

Borough of Tenafly

MAYOR AND COUNCIL

BUDGET MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2012

PRESENT: Mayor Peter Rustin and Council members Anthony Barzelatto
Barry Honig, Martha Kerge, Nadia LaMastra, Jon Warms, and
Mark Zinna

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Administrator Jewel Thompson-Chin
Chief Financial Officer Gene Vinci
Director of Public Works Bob Beutel
Fire Official Alden Blackwell
Director of Buildings Robert E. Byrnes

At 7:08 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 News and posted on the bulletin board in the lobby of the Municipal Center. The notice of this special budget meeting via the February 1, 2012 Sunshine Notice has been sent to the Record, Suburbanite, and Northern Valley News and posted on the bulletin board in the lobby of the Municipal Center."

Public Comments

No one came forward.

Fire Prevention

Gene Vinci, Chief Financial Officer, noted that there have been changes in the salaries for this department. He advised that the Administrative Assistant had been charged fully to the department, but, in 2012, her salary is being charged 50% to Fire Prevention and 50% to the Fire Department. He also explained that there is a new Fire Inspector who works a set 10 hours per week in comparison with the previous inspector who worked on a scaled back schedule last year. Alden Blackwell, Fire Official, advised that the new inspector is handling the inspections for non-life hazard uses, uses that are registered with and fees collected by the State, with a percentage given back to the Borough. Mayor Rustin questioned where this money is placed and Mr. Vinci advised that it is anticipated as revenue. Mr. Blackwell added that the fees are currently being billed as the inspections are performed. He advised that they are working on a software program to track these inspections and are in the process of bringing their database of building locations and uses up-to-date through search and seizure.

Mayor Rustin asked Mr. Blackwell to explain his goal of a fire lane violation system. Mr. Blackwell responded that if there is a fire lane violation on private property, Fire Prevention can write a violation under the Uniform Fire Code. He explained that if the Police issue a summons for this violation, fees are collected through the Court whereas the fees come directly to them if issued through Fire Prevention.

C. Warms suggested that there be one central database available to every department detailing each address and its use.

Mr. Blackwell reviewed some of the repairs that are needed in the Fire Department which include heating and air conditioning issues, rug replacement, and a non-working exhaust fan. There was also discussion about vehicles as there is one vehicle, a 2003 Crown Victoria, which will need replacing in the near future. C. LaMastra questioned whether Fire Prevention has use of the Building Department vehicles and suggested coordinating schedules.

C. Barzelatto commented that the Fireman's Convention should be transferred to the Fire Department budget as Mr. Blackwell is considered a delegate. C. Barzelatto then stated that he attended a seminar given by the Division of Fire Safety on a new five-step program on fire prevention and safety, with 20 minutes devoted to each step. He is planning to write to Lynn Traeger, Superintendent of Schools, and the Board of Education to request that these segments be placed on Channel 77.

Building Department

Mr. Vinci advised that there have been changes in the Plumbing Subcode line item as well as the director's salary. He explained that due to his change in title, 30% of Bob Byrnes' salary is being charged to the Building Department; it had been fully charged to the UCC in previous years. Bob Byrnes, Director of Buildings, explained that as a result of the storms in 2011, there was a high influx of permits for emergency generators and as a result, the inspection load has increased quite a bit. He noted that there has been a 24% increase in plumbing permits and explained that there is an obligation by State law to complete inspections within 72 hours of a request. He advised that in order to accommodate the increased workload, he is requesting that instead of increasing the inspector's salary, he be paid for any additional hours worked. When the work load becomes more manageable, he will return to his regular schedule.

As Borough Hall will have a central supply office, Mr. Byrnes advised that he has decreased office supplies by 20%. Due to last year's reorganization, he was able to reallocate funds for conferences & meetings as well as reduce the cost for education, training, and travel, reducing his overall budget. As there are a few candidates for Elevator Inspector, he explained that he may not go to an agency for this position.

Mayor Rustin remarked that many communities waived fees for damaged construction from the 2011. Council decided to discuss at a future work session establishing a policy to the waive permit fees for damage sustained as a result of a storm.

DPW

Bob Beutel, Director of Public Works, advised that they are currently backlogged due to a lack of personnel and time constraints. He explained that it was a difficult year with extreme weather conditions and a death in his department. Mrs. Thompson-Chin advised that the replacement of Kyle Wilfert was anticipated in the budget, but will be coming before Council for approval. Since adopting a policy of attrition, she explained that the DPW has been on the front lines of budgetary cutbacks. She expressed her opinion that an investment in personnel does need to be made.

There was discussion about whether to continue leaf pickup or switch to bagging. Mr. Beutel expressed his opinion that it would need to be begin on a volunteer basis with the anticipation to change over through education. He also believes that the bags should be provided to the residents. Council discussed the expense being passed onto the homeowner by making this change versus the productivity increases. C. Warms noted that the Environmental Commission is trying to encourage landscapers to implement a policy of "cut it and leave it." He expressed his opinion that this policy could serve as an alternative to bagging. There did not seem to be a consensus to make a change to bagging at this time.

As Kyle Wilfert's salary was already anticipated in the budget, Council decided to allow Mr. Beutel to advertise for this position. Mayor Rustin posed the idea of authorizing an

additional hire. Mrs. Thompson-Chin stated that she will look at the overall budget to see if there are other line items in which reductions can be made to allow for the additional hire.

C. Honig suggested implementing methods to enhance productivity. Mrs. Thompson-Chin advised that all work policies are spelled out within the contract and those policies simply need to be enforced. She explained that there have been meetings with the foremen to review expectations with the intention of having additional meetings with the full department. The foremen have also attended refresher managerial courses.

Mr. Beutel advised that due to the complexity of the building and vinyl flooring in the newly expanded Police Headquarters, an additional 70 hours per week will be needed for Building Maintenance. Mrs. Thompson-Chin expressed her opinion that these additional hours require more review. Mr. Vinci advised that they have incrementally budgeted 30 hours for a part-time custodian. C. Honig suggested the idea of outsourcing. Mr. Beutel is to get quotes for outsourcing the maintenance of the floors in the new Police Headquarters.

Council then reviewed the requested repairs to the various Borough properties. Mr. Beutel advised that the rear door in the Senior Center is a safety issue and should definitely be addressed. Mr. Beutel is to obtain a quote on the roof and shingles and will look to receive donations or check into whether funds are available in the trust for the patio and pavers at the Senior Center. He will speak to Julie Villafuerte, Director of the Senior Center, to see whether the heating system is a priority. Instead of investing funds in reroofing the garage at the Dunham House, he expressed his opinion that the garage should just come down. He advised that he will check into whether the garage is considered historic. Council decided to repair the roof in the Fire Department and clean the ducts at the Municipal Center as it has been approximately 15 years since it was last done. Mr. Beutel advised that there is broken tile in lobby, creating a safety issue for which new foundation will need to be poured. He is to obtain another quote for said project. Council decided that carpet will be replaced anywhere in which it poses a safety hazard. Mr. Beutel advised that the building at Davis Johnson Park has not been touched since it was built and the exterior is beginning to deteriorate. Council agreed that it is in need of repair. Mr. Beutel advised that a study is being conducted by Maser Engineering to have the playgrounds meet ADA standards and he will have a firmer number for said project once the study has been completed. The final project discussed was replacing above-ground diesel and gasoline tanks. Mr. Beutel advised that it is a project that must be completed as they have been directed to do so by the DEP. He stated that he will do more in-depth work with the Borough Engineer to get a better cost estimate.

Capital DPW

Council agreed to the DPW Capital requests for the two pickup trucks, tractor and chipper. Under Building Maintenance, Council authorized the requests for the Dunham House emergency generator, masonry wall and restoration project, flooring in the lobby and carpet replacement wherever the condition poses safety concerns.

Council then reviewed the various streets that are in need of resurfacing and costs associated with each. After some discussion, Council decided to resurface Prospect Avenue, Grove Street, Victoria Lane, and Highwood Avenue. As the Borough applied for a DOT grant for Tenafly Road, Council will consider resurfacing Trafalgar Road and Hastings Drive after the outcome of the grant application.

Adjournment

As there was no further business to come before the Council, on a motion by C. Zinna, second by C. LaMastra, and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 p.m.