

**JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
1033 WELDON ROAD
LAKE HOPATCONG, NJ 07849
973-208-6100
www.jeffersontownship.net**

**FEBRUARY 26, 2020
SPECIAL MEETING - BUDGET – 7:00 PM
MINUTES**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Council President Finnegan read the meeting statement as follows: This Special Meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law. Notice of this meeting was sent to the official newspapers of the Township, the Daily Record and the Star Ledger, on **February 13, 2020**. In addition, notice was posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building on **February 13, 2020** and is and has been available to the public and is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk.

Proper notice having been given, the Township Clerk is directed to include this statement in the minutes of this meeting, as well as the purpose of this meeting, which is to hold a discussion regarding the 2020 budget as well as to discuss or act upon public business.

Council President Finnegan called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

	Present	Absent
Mr. Birmingham	X	
Mr. Dunham		X**
Mrs. Merz		X*
Vice President Senatore	X	
President Finnegan	X	
Mr. Ryan, Township Attorney		X
Ms. Reilly, Township Clerk	X	

Ms. Reilly called the roll. All Council members were present except for *Councilwoman Merz, who was not present but listening in via telephone, and **Councilman Dunham, who arrived at 7:23 pm. Also in attendance was Mayor Wilsusen, Administrator Debi Millikin and Chief Financial Officer Bill Eagen.

3. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Council President Finnegan led the flag salute.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Finnegan opened the public comment portion of the meeting with the consent of the members present and asked speakers to state their name and address for the record.

Tim Hecht - Highland Lakes

Mr. Hecht identified himself as the PBA President and told Council that the Jefferson Township PBA was not on board with the Police Administration regarding body worn cameras. He commented that the State Attorney General has not mandated the use of body worn cameras and most municipalities in Morris County do not use them. He mentioned upcoming issues which will affect the Township budget, such as contract negotiations, the sunset of Chapter 78 and the garbage contract, and said it didn't make sense to the PBA to spend money on the body camera program when it is not a need but a very expensive want. Mr. Hecht also stated that having body worn cameras will increase the workload for Patrol Officers and increase public records requests. He asked that Council not fund this capital project.

With no one else wishing to be heard, Council President Finnegan closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

5. COUNCIL AND MAYOR DISCUSSION

• Department Budget Presentations

Mayor Wilsusen introduced Emergency Management Coordinator Ed Mangold, who first discussed the coronavirus and said he is working closely with the Health Department and the County and that the Township is prepared to get the word out to residents if something develops. He mentioned that dispatchers are already asking callers requesting first aid if they have flu like symptoms or if the caller has travelled out of the country. He said that if the answer to any of the questions is yes, the first responders and Police are notified.

Mr. Mangold reviewed some of the Public Safety Division's accomplishments, including standardizing policies and procedures, as well as revising regulations to protect Fire Department Juniors and EMS Cadets and having volunteers participate in State mandated harassment training. He said Past Milton First Aid Chief James Perrier will become the Division's LOSAP Coordinator and that Mr. Perrier and two (2) representatives from each of the two (2) fire departments and two (2) ambulance squads will be reviewing LOSAP for consistency and reviewing the LOSAP Ordinance for updates. Mr. Mangold said due to the increase in training requirements a change in the point system will be considered and that an updated LOSAP Ordinance should be presented to Council later in the year. He said there would be no request to increase LOSAP payments.

Mr. Mangold mentioned that the Township Mechanic has been doing as much apparatus maintenance and repair as he can, which saves money and allows the operating and equipment budgets to stretch further. Mr. Mangold said all agencies are using the Township undercarriage wash in an attempt to make current equipment last longer and the Division is exploring the option of refurbishing some apparatus for the same reason. He reported that the two (2) new fire trucks ordered last year will be delivered in March. He said the Mayor would like to see ATV patrols in the parks and per insurance requirements riders must be trained. Mr. Mangold reported that two (2) police officers and Mr. Perrier will attend a "train the trainer" class for ATV riders and will then be able to train their first responders. Council Vice President Senatore asked if bike patrols would also be used and Mayor Wilsusen said they would.

Mr. Mangold announced that the Jefferson Township Fire Department will sponsor the Jefferson Day Fireworks this year. He said 2020 is the year that both the County Mitigation Plan and the Emergency Operating Plan need to be updated, and that having current plans allows the Township to apply for grants as well as for FEMA reimbursement in the case of any disasters. He mentioned that both plans are updated every five (5) years.

Mr. Mangold mentioned that the Division would like Council support to develop an Ordinance for Vehicle Response Reimbursement. He said that the Town of Andover has an Ordinance that Jefferson can mirror. He explained that if a response to a vehicle accident includes the use of Hazmat materials, the Ordinance will allow the at-fault insurance company to be charged the FEMA cost of the materials and the responding apparatus. Mr. Mangold said that Andover uses a clearing house for this service and the charge to the town is fourteen percent (14%) but the percentage is built back into the Ordinance as an administrative fee. He mentioned that in the ten (10) years that Andover has had this Ordinance, they have realized at minimum \$10,000 reimbursement per year and in some years as much as \$24,000. He said any money Jefferson realizes will be used to buy new equipment and will be split between the four (4) organizations.

Mr. Mangold stated that the Ordinance would apply to non-residents, as a Jefferson resident is already paying for the service in their taxes. Mayor Wilsusen reiterated that the Township would not be going after individuals but after insurance companies in order to recoup some costs that are currently being borne by the taxpayers. Council consensus was that they would be interested in having an Ordinance like this developed for Jefferson. Councilman Birmingham brought up the cost of replacement of guide rails and Ms. Millikin and Mayor Wilsusen said the Township is able to receive some reimbursement from the Township's insurance company.

Mayor Wilsusen said as Mayor, he saw the need to coordinate all the Emergency Services instead of having four (4) independent organizations. He thanked Mr. Mangold for his efforts and thanked all the Chiefs for their cooperation and for working together. Mayor Wilsusen mentioned the cooperative purchasing and the savings it has meant for the Township.

Mr. Mangold discussed the Division's 2020 Capital Requests. He mentioned that he, the Mayor and the Administrator met with each of the Chiefs to review the capital requests. He said in reference to OEM, the Police are replacing the 2010 pickup truck and that the O&E requests remains at about \$10,000. Mr. Mangold said that Mr. Corsaro, the Fire Official, is doing an excellent job with the fire prevention programs he runs in the schools. He stated that Mr. Corsaro's O&E request remains the same and that he has no capital request as he is a self-funded Department.

Mr. Mangold mentioned that the Fire Prevention Bureau had requested updates to the 2004 Ordinance dealing with inspections of non-life hazard businesses in town. He said that the Ordinance update will allow the Fire Bureau to complete more required inspections and that increased inspections means the Bureau will require an additional part-time inspector, which will also be self-funded. Mr. Corsaro explained the term "non-life hazard use" to Council, and reiterated that inspections were all about safety and not about making money or making a profit. Mayor Wilsusen said the idea is to inspect half the businesses in town every year.

Mr. Mangold said there is no change to the O&E request for Fire Company #1 and that they were able to reduce their capital request for various equipment upgrades to \$83,700. He said they have developed a six (6) year plan which reflects future capital requests that are substantially lower than this year's request. Chief Ray Cabrera said that the projection moving forward is between \$50,000-\$60,000 per year in capital requests after 2020. Mayor Wilsusen commented that Fire Companies used to receive a \$50,000 capital budget each year with few parameters on spending. He said that last year was a catch up year and this year was a partial catch up year, which is why the budget requests are higher. He also said that going forward, the departments will have a capital plan to be followed no matter who the Chief is, so that priorities remain the same and there is consistency.

Mr. Mangold said Fire Company #1 would like to take advantage of the gas line being run past the firehouse, and that the Association has agreed to bear the \$50,000 conversion cost fee themselves. Chief Cabrera said they would like to eliminate the use of propane and oil and run on natural gas only. Ms. Millikin commented that the generator would be converted to natural gas as well. Mr. Mangold also reported that the Fire Company #1 has decided not to replace the out of service pump on aerial truck 728, due to the fact that the truck is thirty (30) years old. Chief Cabrera said the pump has no purpose as its capacity is only two hundred (200) gallons and would only be useful for a structure fire if fed by an engine. He mentioned the cost of replacing the pump is prohibitive and parts are difficult to find but the truck has been kept in good condition and will be utilized for its ladders and for rescue. Mr. Mangold said Fire Company #1's other priority is to place new engine 727 in service as soon as possible this year.

Mr. Mangold stated that Fire Company #2 had the same O&E request of \$90,000 and that they were able to reduce their capital request to \$82,000 for various equipment upgrades. He mentioned that Fire Company #2 needs to mount some equipment on the Fire Boat this year. In response to Council questions, Chief Ioiacano said he hopes to place new tanker 714 in service no later than April 1st, however, he still needs equipment for the apparatus and that's why he is asking for additional funding. In response to a question from Council Vice President Senatore, Chief Ioiacano stated that the useful life of the apparatus, per NFPA standards, is twenty (20) years. Mayor Wilsusen said there is still some capital money from last year that can be used for the equipment.

Councilman Dunham initiated discussion about the costs of a volunteer fire department versus a paid fire department. He said he occasionally hears negative comments about the Fire Department budgets. Consensus was that the Township is very fortunate to have a volunteer fire department, as a paid department would still require capital funding but a markedly increased operating and equipment budget due to salaries, health care costs, pension costs, facility needs, etc.

Mr. Mangold said Milton First Aid Squad and Jefferson Rescue would both like to have a new ambulance ordered this year for delivery next year. He stated that the Township mechanic inspected both vehicles and Milton First Aid's ambulance is older and has more miles. He said the cost for a new ambulance would be \$185,000 for Milton First Aid Squad and \$172,000 for Jefferson Rescue, plus \$40,000 for an automatic lift stretcher. Mr. Mangold said Milton First Aid Squad received a grant for their automatic lift stretcher. He stated that after a lot of discussion, the recommendation from the Administration is to fund and order an ambulance for Milton First Aid Squad this year, and hold off on ordering an ambulance for Jefferson Rescue until 2021, for 2022 delivery. Jefferson Rescue Chief Albie Garcia concurred with Mr. Mangold's statement. Mayor Wilsusen said the capital request falls within the strategic plan and they would prefer to not buy everything in one year but to instead spread out the purchases.

Discussion ensued about the ambulance squads applying for grants. Mr. Perrier said the FEMA grant is open now and Milton First Aid Squad will be applying for a grant for personal protective equipment. Council Vice President Senatore asked about the Fire Department running the 50/50 raffle at Jefferson Fest this year and the use of proceeds. Mayor Wilsusen said the proceeds will go to the Fire Department's non-profit Association to be used for the operation of their corporation. He explained that the Township funds the operating and expense budget for the Fire Department. He said the Township also gives a yearly donation to the squads which helps with the operation of their corporation.

Chief Cabrera said any monies from the sale of 50/50 tickets would be used for the Fire Department's Benevolent Association. Council President Finnegan asked about plans for Jefferson Fest and Mayor Wilsusen said food trucks, fireworks, and maybe a DJ were planned, with no charge for people to get in. Ms. Millikin said she would be discussing food truck fees with Council at the next meeting.

Mr. Mangold asked for a Council consensus on buying one ambulance. Councilman Dunham asked if the Township had a contract with St. Clare's for the ambulance services they provide when the Township volunteer ambulances are unavailable. Mr. Mangold reported that St. Clare's is servicing about thirty percent (30%) of the week for Jefferson Rescue and this agreement is currently based on a verbal contract.

Mayor Wilsusen mentioned that he and Ms. Millikin attended a Freeholder's budget meeting on Saturday and that the County currently has four (4) ambulances and they have budgeted for a fifth. He said the County ambulances are there to help municipalities who are having problems staffing volunteer squads. Mr. Mangold stated that the County only bills insurance companies and does not bill individuals. Mayor Wilsusen said the Chiefs are working hard to try to drum up new membership and there are events planned for April's Volunteer Awareness Month.

In response to Councilman Dunham's questions about funding, Mr. Eagen said funding would be done either through bonding or the capital improvement fund or the recreation trust fund. Councilman Dunham asked if there was money left from last year that can be applied and Mr. Eagen said there was a small amount.

Mr. Mangold reminded Council the Milton First Aid Squad would like to order the ambulance this year with expected delivery next year. Mr. Perrier spoke about the lengthy process of ordering an ambulance. Mayor Wilsusen said Council's commitment for this year would be a partial payment and then full payment on delivery next year. Mr. Mangold stated that there would be one ambulance ordered this year for Milton First Aid Squad and one ordered next year for Jefferson Rescue. He said Jefferson Rescue will try to get a grant for the \$40,000 stretcher and/or pay for some of the cost themselves.

Council President Finnegan polled the Council. Councilman Birmingham said the current ambulance is twenty (20) years old with high mileage. Councilman Dunham said he agreed with Mr. Mangold's recommendations but was recusing himself from the discussion on 745. Council Vice President Senatore, Councilwoman Merz and Council President Finnegan also agreed with Mr. Mangold's recommendations. Council President Finnegan said she believed in supporting volunteer and appreciated seeing everyone work together. Council Vice President Senatore stated that she appreciated the work being done in house by the mechanics. Mayor Wilsusen said the in-house work has been cheaper and offers a better quality service.

Chief Financial Officer Bill Eagen reminded Council that logistically, he needs four (4) affirmative votes to pass a bond Ordinance and that an abstention counts as a "no" vote. He mentioned that the regular capital Ordinances need a simple majority (2/3) vote of Council. He discussed the water and sewer budgets which he had placed on the dais earlier in the evening. He said both budgets were tough budgets and the sewer budget is in a little bit better shape than water. He said a sewer increase took effect January 1, 2020 and there is one more upcoming water increase on the books.

Mr. Eagen stated that the preliminary tax increase appears to be \$100 per average household but he and the administration will be paring that down before the budget introduction. Ms. Millikin mentioned that garbage went up drastically and Mr. Eagen said this was based on the built in 2 1/2 percent increase in the contract.

Mayor Wilsusen said once the budget is over the administration will be working on the garbage contract and he would need Council representatives to assist with developing bid parameters. Council Vice President Senatore said she might be available if the meetings are during the day. Some discussion ensued about the pros and cons of once a week versus twice a week pickup, and the construction dumpsters provided at the DPW.

6. ADJOURNMENT AT 8:29 PM

Motion made by Councilman Dunham, second by Council Vice President Senatore, to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 pm, with all members in favor signifying by "Aye".

ATTEST: February 26, 2020

Michele Reilly, Township Clerk

Kim Finnegan, Council President

Michele Reilly, RMC, CMR
Township Clerk
973-208-6133
mreilly@jeffersontownship.net
