

Minutes

The first of two 2024 Budget Workshop Meetings of the Board of Fire Commissioners, Fire District No.2 was held on the above date at the Lenola Fire House. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Wesolowski. Four commissioners were present with Commissioner Mann absent along with Administrator Knobbs. Also in attendance were Chief Grant and Chief's Assistant Wesolowski.

President Wesolowski opened the meeting by reading the following statement in accordance with the "Open Public Meetings Act":

This meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners, Fire District No. 2 of The Township of Moorestown is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1975. Pursuant to the "Act", on February 21st, 2023 the required notice was transmitted to the *Burlington County Times*.

Additionally, the required notice was posted on the bulletin board, reserved for such notices, in the lobby of the Town Hall, 111 West Second Street, Moorestown, NJ 08057, on the bulletin board of the Moorestown Municipal Library, 111 West Second Street, Moorestown, NJ 08057 and on the bulletin board of the Lenola Fire House, 229 North Lenola Road, Moorestown, NJ 08057 and filed with the Clerk of the Township of Moorestown on this date.

Lastly, written notice was posted on the official website, MoorestownFireDistrict2.com on February 14th, 2023 and mailed to each person who has requested copies of the schedule of meetings.

An affidavit certifying that the aforesaid delivery and posting of notices was prepared and signed by the Administrator.

Wesolowski called for a salute to the flag and a moment of silence for our departed members.

Proposed 2024 Budget:

Wesolowski asked Administrator Knobbs to lead the general budget discussion. The following items were discussed:

- Current and projected Governmental Fund Balances through 2022
- Multi-year Capital Plan
- Budget Timeline

Knobbs then stepped through the Proposed 2024 Budget. Synopsis of the changes by category as compared to the prior year were provided. Discussion ensued with intermittent public comment.

Notable discussion items were as follows:

- Knobbs reviewed the Post Retirement Reserve, and based on current costs, as well as projected costs into the future, he recommended continuing the amount contributed annually to the reserve. He recommends a \$30,000.00 contribution.
- 2024 Salaries: Administrator Knobbs stated the salary actions discussed during the October 4th Executive Session were incorporated into the 2024 Budget.

- Administration: Overall Budget increased due to increased Salary and associated taxes and benefits, a \$800 increase in Election Expenses, a \$2,000 increase in the Insurance cost, a \$1,500 increase in Travel Expenses (chief's Veh.), a \$600 increase in Payroll Services, a \$200 increase in QuickBooks Subscription and an increase in the Office Supplies of \$3,000 to cover the cost of new furniture.
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Salaries & Benefits shows a 6.1% increase total. These were the salaries decided in the Executive session last week.
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Care & Maintenance: Overall shows an increase of \$1,233 or 2.31%. This is due to increases of \$228 for firefighter hoods, \$150 for the Holmatro Tool service contract, \$300 for hose testing, \$150 for Class A Foam, \$380 for the NFPA Fire Flow Pump/Ladder, and \$25 for the NDT Testing of 3135.
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Repairs-Buildings & Grounds: Shows an increase of \$27,350 due to a \$500 increase for Landscape Maintenance, a \$250 increase in Cleaning Supplies, a \$35,000 increase in 225 N Lenola Parking lot resurfacing, a decrease of \$15,000 for the new lock system that was installed, and a \$6,600 increase for 2 exterior steel door replacements in the building.
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Hall Repairs & Maintenance: Shows an overall decrease of \$800 in General Repairs. (Window project completed and new tile project added)
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Utilities: Shows an overall decrease of \$1,200 due to the assumption of the Squad fax line which is utilized for the Alarm System back up phone.
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Fire Equipment: Shows an overall decrease of \$14,350 due to a \$19,850 decrease in equipment purchased last year, a \$500 increase in hose replacement costs, the addition of \$400 for the purchase of a battery-operated blower for Rescue 3132.
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Miscellaneous: Shows an overall decrease of \$1,045 due to a costs associated with software subscriptions.
- Oper App Offset with Rev-Bureau of Fire Prevention: Overall this category shows an increase of \$25,177. \$22,477 due to salaries, pension and health care benefits, and a \$2,700 increase in Education & Training. Intra-district billing for the Bureau of Fire Prevention was also discussed.
- Reserve for Future Capital Outlay and Post-Retirement Benefits: The 2023 Budget includes reserve contributions for these categories, \$50,000.00 and \$30,000.00, respectively.
- Contributions to First Aid Squad: Overall this category shows a decrease of \$30,000 due to a decrease in Assistance with ambulance purchase and supplies. This is due to 319 taking over for 318. The fuel allowance will remain in the budget for assistance with fuel costs if needed.
- Revenues: The following revenue items were discussed: Investment Income, Bureau of Fire Prevention Income, Intra-district Billing Revenue and Rental Hall Income.

Knobbs ended the discussion by reiterating the fact that the state is behind in providing Pension rate information. The proposed budget at this time is using estimated rates. He is also awaiting Healthcare benefit rates. He will adjust the figures as they become available, and if the

commissioners are happy with the current proposed budget, he will adjust the amount to be used from reserves to maintain a flat tax rate for tax payers.

The proposed 2024 Budget as discussed reflects a total revenue of \$739,156, an amount to be raised by taxation of \$771,886 and a total appropriation of \$1,511,041. The preliminary amount to be raised by taxation remains flat compared to the 2023 Budget. Current valuation estimate was used and it would result in the tax rate remaining the same for 2024.

President Wesolowski stated that he believed that the budget presented tonight, with the exception of the discussed pension numbers looked good, and he did not see a need to have a second Budget Workshop. He asked if this meeting could be cancelled. Administrator Knobbs stated that it could be cancelled, as it is listed as an “if needed” meeting, and he would have to post the cancellation notice on the website as well as post a notice at the library and town hall. Wesolowski asked if the commissioners were in agreement, Motion by Commissioner Grant, seconded by Commissioner Humes to cancel the October 18, 2023 Budget Workshop was approved 4-0.

Meeting opened to the public:

Chief Grant asked if there could be consideration of changing the lights on 3132 and 3135 to LEDs since the replacement trucks that are currently listed on the Capital Plan look like they won’t be needed at this time. Administrator Knobbs asked the Chief to get pricing to do those upgrades and we might be able to do those out of unexpended funds in this year’s budget.

There being no further questions or comments from the public, this portion of the meeting was closed.

There being no further business to come before the Board, by Proper Action, meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen W. Knobbs
Board Administration