**STILLWATER TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**February 5, 2022**

**Budget Meeting #2**

A SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING of the Stillwater Township Committee was called to order by Mayor Scott at 9:05 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.

The flag was saluted.

Roll Call: PRESENT: Mr. Barta, Mrs. Rumsey, Mr. Fisher, Ms. Chammings and Mayor Scott. Others presents were: Mrs. Leonard, CFO, and Josh Raff, DPW Supervisor

The Capital Budget requests were discussed first. Mount Benevolence Phase I has a total cost of $215,000.00. This phase has been awarded a DOT Grant of $162,000 and with a $2,750 down payment (funded by an old ordinance) the phase can be completed by bonding for $52,250. Mr. Raff said Mt. Benevolence is a high volume road and must be milled and paved. The Township Committee agrees with the amount to be bonded for Mt. Benevolence Phase I.

Mount Benevolence Phase II can be fully funded by the township with $101,000 from old ordinances and $82,000 from the American Rescue Plan grant. Phases I and II will get the road from Route 521 to just below Stillwater Road. Past practice shows that once a road gets a DOT grant for a portion of the roadway changes are very good the DOT will approve a grant to complete the project. The Township is hopeful that the road will be completed with the 2023 DOT grant.

Mr. Raff requested a 2022 Single Axel Dump Truck to replace the 2002 International. A down payment of $8250 can be paid through the DPW equipment reserve and $50,000 could come from the American Rescue Plan funds. The remaining $133,000 will be bonded. The Township Committee agreed to the purchase of a 2022 Single Axel Dump Truck.

In the Streets and Roads portion of the DPW budget the salaries of the DPW employees have been updated with their contracted amounts from the new contract.

Tree Maintenance: Mr. Raff has decided to start with the trees in the parks for 2022 so that Open Space Funds could be used. The clerk was asked to contact Jackie Espinoza of J C P & L to see if Mrs. Espinoza could arrange a meeting between JCP&L’s Forrester and Mr. Raff to discuss Stillwater’s roads and trees that could be trimmed as part of the JCP&L vegetation maintenance.

A new line for crack sealing has been added with a listed amount of $6,500 to be offset by a reduction of $5,000 from the asphalt line. Mr. Raff feels the crack sealing will be a much more efficient and economical way of maintaining roads. There are other reductions in the pipe basin (now included in capital projects calculations) and road striping projects.

The school/training line in the DPW budget will remain in order to allow other individuals to take courses offered to them.

The Recycling program budget has been updated with the Recycling Coordinator’s salary remaining the same as in 2021. Mr. Raff has asked that the recycling and sold waste employees wage be increased to $15 per hour as it is difficult to recruit and keep employees in this area. The township committee agreed with the increase in wages.

In Building and Grounds field maintenance was discussed and the township committee decided to go with Farmside for the fertilizing, crab grass, grub and leaf weed control and aeration for a total of $14,700 for all Stillwater athletic fields.

Two quotes were received for landscaping. After a discussion it was decided to award the contract for 2022 landscaping to Country Care. There have been some complaints with Country Care and Mayor Scott noted Country Care would be put on notice if the complaints continue they will be replaced in 2023.

The vehicle maintenance section was increased by $2500 to cover the costs of fixing ageing vehicles bringing that line to $85,500.00

This was the end of the DPW discussion and the township committee thanked Mr. Raff for his time.

Mr. Louis Sylvester, Recreation Commissioner, was in attendance at the meeting and wished to discuss paving the parking lot at Veterans Memorial Park. Ms. Chammings said she was not sure if it is an option because of the C-1 stream just to the right of the parking lot. Mr. Sylvester said when the park was approved in 2005 there was an approved plan for the parking lot and Mr. Sylvester believed the DEP issued waivers for the parking lot. The clerk will check with Michael Vreeland the Township’s engineer to see if there are any waivers for the parking lot.

The CFO noted the municipal clerk’s budget has been changed to add $2,700 for Global Relay to retain and achieve e-mail, Facebook and Zoom files according to the State’s retention schedule and $500 for a planner to help with COAH reporting requirements.

The insurance premiums have increased in 2022 but there will decreases in former employee insurance costs due to children aging out and Medicare eligibility.

The extra Sheriff patrols will be discussed at the February 15, 2022 meeting along with Kelly Act reimbursements in Municipal Services.

There were no gypsy moth sightings in the fall so there should be no cost for gypsy moth remediation in the budget for 2022.

The Celebration of Public Events line is increased from $1000 to $2500 to allow the township committee to recognize employees who retired during the COVID 19 pandemic and also have funding available for the 2025 Stillwater bicentennial celebration.

There is a slight increase in electric costs and a slight decrease in telecommunications. Petroleum costs have slightly increased due to uncertain oil prices.

Social Security costs have increased by 6.2 percent for 2022 and the PERS (Public Employees Retirement System) employer contribution has risen about $8000 for 2022.

The LOSAP for 2022 gave more increased figures for the three categories of service credits to $1,749, $1,262 and $814 respectively. These figures are slightly higher than the township committee previously approved but the entire payout is still under the $54,000 amount set for this line.

The Township is expecting grants in 2022: the Municipal Drug Alliance, ARPA-2nd tranche in June and a $30,000 Recreation Grant.

A new Joint Court Agreement has been signed. The cost for 2022 is $44,522.00, 2023 is $45,412.00, 2024 is $46,320.00, and 2025 the cost is $47,246.00.

The Township Committee decided to fund the Capital Improvement Fund with $70,000, the Reserve for Emergency Vehicles with $70,000, the Reserve for Purchase of DPW Equipment with $10,000, Asphalt Overlay $73,664.00 and the Reserve for Park Projects $5,000 for a 2022 capital fund of fully funded projects totaling $158,664.00.

The Township Committee also approved the Debt Services/Deferred Charges line items for 2022. Ms. Chammings asked when the Green Acre Funding grants are available for 2022 the township apply as the township did not in 2021 and the funding is easily obtained.

The Township needs to replace the three (3) “Welcome to Stillwater” signs which may be fully funded - $1,000 from the Clean Communities Grant and $1,800 from the Capital Fund Balance. The Community Center is also in need of a sign replacement. The sign can be replaced with a sign just like the one at Town Hall and be fully funded with $2,000 from Clean Communities Grant and $7,100 from the Capital Fund Balance. The Township Committee agreed with the sign replacements.

The Community Center is also in need of an alarm system. The Abcode proposal was approved at the regular meeting of the township committee on February 1, 2022. The alarm system can be fully funded with $6, 076 coming from the Capital Improvement Fund. The Township Committee approved this expenditure. Mrs. Rumsey noted the community center should also have building temperature sensors – one in the fire department bays and one in the main hall.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**: 11:07 a.m. held in Town Hall

After the reading of the following Resolution to enter into Executive Session, a **motion** was made by Mrs. Rumsey, seconded by Mr. Fisher and carried by roll call vote to adopt the resolution permitting the Committee to go into Executive Session at 11:08 p.m.

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting under certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Stillwater, in the County of Sussex and State of New Jersey as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from that portion of this meeting.

2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows: Personnel

3 . As nearly as can now be ascertained, the matter or matters to be discussed at this time will be disclosed to the public when such matters are resolved.

By a **motion** was made by Mr. Scott, seconded by Mrs. Rumsey to conclude the Executive Session at 11:40 a.m., unanimously carried by voice vote.

 Upon Motion by Ms. Chammings, seconded by Mrs. Rumsey the Township Committee agreed to give Mr. Dixon an additional four (4) hours per week (nonpublic) to bring his weekly hours to fourteen (14). **Roll Call Vote**: Mr. Barta, yes, Mrs. Rumsey, yes, Mr. Fisher, yes, Ms. Chammings, yes, Mayor Scott, yes. The Clerk was directed to put a resolution on the agenda for February 15, 2022 retroactive to February 7, 2022 to memorialize the decision and prepare a memo for Mr. Dixon outlining the Township Committee’s directions and adding abandoned/vacant housing registration to his duties.

There being no further business, Mrs. Rumsey made a motion to adjourn the budget meeting at 11:47 a.m., seconded by Mr. Fisher. In a voice vote, all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynda Knott, RMC