

MINUTES OF THE BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE LOWER SOUTHAMPTON BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2020 AT 6:30 PM VIA TELECONFERENCE

Roll Call: Ray Weldie
Deborah Kaplan
Edward Shannon
Kim Koutsouradis
Susan Cummings

Staff: Joseph Galdo, Township Manager/Finance Director
Frank Dillon, Solicitor
Carl Turner, Township Engineer
Ted Krimmel, Chief of Police
Mike Italia, Zoning Officer
Matt Gilbert, Park & Recreation Director
Ryan Smith, Acting Fire Marshal
Mark McDonnell, Public Works Director
Peter Kim, Assistant Finance Director/Assistant Public Works Director
Josh Dowd, Tri-Hampton Rescue Squad
Dennis Stranz, Librarian
Karissa Murray, Library Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper
Christina Lynn, Township Administrative Assistant

Budget meeting called to order at 6:30 pm.

Rescue Squad 07 Fund

Josh Dowd was present to represent the Tri-Hampton Rescue Squad.

Mr. Galdo explained that last year, Tri-Hampton Rescue Squad requested from the Township for additional funding in the amount of \$255,000 due to employee retention issues. In the past, the Township gave Tri-Hampton around \$91,000. In 2020, the Township gave \$148,853. Mr. Galdo stated that for 2021, he has allocated \$335,500 which comprises of the \$255,000 plus the shortage of \$82,000 from the 2020 budget. The Township took a \$1,500 credit for the past years purchase of radios for the rescue squad.

Mr. Dowd stated that the need for additional funding was for the additional payroll cost to bring staff up to the regional standards and has resulted in improved staffing. Mr. Dowd stated that Tri-Hampton has maintained the same level of service over the last 15 years. Mr. Dowd said year-to-date, there has been 1,200 service calls in Lower Southampton Township. Mr. Dowd explained the additional challenges with COVID and the extra precautions they need to take. Mr. Dowd stated that they were successful in obtaining a Payroll Protection Grant to use for some of the months where revenue took a dip.

Mr. Dowd said the rescue squad moved into their new station in September and they are very grateful to Lower Southampton Fire Company's hospitality during the construction. Mr. Dowd offered to give a tour to the Supervisors of the new facility.

Ms. Cummings asked if there was an increase in spending due to COVID. Mr. Dowd replied that they used some of the stimulus money for a fogging machine that sterilizes their trucks and equipment. Their PPE supply was well-stocked prior to COVID but there was a 200% increase in that expense.

Ms. Cummings asked if the rescue squad was able to do their subscription mailing. Mr. Dowd said yes – they had a good response; better than expected.

Library 04 Fund:

Dennis Stranz, Karissa Murray, Dr. Gary Bowman, and Anne Berlin were representing the Library.

Mr. Stranz said they are here to present the revised budget for 2021. Mr. Stranz stated that the state cut their funding by 50% for 2021 – the actual amount will be known on November 7, 2020. Mr. Galdo asked Mr. Stranz to go over the differences between the Township's proposed budget and the Library's proposed budget for 2021. Mr. Stranz stated that the Library is looking for a 12% cut in the Township's contribution for 2021 - \$563,200. Mr. Stranz explained that they cut salaries by 15%, commercial insurance will be cut by 57%, material will be cut by 14%. These cuts will result in expenses being cut down to \$646,725 for 2021. Mr. Stranz stated that in the budget provided by the Township, there is a line item for fundraising at \$20,000; the Library is proposing that line item to be only \$8,000.

Ms. Kaplan asked if the deduction in insurance includes workers compensation. Mr. Stranz said he assumes it is included. Mr. Galdo stated he doubts it is included – Mr. Galdo said it only includes commercial liability. Mr. Weldie asked if the deductions includes health care costs. Mr. Galdo said the health insurance is only for the four full-time employees. Mr. Weldie if there will be a reduction in pension costs if any employee goes below 1,000 hours. Mr. Galdo answered it could, but it depends on how they manage their human resources. Ms. Murray answered that any employee that received a pension in the past were included in the 2021 budget as still receiving the pension.

Ms. Kaplan asked if Library hours were cut. Mr. Stranz answered no – they cut back on working hours for the staff. Ms. Kaplan asked how many employees they have. Ms. Murray responded that there are four full-time and nine part-time employees. Mr. Stranz said the part-time employee hours are varied from seven hours to twenty-seven hours per week. Mr. Galdo asked Mr. Stranz if the Library's hours were reduced since June. Mr. Stranz said the Library has not gone back to being open 52 hours per week. Mr. Galdo clarified that the Library cutback on hours opened in June after COVID. Mr. Stranz responded correct.

Mr. Stranz stated that the Township's proposed 30% cut in contribution from the General Fund is impossible to work with. Ms. Kaplan said you are asking for more money that what we are offering. Ms. Berlin stated we are asking for a 12% reduction from the amount the Township contributed in 2020 - \$648,000 to \$563,200.

Ms. Kaplan asked if they have ever thought of having student volunteers to help out in the library. Dr. Bowman said it can be done as long as we do not supplant the regular employees. Mr. Stranz said in his experience, one in maybe a thousand volunteers are worth it. Mr. Galdo said research was done at local libraries and they do have volunteers that help at the circulation desk and that can reduce salary costs.

Mr. Shannon asked Mr. Galdo if the Township can afford to use the Library's proposed budget. Mr. Galdo responded that he tries to make things work the best he can but it would impact other operational departments. Mr. Galdo said in 2021, we have to give additional funding to the fire companies, rescue squad, the police pension fund – 2021 will be a bad year. Mr. Galdo said it is the Board of Supervisors decision. Ms. Kaplan stated this will interfere with our employees – we still have employees laid off. Mr. Koutsouradis stated this is concerning and next year is going to be worse. Mr. Weldie said if the Township can give the \$563,200, then what do we do in 2022 and beyond because the gap will widen. Mr. Shannon said we may need to go back and cut more. Discussion ensued about volunteers and cutting hours. Dr. Bowman said we discussed closing the library but want to avoid eliminating services to the community. Dr. Bowman said we don't know the state funding level will be and that will impact the budget for next year. Mr. Galdo said we should not cut service hours, but staff the Library based on need – do more with less. Mr. Shannon said he would like the Library to do a little better – are there other

things they can cut. Dr. Bowman asked if there is a target they can reach. Mr. Galdo said we can get closer but we need to rethink the volunteer aspect and the donation aspect with someone at the Library directing and taking ownership of it. Mr. Galdo said \$8,000 is too low. Discussion ensued about times when employee hours can be reduced. Ms. Berlin stated that a reduction in another \$100,000 in the Library's budget will not work and could result in the Library having to permanently close in March 2022. Mr. Galdo stated the Library needs to function as a non-profit organization and focus on driving donations and grant opportunities. Mr. Galdo said he thinks he can make it work with a Township contribution closer to \$500,000 but the Library needs to commit to fundraising and volunteers.

Police Department Fund

Chief Krimmel stated the payroll increases and health insurance costs remain about the same for next year. Chief said he discussed with Mr. Galdo the technology items that need to be done next year. Warranties for body cams were purchased this year and that has saved the Police money with repairs.

Mr. Weldie asked why there was a change to the Court Overtime line item. Chief Krimmel said Mr. Galdo put that change in there because of COVID. There were some scheduling changes that conflicted with the contract for on-call status. Mr. Galdo put a cushion in there just in case nothing changes for 2021.

Mr. Weldie said the 2020 budget looks like it will come in \$600,000 less than projected. Mr. Galdo said he builds a cushion into the Police budget every year just in case of emergency. Mr. Galdo said the Police are doing well with expenditures this year.

Mr. Weldie asked Chief Krimmel if there is money put aside for the Police dog that he is not seeing in the proposed budget. Chief responded that the training and dog were free. There will be expenses for upfitting a vehicle for the dog but the DA's office is paying for half of that. Chief said a local vet is taking care of the healthcare for free. Mr. Galdo said there are enough appropriations to help with the dog. Mr. Weldie asked about the officer's training for working with the dog. Chief said the officer is at training now with the dog. The training should end in December. The dog will go back for additional training in February for narcotics. Ms. Kaplan asked how much the officer's training costs. Chief answered the training cost is minimal. The foundation that donated the dog is paying a portion of the officer's training. Ms. Kaplan asked for the cost of extra insurance for the dog. Mr. Galdo said according to our insurance broker, there is no additional cost for having a Police dog.

Recreation 05 Fund

Mr. Gilbert said 2020 was a difficult year for their programs. On a positive side, LSAA has their highest enrollment ever and the parks are being used more than ever. Mr. Gilbert said the 2021 budget projects us to be in the new normal. With having time to prepare and talking to the Department of Health, Mr. Gilbert says the numbers are achievable and we should be able to get our programs back on track. Mr. Gilbert said the millage stayed the same. Mr. Gilbert said the Youth Camp allocations are higher because it will be more expensive to operate that program due to the post-pandemic world we live in. Mr. Gilbert said revenue expenses are relative – we are looking forward to running our camps and programs at Playwicki Farm next year.

Dolphin 14 Fund

Mr. Gilbert said this fund is similar to the 05 Fund. Mr. Gilbert said they are planning for the new normal so we can operate safely. Mr. Gilbert explained that for the 2020 season at the Dolphin, there was a new pricing structure that was fair to our customers, but, unfortunately, we were unable to implement that to see if it worked. Mr. Gilbert said it will be implemented in 2021. Mr. Gilbert explained the rent income is a transfer from the 05 Fund related to utilities, maintenance, swimming pool management contract, housekeeping, and general supplies that is related to the summer camp operation. Mr. Gilbert said there were some expenses in 2020 that were related to winterizing the pool and expenses incurred prior to March.

Mr. Shannon asked what was the cost of having the Back the Blue events. Mr. Gilbert said minimal manpower costs but he will work up the numbers and get back to Mr. Shannon.

Edward Shannon, Secretary