
TOWNSHIP OF WEST MILFORD, COUNTY OF PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY

Minutes of: Governing Body Special Meeting
Date of Meeting: March 8, 2017
Time of Meeting: 6:30 P.M.
Minute Page No: Page 1 of 3

The Special Meeting of the Governing Body was called to order by Mayor Bettina Bieri.

Adequate Notice Statement

Mayor Bieri read the following statement:

Please note that in accordance with Chapter 231, Public Laws of 1975 of New Jersey, adequate advance notice of this special meeting was advertised in the Herald News in its issue of February 12, 2017; copies were provided to the Suburban Trends, the Record and Star Ledger and posted continuously on the bulletin board in the main corridor of the Town Hall and on file in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Please also make note of all fire and emergency exits - located to the left, right, front and rear of this room - for use in case of an emergency. Thank you.

Agenda No. I

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Bieri led all in attendance in a salute to the flag.

Agenda No. II

Roll Call

Present: Councilmembers Ada Erik, Mike Hensley, Tim Wagner, Luciano Signorino,
Marilyn Lichtenberg, Mayor Bettina Bieri.
Absent: Councilman Pete McGuinness
Also Present: Township Administrator/Clerk Antoinette Battaglia

Administrator Battaglia said Councilman McGuinness will not be able to attend the meeting.

Agenda No. III

Purpose

Review of the proposed 2017 Municipal Budget.

Agenda No. IV

Review of 2017 Municipal Budget – Police - Chief Storbeck said there was an 8% increase in overtime. The overtime could be reduced if the township added two patrolmen. After a patrolman gets hired, it could take 1 year before he/she gets on the road because of the training requirements. They learn the basic training in the academy but then they have to learn the township's policies and procedures. The Township would not see the savings right away. He said he doesn't want to take short cuts, and wants to make sure whoever they hire is the right fit for the township. Right now there is minimum manpower, and it's a huge driving factor regarding overtime. A certain amount of officers have to be on the road. The overtime is not just for patrol, it also includes road jobs, details, and outside vendors. There is mandatory and specialized training and accumulated sick and vacation time to consider. If there is emergency roadwork repair it's a patrol function to direct traffic. If there is scheduled roadwork that's above and beyond; an off duty officer will work, so there is still the same number of patrolmen working. Mayor Bieri said some of those jobs are offset with revenues collected. For example, if Rockland Electric was doing work and a patrolman needed to be there, the township will get reimbursed from Rockland Electric. The goal is to reduce the overtime using the most cost effective way. Mayor Bieri asked how much overtime is being reimbursed. Councilman Signorino said the township has a lot expenses and he doesn't support adding two new officers. In 2011 the overtime was \$200,000 and there was less manpower. This year there was \$400,000 mentioned in overtime. He asked for the data from the 2011 police general budget for billable outside jobs.

Mr. Casey asked Chief Storbeck about his experience with the bail program and how it impacts the overtime carrying forward. Chief Storbeck said effective January 1, 2017 there were changes made to the bail reform law. When a person is arrested and bail has to be set, it used to be done in the township. Now, if someone is arrested they have to be escorted by two police officers to the county jail. It's a three hour process, and the jail has set hours. It's impacting the manpower and overtime. Councilman Hensley asked if the special officers are allowed to assist in the bail transport. That would help alleviate some of the overtime hours. He's not supportive on hiring two more officers but he would be supportive of getting more special officers on the force. Chief Storbeck said the special officers are being utilized a lot but there are a limited number of them. Only one special officer can assist in the bail transport.

Mayor Bieri said she had interaction with a resident that had a family tragedy. The resident highly complimented police officer Michael Malfetti and said he was wonderful, professional and compassionate.

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Review of 2017 Municipal Budget – DPW - Mr. Casey said the HVAC systems for facility monitoring and the snow costs are two sections in the budget that need to be discussed. There is a proposal in the budget by the DPW to have Facility Dude develop a preventative maintenance schedule for the HVAC system. The biggest change in the budget is buildings and grounds. There is no change in vehicle maintenance. The recommendation from the state on snow and ice is a 3-year moving average with the snow trust account. The snow trust was used a lot in 2015 due to a very bad winter. If you want to reduce the current snow trust you can because you have the cushion.

Mr. Steins said he submitted a proposal to have a professional look at all the HVAC and electrical systems and get the department on a maintenance program. Grit can't be phased out completely because of the dirt roads and steep hills. The department has two brand new mowers, and the sweepers are being serviced to get prepared for clean-up. Last year it took approximately 88 days to clean all the streets with 3 operating sweepers. The biggest reason to cut down on the grit is to make the cleanup easier. The department will have more equipment ready for clean up this year.

Mr. Casey said within the building and grounds there is a sub account for the library. There is a line item for \$25,000 which relates to the anticipated cost for building maintenance of the new library. The Governing Body is responsible for 27.5% of the operating costs. There's an estimate for the electricity, HVAC and elevator maintenance. The municipality pays the library share of the bills and then charges back the library.

Mayor Bieri said the new line item is in lieu of Hillcrest and other expenses. It's not an additional expense. The goal between the PAL Center and the Library is to accommodate the residence with better facilities with the same service level. There are some slight changes at reduced costs because there are newer buildings that are more efficient. We are removing other line items to subsidize the new additional line items and they should net to less.

Councilman Signorino said over the years the township had contracted for certain maintenance on the vehicles. Over the past 6 years he has not received an analysis on the decisions that were made. When it comes to maintenance of the buildings and /or equipment how has it changed due to the decisions that were made by the Governing Body. You don't need to have software to determine total expenditures. Before the council passes the budget, he would like to see an analysis.

Administrator Battaglia said moving forward the Facility Dude should be able to provide that data. Our mechanics said they have a vehicle that's four years old, and they are entering all of their maintenance information into Facility Dude. Mr. Steines said he can try to go back retroactively. The information on the vehicles has been getting entered based on the vehicle work since 2016. Administrator Battaglia said going forward the DPW needs to justify to the Governing Body that this investment is not costing additional funds for maintenance.

Mayor Bieri said this council particularly invested into the DPW last year. Maintenance would not have been impacted until last year. Moving forward we should see reduced costs. In the past if we didn't have new equipment; maintenance costs would not go down. Sometimes it was appropriated and not spent. The new purchases that occurred were last year after the council approved the budget. The maintenance wouldn't have gone down until now because we have a new starting point with new equipment.

Mr. Steines requested an additional 4 people to compliment his manpower. Right now there are four retirees and 4 employees out on workman's compensation. Mayor Bieri said replacing an employee out on workman's' compensation will generate higher costs. Workman's compensation ratings and the costs have been reduced significantly from previous years. Mayor Bieri suggested filling the void by using seasonal workers for the time when employees are out on workman's compensation.

Mayor Bieri asked for a personal status list for new employees, retirees, changes in titles, and workmen's compensation. If there is status quo include a brief statement stating there were no changes. Mr. Casey said he will revisit and revise the salary and wage line item, and provide a separate report regarding overtime, retirees and hiring.

Review of 2017 Municipal Budget Community Services and Recreation - Mr. Casey said Mr. Roetman redesigned his program. From year to year it's fairly well laid out. The overall program net cost to the township is \$1.5 million.

Mr. Roetman said the net expense after revenue is roughly \$1 million dollars. Accumulative revenue was \$ 359,000 in 2015 and \$436,614 in 2016. The basketball and soccer programs are going in to trust accounts. Those expenses are not being charged back to the municipal budget. Last year was the first year of revenue for those programs. The cost for monitoring the PAL building is further down on the budget and it has been consistent. This year's budget is almost even with last year's. The budget increased due to the transportation funds this year. We took in more revenue last year and we gained about \$60,000.

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Councilman Signorino asked if the department had other programs that would increase next year's revenue and reduce the budget. Mr. Roetman said at this point in time we still haven't stretched our current capabilities to their maximum potential. Last year we went through staffing changes. We hired a new employee in December to help with new programs and activities. Some of the new spring programs we are looking to roll out will bring additional revenue and service the community better (middle school and high school basketball league, a dodgeball program for the high school, and restructuring of the tennis program). The library space the township allocated is a great amount of space that could be used for recreational purposes. There will be a line item in the operating budget for \$21,000 for the PAL building and other expenses under line item 374. It is for the PAL building renovations to accommodate the seniors.

Mayor Bieri said next year will be the first full year of operations for the library and recreation center, so next year the township should start to see the savings. This is a transitional year and we should use caution about adding too many activities. The seniors still have to move and the renovations need to be completed in the recreation center. Once we integrate into the new buildings and get used to the lay out and set up, we can see what other ideas there are for new programs. We don't want to take on too much during the transition period.

Mr. Roetman said he removed the \$9,000 convenient fees from the administration line. The fees are for online registration credit card payment. It's incorporated in to registration fees. It's not an administrative cost it's a program cost. Administrator Battaglia stated Ms. Mageean is doing research of what each department is being charged for the online registration costs and they will schedule this for a future meeting discussion and bring the topic before the Governing Body.

Agenda No. V

Public Comments

Mayor Bieri opened the meeting to the public after advising that there is a five-minute limit for each speaker.

There being no comments from the public, Councilwoman Erik moved to close the public portion of the meeting.

Moved: Erik Seconded: Signorino
Voted Aye: Unanimous voice vote
Voted Nay: None
Motion carried.

Mr. Casey proposed introduction at the next Budget Meeting on March 22, 2017.

Agenda No. VI

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Council, the Governing Body adjourned the meeting at 9:19:09 p.m.

Moved: Erik Seconded: Signorino
Voted Aye: Unanimous voice vote
Voted Nay: None
Motion carried.

Approved: April 5, 2017

Respectfully submitted:

Sherry Zbrzeski, Clerk Typist

MAYOR BETTINA BIERI, PRESIDING OFFICER

ANTOINETTE BATTAGLIA, TOWNSHIP CLERK