

August 29, 2019  
6:00 PM

The Budget Workshop of the Township Board of Supervisors was called to order by Chairman Castle for the purpose of discussing 2020 budget.

ATTENDANCE

A.W. Castle, III, Chairman  
Carl Kuhl, Supervisor

Karen Lowery, Recording Secretary  
Holly Wood, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Castle reminded everyone that this is a workshop for discussion only, decisions can not be made.

FIRE COMPANY

Mark Farrell, Dave Heckert and Donna March were present to review the fire company budget. Mr. Farrell said they feel an annual meeting with the Supervisors is needed to discuss the budget. The Fire Company expects and needs a partnership with the Township. Their budget consists of the operating budget, driver funds, apparatus budget and building needs. The members of the Fire Company bring years of experience and provide professional and timely responses to calls. The Fire Company's plan is made with the townships needs in mind and a lot of time goes into the budget process. The 2020 budget proposal is similar from year to year, however there have been some changes made to the apparatus budget and the equipment replacement schedule has been increased to 15 years. The main addition to the 2020 budget is the paid part-time weekend driver request.

Mr. Castle said the budget is pretty clear, but he questioned why there is a need for a weekend driver. Aren't there enough volunteers to cover the weekends? Mr. Farrell said that the volunteers work all week and then are busy on the weekends and we never know who is going to be available, so they are trying to be proactive. The weekday drivers have been a good benefit and given stability knowing there is a driver available.

Mr. Kuhl agrees that the Fire Company and Township need to work together and understand the needs. The DPW has created a detailed plan for equipment replacement with costs for the next 5 to 10 years, which helps with budgeting. He suggested this could be helpful with the Fire Company.

Mr. Castle questioned the \$10,000 for radios since money was given the past 2 years. Mr. Heckert said the portables have been replaced and this request is to update the firmware.

Mr. Castle agrees that the building needs to be painted. There was some discussion on how this would be handled. Quotes were received by the Fire Company with a cost of around

\$20,000. Ms. Lowery mentioned that anything over \$19,100 would need to be bid to meet our requirements. A scope of work should be created and prices can be obtained by the township.

Mr. Heckert clarified that manpower at the Fire Company is good, the issue is having a driver who can run the larger equipment, like the engine. Due to the training and experience needed there is a narrow group of volunteers that can run the engine and that group wants to be able to spend time on the weekends with the families. Mr. Kuhl asked how many qualified drivers there are. Mr. Heckert said there are 6 qualified volunteer drivers. Mr. Kuhl asked if the weekend driver could be on an as needed basis if the volunteer drivers weren't going to be available. Mr. Heckert said that paid drivers need notice and if not working for Monroe may pick up hours at another fire company. Mr. Heckert added that North Middleton Township have added weekend and overnight drivers at \$14 to \$15 per hour, Fairview Township added weekend drivers at \$16 per hour, South Middleton added drivers for Friday night, Saturday and Saturday night, and Carlisle has paid drivers 24/7. He added that the weekday help has been great and helps with mutual aid. Mr. Kuhl asked if there have been any issues with mutual aid response vs. in township response. Mr. Farrell said that would be a rare issue and if they would be on a mutual aid call for an extended period of time a transfer company would be called in.

Mr. Kuhl stated that the Fire Company is requesting an additional \$15,400 for a paid weekend driver. Mr. Heckert said that would be for Saturday and Sunday from 8 AM to 5 PM at a rate of \$12.50 per hour. Mr. Castle said this is a slippery slope which could work towards a full-time paid driver. Mr. Heckert said that Mr. Castle was probably right and that fire companies everywhere are having the same issues, but right now part-time drivers is a workable solution. Mr. Castle added that if the township was to include the paid driver costs in the fire tax monies, the fire tax rate would have to be increase by 24%. Mr. Kuhl asked if the assessed value increase was reviewed. He suggested the fire company work with Mrs. Wood to review projection rate, review grants, fundraising and see how close the budget vs. income would be without touching the fire tax rate. The rate was .304 mill and was increase to .325 mill in 2019. Mr. Heckert said that they do apply for grants, but they are usually for specific items like thermal image cameras or turn out gear. Mr. Farrell added that fundraising money is kept separate to pay for the annual banquet. Mr. Castle added that there are a number of unfunded expenses that are being put on the shoulders of local governments and we can't afford all of it. Some items, like MS4 work, will have to be passed down to the residents through another fee. He also added that he doesn't like the idea of a weekend driver, but that will have to be discussed by the Board.

### MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

Sue Sunday and Bill Beck were present for the Municipal Authority. Ms. Sunday said that the Authority works as a team to come up with the budget proposal.

Southern District:

Ms. Sunday said there is no plan for a rate decrease. They will be working toward another project for 2021, so they will be planning in 2020 since the camera work in the Sandy

pump station area is to be done by the end of 2019. They will be able to build a list of potential projects and be prepared if a grant becomes available. The treatment costs were increase because of having such a wet year from 2018-2019. And in the Southern Capacity fund they would like to set aside \$35,000 per year to put toward paying off the 2010 Bond in 2026.

Northern District:

Ms. Sunday said that \$50,000 from the operation fund and \$50,000 from the Northern Capacity fund has been budgeted to make an additional \$100,000 payment on the debt. Mr. Kuhl asked how much should be set aside in a slush fund. Mr. Beck said he has heard 20-25% of the gross revenue, but all Authorities are different. He would suggest keeping \$500,000 set aside. Mr. Kuhl asked if the Northern fund could lend money to the Southern fund for repairs and they money could be paid back. Ms. Sunday said that would be a question for Mr. Pykosh.

Ms. Sunday added that the Authority has provided two options that they would like to have considered for the Northern District. A) reduce the northern user rate by \$15 per quarter, so the rate would be \$220.00. B) increase the amount paid toward the debt reduction by \$50,000-\$75,000. Mr. Beck added that the northern debt could be paid off in 2022 with an additional payment of \$150, 000 to \$175,000 per year. Mr. Kuhl asked which option the Authority preferred. Ms. Sunday said they didn't really discuss that, but feels the debt reduction is important. Ms. Lowery said she had an email from Mr. Clancy who also preferred the debt reduction. Mr. Beck said they could do a combination to cover both options.

Mr. Beck added that the Northern district is in good shape. We need to do something with the money since it looks like we are making around \$100,000 per year.

Mr. Beck asked about the letter from SMTMA that suggested a moratorium and requested a meeting. Ms. Lowery said that Mr. Rudy was working on scheduling that meeting. Ms. Sunday suggested that the Supervisors and Authority meeting prior to the meeting so they can speak with one voice.

#### GENERAL FUND

Mrs. Wood explained that she is creating narratives for of the accounts to help explain what they are and what they are used for.

Should money be budgeted for the manager position? The EIP suggests that if there isn't going to be a manager than the duties be divided up between other staff members and possibly include some authority to make decisions, such as cost savings items, policy and manual preparations, without having to take everything to the Supervisors until it is in final form. Mr. Kuhl suggested that Mrs. Wood and Ms. Lowery evaluate the manager job description and provide more information on dividing duties. Mr. Castle feels that things have been working well, but some authority could be delegated.

Should the Comprehensive Plan be updated? Mr. Castle feels that this should be left alone since it has been working and there haven't been any issues. Mr. Kuhl said that if needed, sections could be updated. Mrs. Wood agreed and added that if our goals for the township change then it should be updated, but if they haven't changed then there is no reason to update.

Supplies/Small Tools – money was included in the budget for the DPW wish list items for a welder, road-cut saw, slope meter, mileage reader and a new air compressor. These seem to be reasonable items and would make certain projects easier.

Heath/Hospital – this is calculated for 7 full time employees at the full family rate. Mr. Kuhl would like for us to ask the employees if they intend to be on the insurance. Currently only one employee isn't on the health insurance. Ms. Lowery and Mrs. Wood feel that since this is a benefit offered to all full-time employees it should be budgeted for. We don't know when an employee's circumstance may change and they would need coverage. The amount budgeted doesn't account for employee contributions toward the health insurance or refunds from the insurance company.

Should surplus funds be moved to the Capital Projects fund for anticipated administrative building roof replacement? Mr. Kuhl said a roof consultant was out and provided a list regarding the roof, that should be looked at. He would also like a project list created including doors, windows, HVAC, etc. for all buildings.

Should we consider updating the front sign? Mr. Castle said it needs to be updated and suggested getting a price to see what is available.

#### MISCELLANEOUS FUNDS

Hydrant South – Aqua PA increased the hydrant rental fee by 18% in 2019, which will in return create an adjustment in the tax collection to cover the cost. Mr. Kuhl would like us to publicize the increase to make residents aware.

Capital Projects – money to paint the fire house was not included, but discussed earlier.

Township Equipment – the annual contribution was increased to keep up with the replacement schedule and add some new equipment.

Recreation Subdivision – money was budgeted to replace the backstop at the Joe Carr field. Mr. Kuhl asked for a price. Ms. Lowery didn't have a current price. Mr. Kuhl suggested that be looked into. He also asked if baseball had requested this to be done. Ms. Lowery said this has been requested for several years, but currently CV Little League isn't using the field very often, it is mainly used by a traveling team and an 30+ league.

ADJOURN

**Mr. Castle adjourned the budget workshop at 7:50 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Karen M. Lowery  
Recording Secretary