

**FEBRUARY 24, 2021
BUDGET MEETING**

The Budget Meeting of the Hope Township Committee convened at 3:00 P.M. at the Hope Township Municipal Building with the following members present: Mayor Timothy McDonough, Committeeman Christopher John Kruk (via Zoom) and Deputy Mayor Terry Urfer (via Zoom – arrived at 3:10 pm). Also present were DPW Foreman Donald Whitmore (Zoom); Municipal Clerk, Robin Keggan, RMC; Deputy Clerk, Zondra Belstra; Kathleen Reinalda, CFO and Carol Olyszek, DCA.

FLAG SALUTE AND SUNSHINE STATEMENT

Under the provisions of the “Open Public Meetings Act”, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by publishing notice in the New Jersey Herald and the Star Gazette and by posting notices in the Hope Post Office and on the Township Web and Bulletin Boards.

ELECTRONIC MEETING STATEMENT

In addition, as a result of the State of Emergency issued by Governor Murphy, the Township has provided the pertinent information for residents to participate in, or listen to, this meeting via Zoom. The public will be muted for the meeting but will be able to participate by raising their hand with the use of the appropriate button to do so on their electronic device during the public session portion of the meeting. Questions may also be submitted to the Municipal Clerk by 4 PM up to one day **PRIOR** to the meeting to be read into the record. The public is obligated to disclose their full name, residence address and email address in any question/statement sent to the Municipal Clerk. Any question not meeting the above-described timeframe will be handled at the next available Township Committee meeting.

Roll call: Mr. Urfer- present

Mr. Kruk – present

Mayor McDonough- present

Discussions were had about the upcoming budget. Some key points:

Court Budget:

Ms. Olyszek, DCA, spoke about the Municipal Court’s budget. Ms. Reinalda noted that some things on the budget need to be updated/added (pertaining to salaries and benefits). We will work to get those numbers updated in the near future. A lot of staff time will be spent in the coming months expunging marijuana charges due to the Governor’s bill finally signed into law. A copier was put into the budget as the court is in dire need of one to help facilitate faxing and scanning, too. Mr. Urfer asked about any further security measures being needed once courts reopen. Ms. Olyszek noted that the AOC has their own security plan protocol and that they would need to reach out to them to make sure that our court is in compliance.

General Budget:

Discussion took place regarding the DPW budget. There are capital line items for a new pick-up truck and a backhoe that are needed in the amount of approximately \$170,000. Mr. Kruk noted that the municipality has been putting \$75,000 away towards new fire trucks and that for the next couple of years that money should be put away and earmarked for the DPW’s needs as the Fire Department just purchased a new fire truck. Discussion took place regarding where the \$30,000 proceeds from the sale of 6 Walnut Street should go. Towards the Community center grant; DPW needs? To be determined. It was, however, noted that originally the township’s part of the community center grant was being paid for from the Open Space account. Ms. Reinalda budgeted \$112,000 for 2021 DPW budget – it was ascertained that that was a good starting point. Ms. Reinalda noted that she is awaiting direction on where the FEMA monies will be able to be put (back to line items?) if we receive our money back from FEMA due to Storm Orlena.

Ms. Reinalda built in a 2% increase for township employees. Can always be adjusted moving forward.

Municipal Office will be looking into new phone systems; computer monitors; website upgrades and firewall. IT will get quotes to the clerk/deputy clerk.

Planning Board and Zoning Board need to submit their budgets.

Celebration of Events account - \$10,000 to start as a beginning point.

Ms. Reinalda will send the numbers the Committee worked on to Hope Township's auditor so he can plug in the numbers and get back to us on the tax rate impact.

Seeing there was no further budget business for tonight, this meeting of the Hope Township Committee was adjourned at 4:00 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk. Motion carried. The regular work meeting commenced at 4:00 p.m. via the same Zoom call.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin L. Keggan, RMC
Municipal Clerk