

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE BUDGET MEETING
VIA ZOOM VIDEO COMMUNICATIONS**

Monday, January 19, 2021 – 5:04 p.m.

PROPER STATEMENT OF NOTICE – Mayor Blake called the meeting to order stating that notice of the meeting had been posted on the municipal bulletin board and forwarded to the Hopewell Valley News, The Times, the Trentonian and the Hopewell Express (the official newspapers) on January 5, 2021, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975.

ROLL CALL: Those answering the roll call of the Municipal Clerk:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Kuchinski, Kristin McLaughlin, Courtney Peters-Manning, Michael Ruger, Mayor Julie Blake

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Acting Administrator George Snyder, Municipal Clerk Laurie Gompf, CFO Julie Troutman, Director of Community Development/Engineer Mark Kataryniak

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG – Mayor Blake led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

2021 MUNICIPAL BUDGET DISCUSSION

Mayor Blake mentioned that at 5:30 p.m. a moment of silence would be held in honor of those who have died from COVID-19. She then turned the meeting over to Committee Member Kuchinski, the finance liaison.

Committee Member Kuchinski provided a brief update on the status of the budget and announced that this evening begins the move into the operating budget. He explained that tonight's meeting will focus on the Department of Public Work's operating budget, suggested that they focus on understanding the choices that have been made and what the Public Works team is asking for; and stated that after the Public Works budget they will focus on 2021 professional service agreements.

Acting Business Administrator/Public Works Director Snyder began with the operating budget request for the Water Utility Department which included:

- Water Pipe Replacement Design Services
- Work to repair well house pipes, purchase small tools, hardware supplies, leak detector and a line locator.

A discussion ensued regarding the specifics of the utility budgets as compared to past years and it was suggested to have the past 3-year history available in future meetings.

Mr. Snyder reviewed the Public Works 2021 operating budget.

- Cut \$5,000 out of line item 026.
- Trimmed down seats in SDL to original 2 seats which saved money.
- Professional services are less than last year.
- CPR training is required every 3 years and this is a year it is required.
- The street sign budget was reduced.
- Contract pricing for salt was reduced this year.

At 5:30 p.m. Mayor Blake paused the meeting and read into the record: “Tonight is a national moment of unity and remembrance and the presidential inaugural committee will host a memorial to remember and honor the lives lost to COVID-19 in cities and towns across the United States tonight at 5:30. They are featuring a lighting ceremony around the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool and it will be the first ever lighting around the Reflecting Pool to memorialize American lives lost. We are also lighting up a space outside our building and Mr. Snyder, perhaps you can tell us where that will be?”

Mr. Snyder: “The side of the building facing Washington Crossing-Pennington Road is illuminated with flood lights in memoriam for the victims of COVID-19.”

Mayor Blake: “Thank you. So if you all would join me and bow your heads for just a few moments to honor those people whose lives were lost to COVID-19.”

A 30 second moment of silence was held.

Committee Member Kuchinski continued with the Department of Public Works operating budget by reviewing a history of the past 3 years’ budget and discussed how the future presentation of the budget should look. A street sweeper and chip sealing discussion was held.

Mr. Snyder reviewed the Buildings and Grounds budget which cut funding to wash and paint awnings at Public Works; removed construction to the evidence room in the Police Department; added new tables and chairs in the Public Works lunch room; and added a new frame in the garage door.

Discussion ensued regarding expenses surrounding COVID-19. It was decided that it would be helpful to add money to the budget for COVID-19 supplies in case there isn’t a grant for those supplies this year.

Mr. Snyder reviewed the Fleet Maintenance budget and explained that the mechanics provided a review of their yearly maintenance which they transformed into their budget request; the budget was increased for this year due to an increase in the fleet.

The Parks and Recreation Budget was reviewed and there was an increase in the budget this year due to the replacement of fences at MAC Field and Independence Park. Also discussed was renting Port-O-Johns for Woolsey Park as opposed to purchasing them and placing an enclosure around the Port-O-Johns. David Guerard, General Foreman, advised that he has met with the Eagle Scouts regarding a project to put enclosures around the Port-O-Johns.

Committee Member Kuchinski asked Mr. Snyder if the Public Works Department could improve, add or enhance its service to Township residents, what would be a top priority and what would be the cost of fulfilling that top priority? To which Mr. Snyder responded that he would seek recommendations from his staff and return with an answer at a later date.

Committee Member Kuchinski also asked for ideas for new sources of revenue that could enhance revenues coming to the Township that could reduce the burden on tax payers.

Committee Member Kuchinski turned the budget discussion to the Professional Services Agreements and offered an update on the PennEast Agreement litigation.

The Professional Services Agreements review included:

- Parker McCay
- Van Cleef Engineer
- Frank Banisch
- Harry Haushalter
- Ruderman & Roth

- Mason Griffin & Pierson
- KS Branigan
- McManimon Scotland
- Robert Yostemski
- Francis Linnus

At 6:15 p.m. Committee Member McLaughlin left the meeting.

Mr. Snyder reviewed the following PSAs:

- Rnd Consulting
- Penn Med
- Integrity
- Mercer Council on Drug and Alcohol
- The Canning Group
- Jennifer Kelly, PhD

Discussions ensued over PSAs for the Police budget and where certain items should be placed. Deer carcass removal budget amounts for the year were lower than usual in the Health portion of the PSA budget. Mr. Kataryniak advised that well testing money is placed in the budget in case it is needed. There was a discussion of the appraisal services in the Assessor's budget. Ms. Gompf explained Coded Systems, PSA in the Clerk's budget. The Court's public defender's fee was reviewed and Ms. Troutman explained the PSA for bond counsel.

PUBLIC SECTION

The following members of the public spoke during public comment:

No comments from the public.

At 6:28 p.m., motion by Kuchinski, seconded by Peters-Manning to adjourn the meeting.
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED

The detailed public meeting may be viewed at www.hopewelltp.org in the video library.

LAURIE E. GOMPF
 MUNICIPAL CLERK