

TOWNSHIP OF HARDWICK
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

APRIL 27, 2020 Budget Meeting

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 1:13pm 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

Mayor Duffy thanked those that joined us today using Zoom. The other Board meeting will also be using Zoom for their meetings. He apologized for any glitches. Public discussion will be opened at the end of the meeting if there are any questions.

At this time, the Committee reviewed the proposed 2020 budget with the Auditor. Mr. Ardito noted that the collection rate for 2020 was the same as last year and that the Township was in good financial shape. Right now, with all the budget requests received, the Township is under "CAP". The Governor will not be introducing the State Budget until August 25 and right now, no one will be getting their State aid until then. Hardwick will be doing estimated tax bills in order to keep the funds flowing. Hardwick is also under State exam this year. There is a discussion on a bill to extend the May tax deadline to July 25; but this is still in review.

The Committee reviewed the balances in various accounts:

Recreation \$3289

PSEG Grants \$104,686

Open Space \$103,813

PILT (Federal Impact Aid) \$41,184

Clean Communities \$16,697

Capital Improvement \$53,791

Bond Funds: all the funds have not been used yet, there is a balance of \$10,320 in the Ordinance. The Capital Improvement line has \$25,369 left in it that can either be cancelled, spent or put in reserve for next year to spend.

The Committee talked with the Auditor about our State Aid and what would happen if we lose it.

The overall raises for the employees will be 2% across the Board.

Mr. Joseph Dunn, OEM is requesting that his line be increased from \$1500 to \$5000 because of this pandemic- Corona Virus and that he has already spend over the \$1500 for PPE supplies.

Mr. Dunn also discussed with the Committee about tree cutting on the Township right of way for the ash trees that are being destroyed by the Ash bore bug. He talked about having a line item for this.

Mr. Campbell talked about his department and budget. He noted that the mason dump truck is 15 year sold and the pickup truck is 4 years old. Discussion on the possible purchase on one new truck this year. If it is the pick up truck, the old one would either be traded in and bid out on Municipal Bid. He next talked about paving and finishing Sunset Lake Road and Shannon Road. This overlay could be done inhouse. The Township will be doing Millbrook Stillwater Road under the State Grant and they should consider in finishing this road next year (2021). Applications for 2021 State Grant will be due in July. Discussion went back to the trucks and the consensus was that there is a good chance for the purchase of a new pickup truck.

The Committee reviewed each line item and the requests from the various departments. They went back to the OEM request to increase his budget to \$5000. The Auditor broke down what the increase would be on the tax rate if they did this. As for the truck, the Committee talked about deciding this later noting that the funds for this expense are in Capital.

There was again another question about health insurance for the Committee. Right now, Mr. Perry is the only receiving this, but that both Mr. Carrazzone and Mr. Duffy are eligible to also receive the same. Further discuss at the next meeting about this.

The Auditor noted that the tax rate for 2019 was 0.4917 and for 2020 it looks like about 0.4973. The increase is \$.0056 cent (half a penny). This equates to a \$14 annual increase on an average valuation of \$253,401.

A tentative Township Budget introduction date will be June 3 and the public hearing will be for July 1.

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.

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

The Committee agreed to hold the introduction of the 2020 Municipal Budget pending further discussion on health benefits for the Committee. They also agreed that the Open Space Tax, will keep the same for 2020 at 1 cent per \$100.00.

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 3:16pm. Motion carried and all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith M. Fisher, RMC, Township Clerk