

**MANSFIELD TOWNSHIP
BURLINGTON COUNTY
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
February 27, 2024
6:30 PM**

The special meeting of the Mansfield Township Committee was held on the above shown date with the following in attendance:

Members in Attendance: Mayor Mojena, Deputy Mayor Brian Sisz (4:02pm), Committeeman Boyd, Committeewoman Stobie, Committeewoman Jennings

Members Absent: None

Also in Attendance: Michael Fitzpatrick, Township Administrator
Bonnie Grouser, CFO
Ashley E. Jolly, Municipal Clerk

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Mojena at 6:30 PM followed by the following Opening Statement and salute to the flag:

This Special Meeting was called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law. Notices of this meeting were published the Burlington County Times and the Trenton Times on February 11, 2024. In addition, copies of notices were posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building, filed in the office of the Municipal Clerk, & posted to the official township website on the aforementioned date. Said notice stated the date, time, place and purpose of this meeting stating that formal action may be taken.

BUDGET DISCUSSION:

Police Department

Chief Eric Campbell explained that the Police Department is in need of a camera system as the current system is not in compliance. The cost of said camera system is \$17,635.00. A live scan fingerprint and computer system is needed as the current system is outdated. The replacement system is available through state contract at a cost of \$25,583.00. In addition, he respectfully requests that the Police Department's operating budget is not reduced from the 2023 funding.

Mayor Mojena questioned the age of the current live scan system.

Chief Campbell stated that it is from 2017 so it is seven years old, which seems to be the time to replace it. It is no longer under warranty, which is three years.

Mayor Mojena asked about the possibility of an extended warranty.

Chief Campbell was unsure if it would be possible, but he will look into it.

Committeewoman Jennings asked if the camera system was no longer complaint according to the law.

Chief Campbell confirmed that some parts in the camera system were no longer complaint per DOC regulations.

Committeewoman Stobie questioned if any repairs have been done to the 2017 live scan system.

Chief Campbell stated that there have been some software upgrades.

Committeeman Boyd questioned who would be using the live scan system.

Chief Campbell confirmed it would just be our officers using it.

Fire Department

Sean Gable, President of Franklin Fire Department stated that he is asking for an increase this year to \$161,526.00. Last year the budget was \$90,000.00 and were allotted additional money at the end of the year to complete some upgrades that were required bringing the budget to about \$110,000.00. The reason for the increase for the 2024 year is the cost of maintenance and repairs to equipment and vehicles. In addition he is asking for an increase for recruitment and retention due to very low new volunteers. The current incentive per call is \$10.00 he would like to increase that to \$20.00 per call. As of last year, 30% of the calls were not answered due to lack of volunteers. This is a huge safety concern for the community. He is also asking for a replacement of the 25 year old off-road vehicle for \$164,000.00.

Mayor Mojena asked Mr. Gable to further explain the recruitment needs of the fire department.

Mr. Gable explained the difficulties of getting people to volunteer for their local fire departments. He is hoping that by increasing incentives, it will get younger members of the community to want to volunteer. He would like to depend less on the surrounding municipalities. The complications with daytime calls was also discussed, since there are typically no volunteers available during the day. It would be ideal to have some career staff during the day in the near future.

Mayor Mojena will be meeting with the Superintendent of Northern Burlington to discuss ideas on how to recruit high school students to volunteer with the Fire Department.

Mr. Gable further explained the tedious process of becoming a volunteer fire fighter and the reasoning why most volunteers do not stay more than a couple years is because they do not have the time to dedicate to it. The requirements put in place by the State are not easy for younger people to follow.

Some further brief discussion took place on the difficulties of fulfilling calls.

Committeewoman Stobie mentioned the possibility of offering an elective course through Northern Burlington or allowing the students to leave school early to attend fire training.

EMS:

Chief George Senf is requesting \$195,000 direct aid to the squad, which is the same as the previous year. Operating budget is \$75,000 which is not an increase from last year and vehicle maintenance budget of \$25,000 which is again not an increase. He is requesting an ambulance remount to their 2008 GMC in the amount of \$202,000. He briefly explained, that a remount is when the existing box is removed from the ambulance and placed onto a new chassis along with a few electrical upgrades. Four lifeline arm CPR devices are also being requested in the amount of \$55,277.76. These devices provide CPR while patients are being moved to the ambulance.

Fire Prevention/OEM:

Doug Borgstrom is not requesting any changes to the fire prevention budget other than a salary increase for the fire official. In regards to OEM, he would like to increase the salary for the Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator due to workload. He discussed the current communication issues and stated he would like to include the Public Works department into the radio system. This would be a great help during extreme weather events and would benefit many departments to have a township radio system. Said radio system

would cost \$90,000. The biggest expense is installing the antenna on the water tower. He mentioned that he has been working with the Administrator on a safety and security program for the municipal complex. He is looking to add keyless entry to 19 doors. The front doors would need to be retrofitted for \$8,000 or they would need to be completely replaced, which may be the more cost efficient option. With the \$8,000 retrofit of the front doors, the keyless entry project would cost \$45,688.00. Currently, the phone system in the admin side of the building does not easily communicate with the fire department. For the cost of \$11,367.49 the phones could be tied to the fire station, the 2nd floor as well as speakers strategically placed throughout the building. There would also be a \$320.00 monthly fee for said phones. Lastly, he discussed the notification system that is also used by the school called Single Wire. This system could notify emergency personnel as well as, employees, volunteers and residents that the building is on lock down.

Mayor Mojena stated that he would like to suggest doing the security project together as one whole project, rather than a bunch of smaller projects.

Committeewoman Stobie questioned the possibility of grants.

Mr. Borgstrom stated he is constantly looking for grants however it can be difficult due to the grant writing that is necessary. He also noted that a new policy would need to be established pertaining to a safety plan as well as, safety drills.

Recreation & Special Events:

Sabrina Petrella, Community Engagement Coordinator stated that she is asking for a \$30,000 budget for 2024 as well as, a \$30,000 budget for capital projects. The increases are based on program expenses for 2023, in addition to expected increase in cost for equipment, uniform, maintenance and coach training expenses. The \$30,000 capital request is to replace the batting cage at Georgetown Park (Mapleton). Special Events is requesting \$30,000 for the 2024 budget. This is driven by an increase in expenses. The increase includes the cost of fireworks at two separate events including the Tree Lighting and National Night Out.

Clerk & Land Use:

Ashley Jolly, Municipal Clerk explained that she would like to purchase twelve (12) Samsung Galaxy tablets for the Township Committee and JLUB members to utilize. This would reduce the amount of wasted paper printing meeting packets and would save a lot time as well. The cost for the tablets, cases and screen protectors would be \$3,719.64. Lastly, the administration side of the building needs to upgrade its security cameras as they are no longer compliant with state regulations. The estimated cost for all new cameras, hardware, installation and training would be \$18,170.00.

Township Administrator:

Michael Fitzpatrick, Township Administrator spoke for several different departments.

The Public Works Department is looking for an additional \$7,000 for its operating budget this would include fill dirt and stone for the parks for \$5,000, as well as electrical boxes for the recreation building at Mansfield Park for \$2,000. DPW Buildings and Grounds is looking for an additional \$6,000 for landscaping upkeep. Additional vehicle maintenance for DPW is asking for an additional \$5,000.

Administrator Fitzpatrick, wanted to note that the Tax Assessor, Mr. Colavecchio would be retiring at the end of the year. He explained what an asset Mr. Colavecchio has been to the Township and is sad to see him go. With that being said, the Tax Assessor is asking for \$4,000 for the upkeep of the tax maps. This is an every year occurrence for the maintenance of the tax maps.

In regards to stormwater, an additional \$2,500 is needed for education and outreach.

The Zoning Department is seeking an additional \$1,587 for education and training.

Farmland Preservation, requires \$80,000 for the Township's portion of the preservation of Black Walnut Farm.

Lastly, Administrator Fitzpatrick spoke about landscaping at the municipal complex for which \$44,000 is being put aside in the 2024 budget. This amount will include a new sprinkler system.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Carl Schwartz, 40 Fitzgerald Lane – he wanted to be sure EMS would be included in Mr. Borgstrom's upgrades for the communication system. In regards to the tablets he confirmed that the JLUB would be able to utilize them. He gave praise to Mr. Colavecchio and is also sad to hear he is retiring. He questioned how professionals are paid.

Mayor Mojena stated that they are budget line items that are included in the operating budget. The CFO uses averages of what was used in the prior year expenditures.

Mr. Schwartz questioned if under stormwater the township is looking into conservation matters.

Administrator Fitzpatrick explained that currently the Township is trying to get caught up with what the current regulations updates are such as, retrofitting inlets, cleaning basins, proper water flow and documentation.

There were no further comments from the public.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was offered by Deputy Mayor Sisz and seconded by Committeeman Boyd. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Prepared & Respectfully Submitted by:

Ashley E. Jolly, RMC, CMR
Municipal Clerk