

Minutes

The first of two 2023 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. Five commissioners were present (Four in person, Commissioner Humes attended electronically) along with Administrator Knobbs. Also in attendance were Chief Grant, F.O. Orsini, Battalion Chief DiPaolo, FI/FF Carruthers 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 22nd, 2022 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 22nd, 2022 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 2023 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 2023 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 an increase in the amount contributed annually to the reserve. He recommends a \$30,000.00 contribution.
- 2023 Salaries: Administrator Knobbs stated the salary actions discussed during the October 5th Executive Session were incorporated into the 2023 Budget.

- Administration: Overall Budget increased due to increased Salary and associated taxes and benefits, a \$700 increase in Election Expenses, a \$12,200 increase in the Insurance cost, a \$4,000 increase in Professional Services, a \$400 increase in Payroll Services, a \$320 increase in Miscellaneous and an increase in the Post Retirement Reserve of \$5,000.
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Salaries & Benefits shows a 5.5% increase total. These were the salaries decided in the Executive session last week.
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Care & Maintenance: Overall shows an increase of \$2,082 or 4.1%. This is due to increases of \$440 for the firefighter gloves, \$72 for firefighter hoods, \$525 for the calibration and maintenance of the fit test machine, \$270 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 \$17,350 due to a \$2,000 increase for Snow Removal, a \$1,000 decrease in County Software Maintenance, a \$350 increase in Extermination Services and a \$15,000 increase for upgrade/replacement of the door lock/access system. President Wesolowski asked if the parking lot maintenance/resurfacing of the 225-parking lot could be included in the budget. Knobbs stated that it could, pending the acceptance into the coop. Knobbs stated that the cost savings over putting this out to bid on our own could potentially be significant. After discussion, \$35,000 was added to this category resulting in an overall increase of \$52,350.
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Hall Repairs & Maintenance: Shows an overall increase of \$15,600 due to a \$15,000 increase in General Repairs for window replacements and a \$600 increase for floor and carpet cleanings.
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Utilities: Shows an overall increase of \$1,100 due to a \$800 increase in Cell Phones/Hot spots and a \$300 increase in FH Telephone costs.
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Fire Equipment: Shows an overall decrease of \$4,750 due to a \$23,250 decrease in Firefighter Helmet costs, a \$500 increase in hose replacement costs, the addition of \$15,500 for replacement of the Holmatro Ram on 3132, an addition of \$1,500 for the purchase of an AED for the Chief's vehicle, and the addition of \$1,000 for an Accountability Tag System.
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Promotions (Hall): Shows an overall increase of \$5,000 due to \$2,500 increase in Hall Cleaning Costs, a \$2,000 increase in Hall Rep/Server costs, a \$400 increase in Soda Costs and a \$100 increase in Dishwasher rental costs.
- Cost of Operations & Maintenance-Miscellaneous: Shows an overall decrease of \$335 due to a \$3,000 decrease (deletion) of LVFC Open House costs and an increase in Software Subscriptions of \$2,265. FF James Carruthers asked the Commissioners to appropriate funds for Member Recruitment and Retention, after discussion the commissioners agreed to a \$5,000 increase. This resulted in an overall increase of this category of \$4,665.
- Oper App Offset with Rev-Bureau of Fire Prevention: Overall this category shows an increase of \$43,418. \$36,208 due to salaries, pension and health care benefits, and a \$3,000 increase in Fire Prevention materials, a \$1,400 increase for Gas/Auto Expenses, a \$370 increase for Utilities, a \$560 increase in Telephone costs, a \$1,280 increase in Cell Phone/Hot Spot costs and a \$600 increase in SSA Administration costs. 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 \$25,000.00, respectively.

- Contributions to First Aid Squad: Overall this category shows an increase of \$12,450 due to an increase of \$2,450 in fuels costs and a \$10,000 increase in supplies costs. The supplies cost will be used by the squad on an as needed basis.
- 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 2023 Budget as discussed reflects a total revenue of \$746,266, an amount to be raised by taxation of \$771,884 and a total appropriation of \$1,518,149. The preliminary amount to be raised by taxation remains flat compared to the 2022 Budget. Current valuation estimate was used and it would result in the tax rate remaining the same for 2023.

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 with cancelling the meeting and all agreed.

Meeting opened to the public:

Battalion Chief DiPaolo thanked the board for their consideration of the proposal put forth by FF Carruthers for Recruitment and Retention and for the continued support by the board.

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 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen W. Knobbs
Board Administration