

TOWNSHIP OF HARDWICK
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

March 23, 2019 Saturday

The Budget Work Meeting of the Hardwick Township Committee was held on this date at the Municipal Building, 40 Spring Valley Road, Hardwick, New Jersey. This meeting was called to order at 9:06AM by the Township Clerk Judith Fisher who noted that this meeting was being held in compliance with the "Open Public Meetings Act":

In accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting was given by way of notice with the New Jersey Herald and/or the Express-Times, filed in the Municipal Clerk's Office and posted in the Hardwick Municipal Building.

Roll Call:

Present: Mayor Kevin Duffy, Deputy Mayor Alfred Carrazzone and Committeeman James Perry

Absent: None

Also present: CFO Christine Rolef, CPWM Thomas Campbell, Auditor Anthony Ardito and Municipal Clerk Judith Fisher

Treasurer Paul McNamara was present and reviewed their calls for 2018 with the Committee. There were 107 calls for 2018. A five-year history was also reviewed. The Squad has 41 active members, 27 EMT's of which 9 are from Hardwick. They talked about their vehicle and equipment. They raise a portion of their budget and rely on the Municipalities that they service to help make up the difference or help to balance their budget. Right now, the Township does donate \$8,000 to the Ambulance Corp and they are not requesting an increase but are hopefully that the Township will keep it the same this year. The Committee thanked them for coming in this morning.

At this time, the Committee reviewed the proposed 2019 budget with the Auditor. Mr. Ardito noted that the collection rate for 2018 was the same as last year and that the Township was in good financial shape.

The Committee reviewed the balances in various accounts:

Recreation \$4034.02

PSEG Grants \$104,000

Open Space

COAH \$3481

PILT (Federal Impact Aid) \$31,000

Clean Communities \$17,000

The donation to the Fire Companies was also discussed. Knowlton Fire Company agreement is for six years and will be ending January 2020. Blairstown Hose Company agreement was just renewed for 2018 and will run until 2022 and Stillwater Volunteer Fire Company is also 5 year agreement that started in 2018 and expires in 2022.

The Committee then talked about the Salt Reserve for snow storms, Capital Improvement Fund, Alina Lodge, North Warren Joint Court and Cell Towers.

Salaries for the employees and the annual stipends were reviewed. The overall raises for the employees will be 3% across the Board. Professional Services contract for the Engineer shows a 2% salary increase and Attorney will be discussed at the next meeting.

Mr. Campbell talked about his department and budget. His overall budget would be \$112,000. For Capital he is asking for \$22,000 for a Cold Planer and \$40,000 for a Brush Chipper. There was a discussion on maybe another shed. There is another Township looking at our Brush Chipper. They are possibly showing interest in purchasing. The Municipal Building roof shingles need to be replaced. There was damage to the roof from the window storm last year and the Township has an insurance settlement for \$25,000 towards this. Roads repairs and State Aid were discussed. Mr. Campbell noted that the Township recently did receive a DOT State Aid for Sunset Lake Road. The damage to Jones Lane which is in need of repairs will be addressed later in the year.

The Committee reviewed each line item and requested that were given to the Clerk. Other lines items discussed were COAH, Seniors, and Open Space.

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The tax rate in 2018 was 47.52 cents and for 2019 49.17 which is up about 1.65 cent. Average increase per home would be \$42.00 for the year.

A tentative Township Budget introduction date will be April 8 and the public hearing will be for May 15. The Committee discussed the Open Space Tax, which they will keep the same for 2019 at 2 cents per \$100.00.

Motion was made by Mr. Perry, seconded by Mr. Carrazzone and carried to open this portion of the meeting to the public for any questions on the preliminary 2019 Budget.

Mr. Mark Quick asked about Sunset Lake Road, repairs to Jones Lane which was not in the Budget.

See there were no other questions, Mr. Perry moved to closed this portion of the meeting to the public, second by Mr. Carrazzone. Motion carried.

Mr. Campbell talked to the Committee about his stipends for mechanic and CPWM. He would like to have these go towards his salary to increase his pension. There were a few questions from the Committee and Mayor Duffy will discuss this with the Township Attorney.

Mrs. Fisher talked to the Committee about advertising for a Deputy Clerk. Her intentions are to retire soon. The Committee will discuss this request.

Being there was no other business, a motion was made by Mr. Carrazzone, second by Mr. Perry and carried to adjourn todays Budget Work Meeting at 12:05Pm. Motion carried and all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith M. Fisher, RMC, Township Clerk