

EAST FALLOWFIELD TOWNSHIP
BUDGET MEETING
June 14, 2016 Approved minutes
6:37 PM

Members Present

Steve Herzog, Chairman
Ed Porter, Vice Chairman
Carol Kulp, Member
Wilson Lambert, Member

Township Staff Present

Lisa Valaitis, Township Secretary
Pani Martin, Township Treasurer

1. Call to order, moment of silence, and pledge of allegiance.

Chairman Steve Herzog called the meeting to order at 6:37 pm.

2. Discussion

Pani Martin stated she is looking for direction from the Board on what they would like to see in the 2017 budget. She asked the Board if they are looking to keep the tax at the same rate, raise it, or lower it. She asked if the Board wanted to work on Mortonville Road as well as other roads in 2017. There is a backlog of roads that need paving.

Ed Porter asked Pani Martin what raise she put in for the Public Works Department and the Police Department. Pani Martin stated she put a 3% wage increase in the budget for the Public Works, Police and Administration departments. Ms. Martin stated Chief Porter told her to put in 3% for the police for now because the contract is up for negotiation.

Ed Porter asked Pani Martin if Tag Gathercole had given her advice on roads that need paving. Pani Martin stated that Tag Gathercole is working on a road repair and maintenance list. Ed Porter talked about Mortonville Road being important because of travel. However, it is such a great expense and many other roads could be repaired for the cost of repairing Mortonville Road.

Ed Porter asked Pani Martin if she foresaw any big expense in the office. Pani Martin stated the only thing she is looking for this year is to hire a township manager which she included in the budget for \$100,000. Steve Herzog asked if the budget was balanced with the township manager included. Pani Martin replied yes.

Pani Martin stated there are not many big changes in this preliminary budget. Pani Martin discussed the Township's grass mowing and man hours. Ms. Martin said she discussed with Tag Gathercole how many man hours it takes to mow the grass in the Township. She said Tag Gathercole would like part-time summer help with grass cutting. Ed Porter and Steve Herzog discussed hiring part-time help to mow grass and possibly going through the Teamsters Union to subcontract. Hiring part-time help to mow grass would free up the Road Crew to do more road work. Ms. Martin said they are interested in hiring two part-time grass mowers at \$13.50 per hour from May through September.

Ed Porter asked why account 1410.20 Full Time Officers Salary/Wages is the same cost this year and next year with only seven full time officers. Pani Martin stated that she included eight full timers for next year's budget. Steve Herzog stated we will need to check with Chief Porter regarding his hiring plans.

There was a discussion about the need for a township manager. Wilson Lambert asked if \$100,000 for a township manager is a necessary expense. Steve Herzog stated that \$100,000 would include benefits. Ed Porter commented that the total cost for a township manager could be higher than \$100,000 with benefits. Steve Herzog stated that they have the option to add office employees to the Teamsters medical insurance plan to save money. Wilson Lambert stated he keeps hearing about complaints that the Road Crew spends too much time cutting grass but that is part of their job duties. Wilson Lambert asked what the benefit to the Township is to hire a township manager. He stated that it would be more beneficial to put the \$100,000 back into the Township. Steve Herzog discussed the

various benefits of hiring a township manager such as: having someone to run the day to day operations of the office, someone to handle the human resource duties (which would free up Pani Martin to do the treasurer job), grants, Park Day, pull things in line, maintain relationships with the Planning Commission and other commissions and develop proper processes/procedures. Steve Herzog stated he feels the Township needs a township manager. Mr. Herzog stated a good township manager would pay for itself. Pani Martin commented that a previous Board had had a management report done for \$7,000 that recommended the Township hire a township manager. Ed Porter stated the Township has had full time township managers in the past and it wasn't effective. He also said there is little that a township manager can oversee with the Police Department and Public Works Department unions. Mr. Porter stated the only area a township manager could oversee is the office which is small. Ed Porter suggested trying a part-time township manager. Ed Porter stated he won't vote in favor of hiring a township manager without further discussion regarding what the Board would use the position for. Ed Porter suggested a part-time treasurer and full-time manager. Wilson Lambert discussed the need for the Board to do performance reviews. Mr. Lambert said the Board hired leaders to handle management of each township department. Mr. Lambert stated the Board needs to draft a performance review form. He stated it isn't worth having a township manager for accountability purposes.

There was a discussion about Tag Gathercole's position being a management position or not and that he can't be in the union if he is considered management. The Board discussed the option of adding staff to the office and the need for a township manager to oversee the Public Works Department. Steve Herzog said due to the union, Tag Gathercole can no longer give direction to the Public Works Department. Someone needs to manage the Public Works Department. If Tag Gathercole is directing the department on what to do, then he would be considered management and would not be able to be in the union. The Board will talk to Tag Gathercole about his interest in management. Wilson Lambert stated he would be Road Master if Tag Gathercole does not want to become part of management. Ed Porter stated the Elected Auditors set the pay rate for snow plowing at \$15.00 per hour.

Ed Porter asked Pani Martin if she consulted the Township department heads on the budget. Pani Martin stated she did meet with the department heads. She said the main requests were that the Public Works Department asked for summertime grass mowing help and the Police Department requested a new car. The Police Department is not purchasing a new car this year even though a new car is in the current year budget.

Steve Herzog asked if Tag Gathercole had told Pani Martin what the \$150,000 in Liquid Fuels Road Improvements is for. Pani Martin stated she is still waiting for that list. Steve Herzog discussed the need for the township to have a one, three and five year plan for Township roads. Ed Porter stated the roads are in serious crisis. Wilson Lambert asked if Tag Gathercole decides what roads are repaired. Wilson Lambert said the Board needs to be part of the decision on what roads are repaired and suggested the Board drive around the Township, view the road conditions, and determine what roads to work on. Mr. Lambert stated this would give the Board accountability and transparency. There was a discussion about the Sunshine Law and having only two Board members drive around the Township at a time. The Board and Tag Gathercole could decide on a schedule for road work after the Board surveys the roads. Steve Herzog commented that there is not enough Liquid Fuel money to cover all the road work. Ed Porter stated seal cracking the roads is critical to helping them last longer.

Dennis Crook spoke to the Board regarding 2017 budget requests for the Planning Commission. He spoke about conversations with Will Stevens III who is the Director of Chester County 2020. The programs they offer are the Master Planning Series, Keep Farming First, and Community Conversations. Mr. Crook talked about taking the results from the Comprehensive Plan meeting and using it to start a Community Conversation program to develop procedures for the Township. Mr. Crook stated he has been working on setting up an agreement to bring the Master Planning Series courses to the Township which would allow the Township staff and volunteers to be more unified. Mr. Crook stated the cost would be \$1,600 per class for three classes: planning, zoning and subdivision and land development. 10-15 people would be needed to take the course. Ed Porter asked Dennis Crook if the entire Planning Commission is interested in taking these courses. Dennis Crook said yes they are all interested. Ed Porter asked Dennis Crook if completing these courses would reduce the need for the Planning Commission to need a Solicitor. Dennis Crook stated yes that would help lessen the need for the Solicitor's help. Ed Porter stated that the Solicitor went through the Planning Commission's conditional use recommendation letter and discussed the points and law around it with the Board. Therefore, the Planning Commission was able to make their points to the Board. Ed Porter discussed parameters and allotting time for the Solicitor to work with the Planning Commission. Budgeted allotment for the Planning Commission budget will be \$1,000 for the Solicitor and \$4,800 for the Chester County 2020 Master Planning course series.

3. Adjournment

MOTION: Steve Herzog made a motion to adjourn the budget meeting at 7:25 pm. Ed Porter seconded.

VOTE: 4-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Valaitis,
Township Secretary