

FEBRUARY 26, 2020
BUDGET MEETING

The Budget Meeting of the Hope Township Committee convened at 6:00 P.M. at the Hope Township Municipal Building with the following members present: Mayor Timothy McDonough, Committeeman Christopher John Kruk and Deputy Mayor Terry Urfer. Also present were Kathleen Reinalda, CFO; Don Whitmore, DPW Foreman; Municipal Clerk, Robin Keggan, RMC; Deputy Clerk, Zondra Belstra and Brielle Walsh, Events Coordinator/Sports Director.

Under the provisions of the “Open Public Meetings Act”, adequate notice of the meeting had been provided by publishing notice in The Star Gazette and The New Jersey Herald and by posting notices in the Hope Post Office and on the Township bulletin boards.

Roll call: Mr. Urfer- present

Mr. Kruk – present

Mayor McDonough- present

General discussion took place regarding the budget for 2020. Paul McNamara, the Treasurer from Blairstown Ambulance, was in attendance and distributed his annual report for 2019 to the Township Committee. Route 80 and the State Police make up the biggest portion of calls for Hope Township. Last year Blairstown Ambulance requested the Township contribute \$13,950 towards the costs of running their organization and are requesting that number to stay flat for the 2020 contribution/donation.

Salaries/Wages for the Sports Coordinators should continue to be drawn out of the regular budget vs Recreation Budget. Recreation budgets will remain flat as the budget process begins but will be revisited if necessary.

Ms. Reinalda and the Committee discussed the “left-over” amounts that remain in Ordinances from years past and how to utilize them based off of their original intended use.

Salaries were discussed for Celebration Coordinator/Assistant Coordinator and whether they should come out of the Trust Account or the regular budget. To be revisited.

Mr. Boesze (Zoning Official) submitted his budget which was discussed and approved. Also discussed was the possibility of allotting Mr. Boesze one more hour per week for Township work (currently 3 hours per week).

Planning Board and Zoning Board budgets were left flat (no change from last year’s number).

Environmental Commission budget of \$2,000 was approved (requested \$2,980).

\$75,000 will be set aside in capital budget for fire truck purchase in the next year or so (last year same amount set aside).

Various other capital “wish list” items were discussed. The Township will need to acquire a new pick-up truck for the DPW (Ms. Reinalda allotted \$50,000 in her notes for same). May look into this purchase for this year. Within the next year a new backhoe will need to be purchased (current backhoe is 20 years old). Approximate cost will be \$130,000.

NW Municipal Court prepared a preliminary budget that was sent to the AOC and provided a copy to the Committee. As of this meeting, the Court is a “moving target” as many unanswered questions remain about courts coming on board and the staff currently in place with Mrs. Eger retiring. Ms. Reinalda asked the Township Committee to get involved with the collection of the 2019 monies owed to the NW Municipal Court from Hardwick as she has been unsuccessful in getting them to pay and the 2020 preliminary monies will be coming due as well.

The Streets/Roads O/E line is one line that needs to be looked at in detail as last year it was underbudgeted (budget of \$90,000 – actual monies paid to that line were \$126,000). Discussion took place regarding roads on the list to be put in for State aid/DOT grants for paving. Mr. Whitmore is in the process of composing same based off of condition and usage. Tar and chip is also something that needs to be budgeted for in an effort to extend the life of

roads in the Township. Ridgeway is on the short list for paving (at each end) with tar and chip in the center as that portion is in good shape – should extend the life of the road for a substantial amount of time.

Hope Volunteer Fire Department budget will remain flat per Mr. Kruk.

Discussion took place regarding Celebration of Public Events/Creative Team and how to manage budgets. Ms. Reinalda spoke about Procurement Cards (P-Cards) which are offered through State contract with the Bank Of America. These cards would be an easy tool to implement in making sure that budgets are stuck to and everything is funneled through one person (Events Coordinator) as the Events Coordinator's name would be on the P-card. Mayor McDonough authorized Ms. Reinalda to look into and start the process of obtaining P-Cards. Mayor McDonough did point out that Ms. Reinalda would need to educate the Township personnel on how to use these cards and would be an integral part of getting the program up and running for the Township's use.

The Township Committee gave Ms. Reinalda the OK to "plug in" number discussed this evening and provide her findings to the Municipal Auditor for polishing up.

Seeing there was no other business for tonight, this meeting of the Hope Township Committee was adjourned at 7:05 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Urfer, seconded by Mr. Kruk. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin L. Keggan, RMC
Municipal Clerk