeting dates for the year are listed in the Annual Agenda; copies are sent to the Record, Suburbanite, and Northern Valley Press and posted on the bulletin board in the lobby of the Municipal Center. The notice of this special budget meeting Resolution #13-70 has been sent to the Record, Suburbanite, and Northern Valley News, has been posted on the bulletin board in the lobby of the Municipal Center and Borough Website."

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No one came forward.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS**

DPW Director, Mr. Beutel noted that salaries have decreased due to a death of an employee, a retirement, and a termination. Two new employees were hired last year and less seasonal employees were used. There is an increase for the line item concerning motor vehicle parts and accessories since the equipment is getting older. There was discussion regarding the maintenance of the turf field, but it is yet to be determined as to which budget account would be responsible for the expenditure.

Mr. Beutel explained that the increase in HVAC maintenance and repairs was due to the expansion of the Police Department in which 1 contractor is in charge of whole building.

There was discussion regarding the DPW facility. Mrs. Thompson-Chin advised that there is over \$300,000 from a 2003 capital ordinance for a DPW facility. The next assignment for the engineer is to evaluate what can be done to upgrade the current site.

Mr. Beutel reviewed his goals and objective, starting with the micro-resurfacing of Jefferson Avenue from Riveredge Road to Clinton Avenue as a test to prolong the life of the street. With this type of preventative maintenance, more streets can be addressed before complete repair is required. He noted that he would like the Borough to attain Sustainable Jersey Silver Certification, but it will be difficult due to lack of participation from the public. Mr. Beutel advised that 2 DPW vehicles will be auctioned and that he would like to evaluate one particular area of the Borough to conduct an I & I study to investigate flows to determine leaks or illegal sump pump connection.

C. Barzelatto commended Mr. Beutel for his assistance in interacting with FEMA after Hurricane Sandy.

In reviewing the capital budget, Mr. Beutel commented that a main priority for this year is to replace a 1984 front end loader, which is a type of equipment that expedites storm clean up. The DPW can longer get replacement parts for this vehicle. He advised that the 1993 street sweeper needs to be replaced and a claw for the backhoe is required for storm operations. Mr. Beutel advised that the replacement of the 1988 rear packer garbage truck can be held for another year.

Mr. Beutel advised that the capital budget request includes replacing the chillers in the municipal complex, which were installed in 1986. This equipment only has a 15 year life expectancy and that \$9,000 was spent last year for interim repairs. The cost to replace the chillers was estimated at \$400,000. Mr. Vinci advised that a portion to replace chillers can come from the reappropriation from left over from police headquarters project. Mr. Beutel commented that from the annual appropriation of \$400,000 for road resurfacing, \$100,000

needs to be committed to completing Tenafly Road from Hamilton Place to Westervelt Avenue. With the \$300,000, he is seeking to have Churchill Road and Buckingham Road repaved.

#### **AUDITOR**

Mr. Vinci provided Council with a summary of revisions based on decisions made during these budget meetings. He noted that after the auditor prepared the annual financial statement, additional revisions are required, which would add to the tax levy.

Mr. Lerch advised that the annual financial statement is 95% complete and he anticipates having the surplus projection finalized tomorrow. Mr. Lerch proposed to increase the reserve for uncollected taxes by \$75,000 because the school board and county must be paid 100%. Under state law, the municipality is subjected to uncollectables. He commented that the collection rate dropped from 98.8% to 98.4%. His other recommendations included increasing FICA by \$15,000, debt service rounding, library rounding, and housecleaning in deferred charges for grants.

Mr. Lerch projected that the Borough's surplus is between \$2.9 million and \$3.1 million. He will provide a forecast for 2014 and 2015 since the reductions in expenditures in 2013 are anomalies, mainly due to numerous retirements. At this point, the 2013 municipal tax rate will increase about \$67 for the average home in the Borough.

*At 8:45 p.m. Council recessed and reconvened at 8:50 p.m.*

#### **CAPITAL BUDGET SUMMARY**

Mr. Vinci provided a list of all the equipment that department heads had requested as well as the recommended expenditures for the capital budget. He commented that prior capital ordinances were applied in this list to offset some of the expenditures.

C. Barzelatto questioned why the fire truck was not included in the capital budget. Mrs. Thompson-Chin responded that grant opportunities for a replacement vehicle were being explored. Mr. Vinci commented that if the fire truck were to be added, it would require an additional \$30,000 in the proposed capital budget for the down payment of the vehicle. Mayor Rustin highlighted that competition for the grant will be more intense especially since municipalities lost fire trucks from Sandy. He mentioned that if the Borough does not spend the money, the funds can always be reappropriated for another use. Council concurred. Council also determined not to upgrade the radio system, since the Fire Department spent over \$100,000 for upgrades last year.

C. Barzelatto inquired about the traffic study listed on the capital budget. Mrs. Thompson-Chin advised that the study will be funded from prior bond ordinance from 2006 and that the purpose of the study is to begin the first phase of implementing traffic circulation improvements. Council discussed whether to proceed with the implementation of the traffic study. The majority of Council opposed the implementation of the study and the item was removed from the capital budget.

Mrs. Aportela-Hernandez advised Council that with regards to paperless agendas, the Board of Education recommended using Dell tablets and obtained a quote for approximately \$13,000. Council directed the Borough Clerk to obtain quotes to purchase iPads. She will report back to Council once quotes are acquired.

Mr. Vinci advised that the down payment for the capital projects based on the changes made by the governing body has increased by approximately \$34,000. Mrs. Thompson-Chin confirmed that modular improvements to the DPW will come from a prior capital ordinance, which is over \$300,000. The Borough Engineer will review the needs of the DPW so that the project can be completed by 2015.

#### **CONFIRMATION OF BUDGET FOR INTRODUCTION**

C. Honig advised that the Code Enforcement Officer was appointed as a part-time subcode official in Leonia and will work 15 hours per week. Council discussed the schedule for this position, which includes court time and Saturdays, as well as the availability of the code enforcement officer available to catch violations as they occur. The consensus of the majority of Council was to keep the Code Enforcement Officer as a part time position, but to increase the hours to 29 hours per week.

C. Warms requested that funds be allocated for the summer concert series. Mr. Vinci advised that there is currently \$3000 for fireworks. Council decided to add \$25,000 for the fireworks and summer concert series. Mr. Vinci noted that he will make the amendments to the budget and forward the information to the auditor.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

As there was no further business to come before the Council, on a motion by C. Kerge, second by C. Honig , and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 9:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lissette Aportela-Hernandez, MPA, RMC  
Borough Clerk