

MINUTES OF THE BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING
DECEMBER 12, 2024

The first 2025 Budget Workshop Meeting was called to order by Mayor Larson at 2:00pm at Borough Hall, 10 East 7th Street, Barnegat Light, NJ 08006. He stated that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act. He said that notice of this meeting was posted on the bulletin board in the Borough Hall on December 10, 2024 and transmitted to the Asbury Park Press and Beach Haven Times on December 10, 2024.

ROLL CALL: Larson, Spark, Wellington, Foley, Mikuletzky, Gutowski

ABSENT: Reynolds

Also present, Public Works Superintendent, Stuart McGowan; Chief Financial Officer Kathleen Flanagan; Municipal Clerk, Brenda Kuhn

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Financial Officer, Kathleen Flanagan provided the following budget report.

- UTILITY OPERATING
 - Current Water Revenue is up from 2023 in the amount of \$228,364.29 (\$113,367.03 is from prior year rents due).
 - Current Sewer Revenue is up from 2023 by \$157,758.85 (\$160,707.18 is from prior year rents due) if not for prior year revenue we would have been in a deficit of \$2,948.33)
 - Total excess from Anticipated Revenue is \$382,023.25 to date
 - Total revenue outstanding at year end \$20,327.81
 - Appropriations are on point and no transfers are expected to be needed
 - Additional funds advised for 2025 budget. We cut it pretty close this year.
 - No Tax Sale Needed.

- FINANCE
 - Revenues are up slightly from 2023
 - lease monies finally received. Waiting for exact breakdown from Lessee.
 - \$125,000 reserved for revaluation. Another \$125,000 expected in 2025 and 2026 budget.
 - Additional monies needed for Legal –
 - No Tax Sale Needed.

Discussion: The Borough is considering hiring legal counsel to help meet its affordable housing obligations required by the state. Councilman Wellington noted this during the discussion and Flanagan clarified that the additional funds set aside for legal counsel are intended for this purpose in addition to the town's regularly hired professionals.

- BEACHES AND PARKS
 - Beach badge revenue is up \$5,450 from 2023
 - Increased badge prices should help significantly
 - Tighter rein on guards and salary is required
 - Honeywell Stock needs to be used this year to offset costs of the beach patrol
 - I'm not aware of any large purchases
 - Recreation Grant-What are we doing for 2025

Discussion: Stuart McGowan, public works superintendent mentioned the need for a new rack body truck. McGowan suggested that the lifeguards take the existing rack body truck, while requesting a new one be purchased for Public Works, with an estimated cost between \$74,000 and \$84,000. He mentioned that there is money left over from 2024 to use. Flanagan agreed to put the rack body in the capital budget noting that the money is available.

- DOCKS AND HARBORS
 - Boat ramp revenues are up by \$8,340. This does not include the kayak revenue.
 - Salaries and wages for the boat ramp were down \$2,295.94 in 2024.

Discussion: Gutowski emphasized the importance of maintaining a presence at the boat ramp, even if the operation only breaks even financially. He requested funding to apply a two-part epoxy coating to the floor and to make repairs to the plumbing in the ramp's bathroom. Flanagan noted that \$10,000 remains in the operating budget, which could be allocated to this project and carried over into 2024.

- PUBLIC SAFETY
 - Police contract increase \$809,881.42
 - 3% increase over 2024
 - Court revenues up \$4,764.89
 - Still not worth it to have the court
 - Still insists that the panic alarms are not acceptable

Discussion: The Council raised concerns about the rising cost of police services. McGowan addressed the panic alarm system concern and said that it passed judicial inspections.

- PUBLIC WORKS
 - No large purchases anticipated

Discussion: McGowan discussed the need for a bucket truck or a tow-behind unit, with the Council agreeing that the tow-behind would be the more cost-effective option. McGowan confirmed that the cost would not exceed \$10,000.

Councilman Wellington brought up the need for a sprinkler system for the Borough Hall lawn, estimating a cost of around \$10,000. He also mentioned that additional lawn maintenance would be required, potentially costing about \$35,000. Flanagan noted that this project could be encumbered for 2024.

McGowan further stated that the interior of Borough Hall, as well as the pavilion ceiling, would require painting, with an estimated cost of \$30,000. Additionally, McGowan requested \$20,000 to be allocated in the budget for materials to begin rebuilding the wooden beach walkways.

- PERSONNEL
 - Non contractual employee increase for 2025
 - I need this decided before year end

Discussion: Flanagan requested that the Personnel Committee determine the percentage increase by the end of the year.

Mayor Larson inquired about sending a former part-time employee to school for the Technical Assistance to the Construction Official Certification. Flanagan confirmed that there is funding available in the budget for the training.

Mayor Larson also mentioned that Emergency Management requires three new radios and a laptop. Flanagan confirmed that there is \$9,800 remaining in the Emergency Management budget. She will encumber the laptop purchase for 2024, but the cost of the radios will need further research before being included in the 2025 budget.

CAPITAL PROJECTS ANTICIPATED FOR 2025

- o All open space monies used to paydown debt on Coast Guard Property
- o I'm unaware of any capital items needed for 2025

Discussion: McGowan discussed the need to purchase a new generator for one of the wells, as well as a quick-connect generator for the Borough Hall. Flanagan asked if both would have a useful life of at least five years and cost over \$5,000. McGowan confirmed that they would meet these criteria.

McGowan also inquired whether the water tower was included in the capital budget. He explained that the tower would require an overcoat and spot sandblasting, with an estimated cost of \$236,000. Flanagan confirmed that \$300,000 would be allocated in the budget for the water tower.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Councilman Wellington inquired about the town's financial contribution to the First Aid Squad and Fire Company, referencing state statute NJSA 40A:14-34, which allows municipalities to appropriate up to \$90,000 to the boards of fire commissioners or volunteer fire companies. Flanagan emphasized that a financial audit would be helpful for the fire company in securing funding from the town. Wellington responded that the fire company's financial controls are well maintained and that they would have no issue with a financial review or audit. Flanagan clarified that the town would be requesting a financial audit, not a forensic audit.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Mayor Larson asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Wellington Second: Foley All in Favor

APPROVED:

KIRK O. LARSON, MAYOR

BRENDA L. KUHN, MUNICIPAL CLERK