

**Borough of Palmyra
March 9, 2013
Minutes-Budget**

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mayor Scheffler, Mrs. Dobbs, Mrs. Riener, Mr. Bostock, Mrs. Ragomo Tait and Mr. Norcross.
Absent: President Dorworth

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT

Public Notice of this meeting pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act has been given by the Borough Clerk in the following manner:

- A. Posting written notice on the official bulletin board at the Palmyra Borough Hall on March 3, 2013.
- B. Mailing written notice to the Burlington County Times, and the Courier Post Newspaper on March 3, 2013.
- C. Notice to All Council Members.

CLOSED SESSION. **Resolution 2013-70, Resolution Excluding The Public From Certain Meetings Pursuant To Section 8 Of The Open Public Meeting Act C. 231 P.L. 1975. (Negotiations and personnel).** Ms. Dobbs made a motion to approve the resolution, Mr. Norcross second the motion. At the call of the roll the vote was:

AYES: Ms. Dobbs, Mrs. Riener, Mr. Bostock, Mrs. Ragomo Tait, Mr. Norcross.

NAYES: None. Also present was Mrs. Lewis, CFO and Mr. Stewart, Auditor.

Council returned to public session at 8:30am.

BUDGET WORKSESSON.

Capital Budget-Mr. Gural discussed the capital fund projects that are being requested as part of the budget process. The fire department is requesting a new truck- \$590,000, police department is requesting a 4 wheel drive patrol vehicle-\$46,500, three line speed board-\$20,800, automatic license plate reader-\$24,500, Tasers-\$11,000, pedestrian crossing light at Cinnaminson and Charles-\$44,000, police carport, site improvements and entry way improvements-\$107,500, cross match line scan for fingerprinting-\$30,000, mobile computer upgrades-\$5,000, public works is requesting-small case/komatsu wheel loader-\$105,000, Toro Z mower and trailer-\$16,000, 4X4 dump truck with plow and spreader-\$180,000, capital emergency, traffic and general sign project-\$66,000, general request- community center-\$150,000, hall security improvements-\$110,000, trash carts-\$156,000, scoreboard at Legion Field-\$35,000, security camera upgrade at Legion Field/concession stand-\$25,000, road improvements-\$300,000, copy machine-\$14,000-for a total of \$2,036,300.

Mr. Norcross inquired if the fire truck would be a 2014 model? Mr. Zimmerman replied that they would not be able to order until fall so the delivery would be in 2014. Mrs. Lewis explained that the borough would pay for the truck over a period of years as a debt to the borough. Mayor Scheffler explained that the capital budget does not affect the current tax rate; it is debt that is incurred as the purchases are made. Mr. Gural discussed that not all capital projects listed in the budget will be approved by the council they are just a list that is required as part of the budget process.

General Budget-Mr. Gural discussed that there are two separate line items for each department; the second number represents a 2% salary increase built in for all non-uniformed employees. Adopting the second number does not necessary mean that there will be a 2% increase, borough council would still have to adopt a salary resolution. Mr. Stewart informed council that they are still below the required cap with the increase in the salary line item. Mayor Scheffler discussed that she would like to see funds place under Council expenses to allow the borough to do a calendar for the residents that would list all of the necessary information including trash pick-up, recycling, brush, meeting dates, etc. the calendar would be a way of disseminating information to all of the residents at one time. Mayor Scheffler inquired if borough council would like to attend the League of Municipalities conference in November this year, there are a lot of training seminars available for the new council members. Mr. Norcross explained that the borough in previous years paid for just council members for a two night stay and for their registrations. Mrs. Riener discussed that there is a lot of training for the Land Use Board as well, but does feel that taxpayer money should be used on the rooms. Ms. Dobbs explained that the best way to learn is on the job. Mrs. Sheipe informed council that if the early voting law is approved, the clerk or the deputy clerk will have to be in the office for 14 days straight before each election which will affect the budget. Mr. Gural informed council that the interviews for a payroll clerk were conducted and that Mrs. Lewis and he are reviewing the applicants. There is an increase for advertising in the tax assessor's budget, an increase in labor counsel, an increase in engineering due to the environmental obligations that will occur with ERM for this year. There are two grants already in the process, one for the tennis program and another for the juvenile justice grant for the summer camp. Land Use Board is reduced to \$4,000 in their salary request. Construction budget o/e is being increase to allow for more demolish and security of abandon properties and unsafe structures. Mr. Gural discussed that he would like council to consider the hiring of a part time deputy code enforcement officer for one day a week. The person would be able to concentrate on code enforcement and report to Mrs. Kilmer.

Police Department- Mr. Gural informed council that there is a new line item in the police budget to cover the cost of the borough helping out Riverton Borough with officers. Riverton Borough would reimburse the borough for the cost of our officers covering Riverton while they are shorthanded. There is also an increase in professional services to cover the Global Connect contract. The crossing guards and all new hires are required to have complete physical completed.

EMS- the budget will be reduced to \$5,507; the squad has obtained their own insurance to cover the workers compensation.

Public Works/Sewer- Mr. Gural would like council to consider a new hire for the public works/sewer department. There is a need for more coverage. Mr. Norcross explained that students were used in previous years for the summer months.

Solid Waste Collection- The trash will be collected by automation carts as soon as the capital ordinance is approved and they can be order. There will be savings over the next five years in the trash collection line item.

Shade Tree and War Memorial- The War Memorial donation will remain the same. Mayor Scheffler requested that additional funds be placed in the shade tree budget as there are residents waiting for trees to be planted. Mrs. Riener explained that some of the stumps from the previous year still have not been taken out. Mr. Austin of the Shade Tree Committee informed council that there are about 20 stumps that need to be removed and that also several trees that are in bad condition and need to be replaced.

Parks- Mr. Gural discussed the irrigation of the fields and that the concession stand is not ready for use due to not being open during the winter months. Mr. Gural explained that the earliest the concession stand should be open would be for the Easter egg hunt on March 23 and who would be responsible for cleaning the stand and opening and closing the bathrooms. Mayor and Council discussed the need to have the bathrooms at the stand open and also the fact that there were no personnel available to monitor them and clean them. Mr. Bostock inquired about the possibility of port-a-pots for rent by the organizations. Mrs. Ragomo Tait discussed that the children are cold and that it does not look well for the borough not to have bathrooms available, some of the children come far to compete in the soccer. Mrs. Riener discussed that the organizations last year were offer the opportunity to open the stand and make some money, but only a few took the offer. Ms. Dobbs explained that borough council needs to protect the residents of the borough and should not have to provide for teams that are not located in the borough. The bathrooms get damaged before and after the games and there currently is no one to clean them or do maintenance. The consensus of council was to leave the bathrooms and concession stand closed until the Egg Hunt and the borough can provide someone to open and close them as well as do the cleaning.

Community Center- Mr. Gural informed council that a group of people would like to form a corporation to run the center. They would like to be a non-profit group and provide their own insurance. Mrs. Ragomo Tait discussed that it is currently difficult for small groups to use the center due to insurance certificates. The non-profit would be able to provide the insurance under their umbrella for the small groups. Mrs. Riener explained that the group should not make a profit off of the center and would the Senior group be under the them or remain separate. Mr. Gural replied that the Seniors are already incorporated and would remain separate from the non-profit group. Mr. Gural discussed that the borough would still have total control of the center, but that this group would be able to manage the insurance and scheduling of the center. Mayor Scheffler explained that she would just like to make sure that the center still benefits the residents of Palmyra as well as outside groups. Mrs. Ragomo Tait explained that the 8th grade dance could not be held at the center due to the regulation of no heels on the gym floor. Mr. Bostock recommend leaving the amount in the budget and having further discussion on the issue at a work session. Mayor Scheffler replied that there will be discussion with borough council before anything is approved.

Library- Mayor Scheffler requested that this amount be left in the budget for a donation to the library.

Prom Committee- Mr. Gural reported that the prom committee had requested more funding this year, but that in previous years the funds would come from the Municipal

Alliance Grant and the borough does not receive that funding any longer. Council recommend giving the committee the \$1500.

Seniors The Senior Program has requested additional funding. Council recommend the same donation as last year in the amount of \$5,000.

Halloween- Council approved a donation of \$5,000 to the Halloween Committee for the parade.

LOSAP- Mayor Scheffler explained that this is a donation to members of the fire department for their dedication and service to the borough. They currently receive \$700. Into an account pertaining to length of service award program. Mayor Scheffler recommend increasing the amount according to the consumer price index each year. The council would have to do a resolution approving the change.

Court- Mr. Gural explained that there is a need for a full time deputy court administrator and that he would like to leave the amount of salary in the budget until a decision is made by council.

Mr. Stewart informed council that they are still under the required cap amount and that it is a \$33.25 dollar increase on the average home with using about \$750,000 of surplus. Mr. Stewart explained that the borough had a good year with tax collection and increase in revenue to help the surplus.

Borough Council took a 15 minute break at 10:20am.

Salaries- Mr. Gural explained the salary increase above the 2% requested amount. He is requesting that the following employees receive an addition increase, Ms. Wiener-tax office-additional \$2.50 an hour, Mrs. Nagle-administration/clerk-\$15.00 an hour, Mr. Austin-pw/sewer full time at \$18.50 an hour, Mr. Allen-pw/sewer at \$18.00 an hour, Mr. Palmer-pw/sewer at \$16.00 an hour, Mr. Benson-pw/sewer full time at \$17.00 an hour. Chief Pearlman discussed with council his request for an increase to his salary and Lieutenant's salary. Chief Pearlman is requesting that his salary go from \$98,475 to \$111,000 in the budget and for the Lieutenant to go from \$92,500 to \$96,500 in the budget. Chief Pearlman explained that he was appointed in 2010 with a low salary and that the average in the county is \$122,000. He is currently making a little more than a Sergeant. The Lieutenant is doing an excellent job and was appointed in 2012 and deserves an increase in salary. Mrs. Riener discussed that the Lieutenant was appointed less than a year ago and should not be looking for a large increase until at least a year from appointment. Mayor Scheffler explained that she understands that the council cannot compare the non-uniform employees to the uniform employees but that she cannot justify an increase that would place the Chief at least \$25,000 over the administrator salary. The majority of the police department is controlled by contract. Chief Pearlman explained that he had reviewed the salaries of other Chiefs in the area and they are making more than him. Mayor Scheffler explained that if you compare a lot of the other employees to the towns they would not compare well either, but this is Palmyra and that since the Chief built the budget request into the police department budget it has to be discussed as part of the budget process. Chief Pearlman explained that he had placed the full amount into the budget after a discussion with President Dorworth whom is Chairman of the Public Safety Committee. Mr. Gural explained the budget process that is conducted by department heads before the budget is prepared for council and that he does not amend a budget item once it is approve by the

Chairman of a committee. The budget is present to council as prepared by the department head with approval of the committee. Mr. Bostock discussed that Mr. Gural has to rely on the information that he receives from the council committee. Mayor Scheffler expressed her concerns that this discussion has to take place today and that many councilmembers are just hearing about the request for a salary increase from the Chief. Mayor Scheffler will reach out to President Dorworth concerning the requested salary increase and that council will leave the amounts in the current budget with the understanding that the budget can be amended or the amounts cancelled out at the end of the year. Mayor Scheffler informed council that she is also recommending that the Administrator receive a larger raise this year due to the amount of extra hours and efforts he has put in.

Mr. Stewart inquired if council would like to increase the amount of surplus placed in the budget to lower the rate. Mr. Stewart cautioned against going to low as it will hurt the budget process next year. Council agreed to \$790,000 from surplus for the 2013 budget which is an increase of \$32,000 from last year. The tax rate would be 1.143 for the 2013 rate compared to 1.761 from 2012 for a decrease of .586. The average home assessed at \$148,175.25 would have an increase of municipal taxes of \$48.00.

RESOLUTIONS.

A. **Resolution 2013-64**, Resolution Introducing The Budget Of The Borough Of Palmyra. Ms. Dobbs made a motion to approve the resolution, Mr. Bostock second the motion. At the call of the roll, the vote was:

AYES: Ms. Dobbs, Mrs. Riener, Mr. Bostock, Mrs. Ragomo Tait, Mr. Norcross.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: President Dorworth.

ORDINANCE ON FIRST READING. (public hearing on April 1, 2013).

A. **Ordinance 2013-7**, An Ordinance Of The Borough Of Palmyra In The County of Burlington Providing For Various Capital Improvements and Related Expenses In and For The Borough Appropriating \$155,000 Therefor Authorizing The Issuance Of \$147,250 In General Improvement Bonds Or Notes Of The Borough To Finance The Same. Mrs. Riener made a motion to adopt the ordinance on first reading, Ms. Dobbs second the motion. At the call of the roll, the vote was:

AYES: Ms. Dobbs, Mrs. Riener, Mr. Bostock, Mrs. Ragomo Tait, Mr. Norcross.

NAYES: None. The ordinance was adopted on first reading and will be heard on second and final reading after a public hearing on April 1, 2013.

Mrs. Ragomo Tait left the meeting due to a work commitment at 11:30am.

Mayor Scheffler inquired about the need for tasers in the capital projects? Chief Pearlman explained that they are used as the last resort before firing a shot at an individual. The tasers are just another tool for the police department to use, there is mandatory training required of each officer.

Sewer Budget-Mr. Gural explained that the sewer budget figures also include in a separate column the 2% increase for the employees. The engineering cost is higher due to some issues at the plant. In September the borough is hoping to go to a water usage system for the winter months.

Consent Agenda- Items B-I will be enacted as a single motion, if any resolution needs additional discussion it will be removed from the consent agenda and voted on separately. Mayor Scheffler read the title of the resolutions into the record. Mrs. Riener made a motion to approve the consent agenda, Mr. Norcross second the motion. At the call of the roll, the vote was:

AYES: Ms. Dobbs, Mrs. Riener, Mr. Bostock, Mr. Norcross.

NAYES: None.

- B. **Resolution 2013-37,** Resolution Awarding Trash Collection System To Central Jersey Waste And Recycle For The Borough Of Palmyra.
- C. **Resolution 2013-65,** Resolution Awarding The Carts For Automated Collection Systems To IPL Plastics In The Amount Of \$136,428.65.
- D. **Resolution 2013-66,** Resolution Awarding The Generator Replacement For The Independence Fire Company #1 To Ronald Janney Electrical In The Amount Of \$37,850.00.
- E. **Resolution 2013-67,** Resolution Appointing Dominic Fabrizio To The Borough Of Palmyra Police Department At An Annual Salary Of \$44,203.83.
- F. **Resolution 2013-68,** Resolution Awarding Professional Services To TrashPro For Consulting And Bidding Services For Automated Cart Service.
- G. **Resolution 2013-69,** Resolution Allowing For Annual Cost Of Living Increases For Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) For The 2013 Year.
- H. **Resolution 2013-71,** Resolution Amending Resolution 2013-48 Appointing Bridget Elmes As A Seasonal Worker To The Public Works/Sewer Department At A Rate Of \$15.94 An Hour. This resolution changes the title to only a seasonal worker for public works.
- I. **Resolution 2013-72,** Resolution Appointing Gregory Benson As A Full Time Sewer Department Employee At A Rate Of \$17.00 Per Hour.

MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC. Mr. Norcross made a motion to open the meeting to the public, Mr. Bostock seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. No one from the public wishing to be heard, Mr. Norcross made a motion to close the public portion, Mrs. Riener second the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

ADJOURNMENT. Mr. Norcross made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Bostock second the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion.