

**TOWNSHIP OF MANSFIELD
BURLINGTON COUNTY
BUDGET MEETING MINUTES
February 10, 2021
6:00pm**

The special meeting was called to order on the above shown date with the following in attendance **Mayor Magee, Deputy Mayor Robert Tallon, Committeeman Higgins, Committeeman Golenda, Committeeman Rudy Ocello, Township Administrator Michael Fitzpatrick, Chief Financial Officer Bonnie Grouser, Deputy Clerk Jolly and Municipal Clerk Linda Semus.**

Mayor Magee called the meeting to order at 6:00PM, followed by the following opening statement read by **Municipal Clerk Semus** and followed by the flag salute: **It was noted that this meeting is being conducted during the current National Emergency with remote participation in accordance with guidance provided by the New Jersey Division of Local Government Services, Department of Community Affairs, as set forth in the Public Notice of this meeting.**

Notice has been proved for this special meeting and has been posted on the official bulletin board of the Township of Mansfield, noticed in the Burlington County Time and Trenton Times on January 15, 2021 and filed with the Municipal of the Township of Mansfield, notice of which contains the date, time, place and purpose of this meeting as so noted under NJSA 10:4-8 amended in 1981 and including sections 10:4-18 which addresses regular meetings of the public bod which is addressed under annual notice.

BUDGET DISCUSSION:

CFO Grouser explained that with the PILOT money calculations the Township is now working with a figure in the amount of \$682,000 to increase the in CAP appropriations by. The public works equipment the Forman is looking to purchase in regard to the fact that the township can purchase them out of CAP with the money received from GovDeals. She added that the Township has incurred \$75,000 in cost for snow removal and salt this year, which should be taken into consideration as well.

CFO Grouser explained that in regards to the Fire Prevention budget Mr. Borgstrom was looking to increase O&E by \$775.00 from the previous year. There was a request for a full time Fire Chief and a full time Fire Fighter. There is a request for a 4-wheel drive SUV pickup.

Administrator Fitzpatrick added that the first line item was for inspector salary and wages for \$45,500.

Deputy Mayor Tallon questioned if this was for the full time fire fighter.

Mr. Borgstrom added that both of those positions would be able to respond to fire calls.

Deputy Mayor Tallon feels the township as an obligation towards to safety and welfare of the residents and because there are not many volunteers, he would suggest giving Mr. Borgstrom at least one full time employee.

Mr. Borgstrom clarified that a Fire Inspector cannot fight fires, however a Fire Fighter can be asked to do fire inspections.

Committeeman Higgins agrees there is a need however the township does not have all the answers on how to handle it currently. He does promote putting a certain dollar amount aside until the township can find the proper way to handle. He questioned if one fire fighter is hired if that would create a fire department and whether that would be detrimental to the volunteer program.

Mayor Magee added that he would support a full time employee. He questioned the role of the inspector.

Mr. Borgstrom explained that right now the department has part time inspectors and their salaries are partially funded by fees that businesses pay to the township and the state also refunds for the large warehouses. He explained that his income for his department is approximately \$35,000 - \$40,000 per year in fees for home resales, businesses and rentals. Hiring one or two full time fire fighters can help cover some of those inspections.

Mayor Magee supports hiring one full time person presently.

Committeeman Ocello also agrees with hiring one full time employee as well as the new vehicle.

Committeeman Golenda asked if one or two full time employees would impact the volunteer component.

Mr. Borgstrom clarified that it would not because they would be municipal employees and would have no bearing on the fire company's non-profit status.

Committeeman Higgins questioned if the township starts hiring fire fighters, would a fire department be created?

Mr. Borgstrom stated yes a municipal fire department would be created and it would be a combination fire department. There will be personnel that cover a shift and volunteers that work another shift.

Committeeman Higgins suggested hiring one full time person this year and one full time person next year.

All committee members are in favor of hiring one full time person and one 4-wheel drive pickup truck.

CFO Grouser questioned the salary & wage line with an increase for the inspector by \$10,000.

All Township Committee members agreed with said increase.

CFO Grouser questioned the \$775 for the other expenses line.

All Township Committee members agreed.

CFO Grouser summarized that for Fire Prevention the Township has added to their salary and wage, added to their other expenses, hiring one full time fire fighter and the purchase of one SUV pickup for \$60,000 capital purchase.

After some brief discussion all Township Committee members agreed.

CFO Grouser moved onto Emergency Management. She explained that Mr. Borgstrom is looking for an increase in the salary and wage line of about \$7,000 and an increase in the other expenses line as well. He is also requesting a Polaris Ranger.

After some brief discussion the Township Committee agreed to all the above however, they asked to hold off on the Polaris Ranger until next year.

CFO Grouser went on to discuss the Fire Department who is asking for the full \$90,000 as permitted by law and is always appropriated to them. There is a request for the replacement of the Chief's Tahoe at \$60,000 and there is also a request to replace the 20 year old Class A Pumper. The new Pumper would be \$700,000.

Administrator Fitzpatrick questioned if all were comfortable with the \$90,000.

All Township Committee members agreed.

Administrator Fitzpatrick questioned if all were okay with the purchase of the \$60,000 Tahoe for the Chief.

All Township Committee members agreed.

Administrator Fitzpatrick then moved to the \$700,000 Pumper.

Committeeman Ocello explained that he would like to hold off on the Pumper until next year.

Mayor Magee agrees to hold off on the Pumper as well.

Committeeman Higgins questioned replacing a pumper truck with only 53,000 miles on it.

Mr. Borgstrom explained that the NFPA has standards and the standard for fire trucks now states that you can use them for 15 years in front line service and for 5 years as a spare after which they would need to be reconditioned or replaced. The issue with this truck is the maintenance and the wear and tear on the vehicles because of the salt there is a lot of rust and parts that break after 20 years becomes cost prohibitive to continue to put money into an old vehicle. \$35,000 was spent over the past 4 years just on one to keep it running.

Committeeman Golenda added that he thinks this is something that is critical as it is a 20 year old truck.

Deputy Mayor Tallon explained that he believes the Township owes it to the residents to ensure their safety.

Some additional discussion ensued on the Pumper Truck. The Township Committee agreed to wait on a final decision.

CFO Grouser moved onto the Public Works Department. The first item being the Mapleton Park repairs tennis and basketball court for \$16,000.

Committeeman Higgins mentioned in regard to parks, each and every one of the items in parks needs to be done and if it can be added to the capital budget, he recommends the township to do that as well as the lawn mowers; 5% will be put down and the capital outlay expenditure will be less than \$100,000.

CFO Grouser went through the items for the park which included the repairs to the tennis and basketball court for \$16,000, Mapleton Park repairs to the hockey court for \$20,000, repairs to the two tennis courts for \$22,000, Mansfield Community park repairs to two basketball courts for \$26,000, and Mansfield Community Park to replace the 4x4 border around the playground which would cost \$8,500. The total being for park repairs totals \$92,500 which can be done through capital.

Committeeman Higgins questioned if the mowers could be considered to have a five year life for bonding purposes.

PW Foreman Metz stated that you can get about 10 or 15 years on a mower.

Committeeman Higgins suggested putting the items in capital outlay.

All Township Committee members agreed to put all items regarding parks into capital.

CFO Grouser went on to discuss buildings and grounds. There is a request to repaint the municipal building for \$11,000.

All Township Committee members agreed that painting the building is not a priority at this time.

Administrator Fitzpatrick added that there were some issues with the air quality in the upstairs portion of the building. It will cost about \$3,000 in taking samples to see if there is any black mold. There are also roof repairs necessary for \$13,570.

All Township Committee members agreed to the above.

CFO Grouser asked about the fence for \$14,000 for the PW yard.

Committeeman Higgins suggested putting same into capital.

All Township Committee members agreed.

CFO Grouser moved onto Streets and Roads. The first item being the striping for Petticoat Bridge, Arlington and Mansfield Road East.

All Township Committee members agreed.

Administrator Fitzpatrick brought up the road management program from R&V for \$24,000. In talking with PW Foreman he believes this would be beneficial to the township to provide a blueprint and a plan moving forward to make sure the roads get fixed properly.

PW Foreman Metz explained the R&V put a plan together to grade the townships roads and by them doing that it will give the township an idea of which road to do fully and which ones are a priority. It will also help to check the townships storm drains and pipe structures. There may be some roads that the township doesn't know about that may need to be addressed. Many towns in New Jersey do a plan like this.

Mayor Magee stated that he thinks it is important to have a plan for the residents since many people complain about the condition of the roadways.

All Township Committee members agreed to have R&V do the plan for the roadways.

Mayor Magee mentioned the removal of various dead trees along township rights of way for \$10,000.

All Township Committee members agreed.

Mayor Magee moved onto road crack repairs through Patch Management in the Meadows at Mansfield, Cambridge Manor, Covington Estates and sections of Mansfield Road for \$30,000.

All Township Committee members agreed to complete the road crack repairs.

In regards to the basin work the Township Committee members agreed to have the PW employees complete said work since the equipment to complete is being purchased.

Mayor Magee questioned if the Township Committee members were in favor of the \$22,500 for safety and equipment materials as well as training.

All Township Committee members agreed.

CFO Grouser asked the committee if they were approving of basin cleaning for \$9,000.

All Township Committee members agreed.

Staffing for the Public Works Department was discussed briefly. The Township Committee members agreed to have 5 Full Time PW Laborers as well as, 2 Part Time and 2 Summer Workers.

Deputy Mayor Tallon questioned the record keeping as per stormwater regulations.

PW Foreman Metz explained that Superintendent Fitzpatrick would be taking care of the paperwork side.

Some brief discussion took place in regards to outsourcing versus keeping everything in house. The PW Foreman explained that he would like to keep as much as possible in house because of cost.

Maintenance cost of \$11,000 was discussed for the John Deere tractor.

All of the Township Committee members agreed to pay the maintenance costs.

Mayor Magee went through a list of several items. A 2021 John Deere backhoe, state contract with a 25 to 30 year life with a cost of \$98,559. 2 2021 Ford F350 4-wheel drive with plows and safety lights with a 10 year life, \$80,000. A 2021 Ford F550 Dump Truck with plow and a salt spreader 10 -15 year life, \$80,000. Two international 2022 single axle truck with plow and spreader 20 – 25 year life, \$277,200. Flail arm for the John Deere Tractor for \$30,000. PW addition to the current building for the new purchased PW equipment \$175,000. A wood chipper for \$15,000. The total requested amount is \$755,759.

Committeeman Higgins added that all of the requested items qualify for capital. He questioned buying two international trucks.

Mayor Magee questioned the PW Foreman if he need the two international trucks.

PW Foreman Metz explained the equipment he requested is the basic bare bones minimum that he would need to be able to plow and do everyday things.

Brief discussion on the addition took place. Said addition will have 3 bay doors, a man door, concrete floor and radiant heat. The size of same would be 50 x 50x 16.

The Township Committee members agreed to add all the above request to the budget as capital.

PW Foreman Metz added there would be an additional cost of \$25,000 to clean up any mold that might be discovered in the building.

The Township Committee members agreed that if there is mold, it would need to be cleaned up for the health and safety of the employees.

There were no further requests from the PW Foreman.

CFO Grouser explained that the Tax Collector is looking for an additional \$9,200 for estimated tax bills and for Ms. Fortin's assistance and guidance.

All Township Committee members were in favor of said request.

CFO Grouser moved onto the Police Department. They are looking for two new SUV's for \$110,000.

All Township Committee members agreed to the request.

The Police Departments request for a Class II Officer hire was also approved.

CFO Grouser discussed the request from EMS. They are requesting an additional \$12,000 for their other expenses, which includes vehicle maintenance.

Mr. Senf explained that there are currently 4 ambulances that the Township owns. Two 2008's with over 100,000, one 2012 that was a remount of an earlier model, and the newest is a brand new model which was purchased in 2018.

Committeeman Higgins questioned how long a remounted ambulance would last.

Mr. Senf clarified that a remount is just as good as a new ambulance for length of service.

Some brief discussion took place in regards to the storage of the ambulances and the mileage as well as the power load system, which is an extra cost of \$50,000. Currently, EMS does not have any ambulances with the power load system.

Mr. Senf suggested doing a remount with the power load system would be sufficient if possible. This would cost \$201,743.76.

Committeeman Higgins questioned CFO Grouser what the debt service is for the next five years.

CFO Grouser stated it would be close to one million dollars. With close to \$100,000 for capital outlay.

All Township Committee members agreed to the remount with the power load system.

There were no further request from the EMS Chief.

CFO Grouser went on to discuss the Tax Assessors Department. He is looking to hire an assistant who would work about 7 hours per week for about \$8,000 per year. Additionally he is looking to increase his other expenses by \$5,000.

All Township Committee members agreed to all of the Tax Assessor's requests.

CFO Grouser moved to Recreation stating that they are looking to increase their other expenses budget by \$7,500.

Committeeman Higgins questioned having PW handle what needs to be done for Recreation.

Mayor Magee went over the requests consisting of: over seed the civic club soccer field \$3,000; COVID supplies \$2,500; removing the grass from the infield of the Babe Ruth field \$2,000.

Recreation Coordinator Mr. Narwid explained if PW can do the over seeding it would be great as well as the removing of the grass.

Administrator Fitzpatrick stated that the PW Foreman would be contacting Mr. Narwid directly regarding these items.

All of the Township Committee members agreed to the \$2,500 in COVID supplies.

CFO Grouser then discussed salary and wages for non-contractual employees.

Committeeman Ocello commented that he was comfortable with the 2.5% increase.

All of the Township Committee members agreed to same.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Alex Brouder – He asked where the township stood in regards to the purchase of the fire truck.

Mayor Magee stated it would be included and the township will review how it would work out once everything is added into the budget.

Frederick Cain, 39 Fitzgerald Lane – He is happy that the Township is trying to do what is necessary without raising taxes. He further stated that he believed Mr. Jones had a listing of the streets and roads that were in total disrepair and each one was tackled accordingly. He wasn't sure if going to R&V for road mapping was a necessary expense. Lastly, he asked what the debt repayment percentage of the total budget.

CFO Grouser stated that for 2020 it was roughly 11%.

Carl Schwartz, 40 Fitzgerald Lane – He questioned why the Court was not involved in the budget process this year.

CFO Grouser explained that the court had no requests this year.

Mr. Schwartz then mentioned the municipal building and all of the money that goes into it. He further mentioned that there was a lot of background noise during the Zoom meeting making it very difficult to hear. He added that he would like to see a multiyear plan to see where the township would stand down the road given all of the changes.

Kristianne Goodenough, 28126 Gaunts Bridge Road – She thanked the Committee for their hard work and thanked them for considering to purchase a fire engine. She added the importance of public safety.

Colleen Herbert, 2 Millennium Drive – She believes purchasing a fire truck is a necessity. She is happy to see there is money to provide infrastructure improvements.

MAYOR & COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

All Township Committee members thanked everyone for participating and stated that they appreciate all of the Department Heads and Township Professionals.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was offered by **Deputy Mayor Tallon** and seconded by **Committeeman Golenda**. All ayes. Motion carried.

PREPARED BY:

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

Ashley Jolly, Deputy Clerk

Linda Semus, RMC, CMR