

STILLWATER TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
February 4, 2017
Special Budget Meeting #3

A SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING of the Stillwater Township Committee was called to order by Mayor Chamblings at 9:12 a.m. noting the meeting date, time and place were sent the New Jersey Herald and posted at the Town Hall, on the Township's website and advised those present that this meeting was being held in compliance with provisions of P.L. 1975, Chapter 231, Sections 4 & 13.

Roll Call: PRESENT: Mayor Chamblings, Committeeman Gross, Committeeman Fisher, Committeeman Morrison, Municipal Clerk Lynda Knott, CFO Dana Mooney, ABSENT: Committeeman Scott

Mayor Chamblings asked all present to join her in saluting the flag.

This budget discussion began with the Stillwater Area Volunteer Fire Company represented by Chief Justin Francomacaro, Asst. Chief Eric van der Haeghen, Lieutenant Steven Sugar and Chief Engineer Chris Oswin.

The fire company is requesting the same contribution of \$15,000 and \$20,000 for rent of the fire trucks housed at their firehouse. A fifth truck which will be delivered soon will also be housed at the fire house but at that time the older tanker will be housed at Town Hall so the rent will remain the same.

Mayor Chamblings asked the clerk that a discussion of the older tanker be placed on the March 7, 2017 agenda.

Chief Francomacaro noted a big part of the comprehensive five year plan is a new building that would allow them to keep all the apparatus together.

Overall the operating expense requests for the fire company are down from 2016 with the exception of fire police to replace the fire police from the former Swartswood Fire Department and training costs. Chief Francomacaro said because there are no a lot of fires some training must be done at the fire academy and they have also had drills for ice rescue and vehicle extrication.

Mayor Chamblings asked the fire chief if the abandoned vehicle at the Recycling and Convenience Center belonged to the fire company. The chief answered no. The Mayor asked the clerk to add the abandoned vehicle to the February 7, 2017 agenda.

The First Responder budget request is up \$200.00

The next area discussed with the fire company was the fire trucks. The Township's truck acquired from the former Swartswood Fire Company had a request of \$6,000.00 because it will require a full service for pumps, valve repair, and chassis service. The lack of use caused valves to freeze.

Each truck and their service/maintenance requests were discussed.

The new truck 42-72 there is a request for \$8,000.00 to outfit the compartments of the truck. The CFO suggested the items needed to outfit the truck be separated from repairs and listed separately and should

be able to be a capital item. Chief Francomacaro said he would have the list together by the February 7th meeting.

Mayor Chamings asked that the new truck 42-72 be added for discussion on the February 7, 2017 agenda.

The CFO noted that the request of \$42,000 for LOSAP was high because the LOSAP funded in 2016 was \$31,000.00. Chief Francomacaro noted they have several new members who make a lot of calls, meetings, etc. It was decided to leave the line item at \$42,000.00

Capital requests were discussed. Mr. Sugar discussed his findings on the cost of a second repeater card for the communications system discussed at the January 7, 2017 budget meeting. Mr. Sugar said there will be no savings in purchasing additional repeater cards and that his recommendation to the Township Committee is that they go with the original request for the one voter and one repeater site. Mr. Sugar gave an overview of his plan for the equipment. The first site for the repeater would be on the DPW building. He feels that until that site is up and running can they determine the area of service and if additional sites are needed.

The CFO noted this equipment would be a Township capital project and not assigned to either the Fire Company or EMS.

The Fire Department also requested five sets of turn out gear for \$16,147.10 and radios/pagers. The CFO will prepare a summary sheet of the capital requests.

Chief Francomacaro also discussed their air bottles now have a life of 15 years and after they are replaced at five per year they will be reducing their purchase by two bottles per year.

At the conclusion of the fire department's budget discussion there was a five minute break.

Mayor Chamings resumed with discussions of the Town Hall departments and Boards and Commission budget requests.

Committeeman Morrison suggested that the Township Committee hold off on salary increases for everyone until the end

In Administration there are the positions of clerk typist, receptionist and file clerk. The Clerk had originally deleted the request for funds for file clerk because the employee who had the position left the Township. There has been interest from another resident to do work for the township "as needed". After a brief discussion the Township Committee agreed to leave the funds in the budget and change the designation of the position to "clerical".

The operating expenses for administration were discussed. Mr. Morrison expressed his opinion that the governing body should pay for their own hotel room at the League of Municipalities convention. Those funds are used for the Mayor's convention as well. Pending further discussion the requested funds will be left in the budget.

Congratulations to the Finance Clerk, Tammy Leonard who has passed the State exam for Certified Finance Officer.

Next the CFO discussed the requisition system from MSI that works with the finance software already used by Finance and Tax Collection. The system will allow individual departments to send a request for

purchase to Finance and see exactly how much of their budget is encumbered and/or free for other purchases in real time. Mayor Chammings asked how much data entry would be necessary for the system to be up and running. The CFO said “none” and added that Mrs. Leonard would be sent for training and would train departments during the day and she would be available for the emergency services for training at night. The software would initially cost \$4,000.00 and after the first year there would be a \$1,200 licensing fee. Each department would have access to their department only. Only the finance department would have access to capital purchases. After a requisition is requested the CFO can approve (even remotely) and a purchase order would be created. This system would eliminate Mrs. Leonard from having to key in each and every purchase order. The Township Committee granted the request for the requisition system.

The Tax Collector’s and Tax Assessor’s operating expenses were discussed. There was no change from 2016 for either department.

The legal fee budget was discussed and after review the miscellaneous legal expense line was decreased from \$5,000 to \$2,000.

The 2016 engineer costs were inflated because the Municipal Engineer was working as the Municipal Planner during the year to update the COAH plan as required by the State. There is no need to add additional funds to the line item.

The Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment budgets were discussed. The Planning Board did not ask for an increase in any line item and the Zoning Board of Adjustment reduced the line item for litigation expense.

The Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer was on hand to discuss her budget. At this time Committeeman Fisher recused himself.

Mrs. Fisher gave an overview of her duties. Mrs. Fisher noted in 2016 she collected \$15,000 in abandoned property registrations. She put in extra time with no compensation or mileage costs from the canvassing of the abandoned homes. Mrs. Fisher is requesting mileage compensation similar to the construction inspectors and finance employees. Mrs. Fisher said she spends many hours inspection each site of the campgrounds checking for violations prior to the campgrounds license renewal each year. The Township Committee agreed to allow \$1,000.00 in a line item for mileage.

Mrs. Fisher also discussed she goes to court on behalf of the Township and that court days are not on her scheduled Stillwater days so she takes a vacation time from the other municipality she works for and goes to court. Mrs. Fisher is asking for compensative time off from Stillwater to make up for the vacation time she uses in other municipalities. Mrs. Fisher will give the Clerk a copy of the summons she went to court to enforce with her request for compensative time.

Mrs. Fisher requested an additional hour (from 13 hours a week to 14 hours a week) to do all that is necessary for the abandon home inventory. Mr. Morrison said he was opposed to giving anyone extra hours in this budget but would be willing to continue the conversation with Mrs. Fisher. Mrs. Fisher said she welcomes the conversation.

Mrs. Fisher also spoke about a situation which occurred in 2016 where she feels she was grossly misrepresented in town and on social media. Mrs. Fisher thanked Mr. Scott for correcting the record at the August 16, 2016 meeting.

Mr. Fisher rejoined the meeting. The next discussion held was on salaries.

Mr. Fisher began by sharing his concern that the Planning Board Secretary and the Zoning Board of Adjustment Secretary make more money than the other commission secretaries and those boards do not always have a meeting each month. Mr. Fisher feels that if the total salary is \$500 per month that the secretary should receive \$250 if no meeting for the month and \$500 if a meeting is held.

The CFO explained the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment secretaries are actually regular employees of the Township and not just a secretary taking minutes at a meeting. The Board secretaries have set hours at the municipality and do continuous work even if there is no meeting and that is why there is a difference in salaries.

Planning and Zoning Board Secretary Alfia Schemm discussed that she blocks out the time for the meetings and takes no other work on the days she works for Stillwater. Mrs. Schemm noted she is accessible daily for the Stillwater residents and professional alike. Mrs. Schemm said Stillwater is very lucky to have the type of employees that go above and beyond their job descriptions.

Mayor Chamings said she is not in favor of cutting of the salaries for the Planning and Zoning Board secretary. Mr. Morrison said he is not in favor of taking anything away from the employees.

The Tax Collector Ms. Rutnik asked for a three percent (3%) increase in her salary as she is receiving a three percent raise in another municipality where she works too. Mayor Chamings said it is a reasonable request from employees. Mayor Chamings asked the Clerk what the DPW negotiated in their most recent contract. The Clerk answered 2% each year for 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Mayor Chamings asked the CFO how much the budget would change if employees receive a 2-1/2% increase in salary. Mr. Fisher asked about a 3% increase. The CFO will make the calculations and report the findings at the next meeting on February 7, 2017.

The Recreation Commission and the Clerk will discuss their budgets at the meeting on February 7, 2017.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m. with a majority voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynda Knott, Township Clerk