

DOYLESTOWN TOWNSHIP

2009 BUDGET WORK SESSION

November 10, 2008

10:00 AM

NOTES

In attendance were: Barbara N. Lyons, Chairman; E. Thomas Scarborough, Jr, Vice Chairman; Barbara Eisenhardt. Cynthia Philo, and Jeffrey Bennett. Also in attendance Stephanie J. Mason, Township Manager, William Wightman, Finance Officer; Richard John, Director of Operations; and Karen Sweeney, Director of Parks and Recreation.

Mr. Wightman indicated that at the last budget work session we had a \$232,000 shortfall in operations with \$900,000 in the unrestricted reserve. He reviewed a spreadsheet that shows all the items that have been taken out, added in, which assisted in getting rid of the \$232,000 shortfall. There were some capital items that need to be completed in 2008 and have been incorporated into the revised 2008 budget.

The ambulance \$50,000 in revenue is offset by expenditures, now that the millage passed the \$50,000 can be added back into operations.

Salaries were reduced from 4% to 3.5% which was a saving of \$9,217. We reduced part-time administrative assistant to an intern level, saved \$25,000. Reduced the TAB video communications by \$6,434. The Senior Task Force by \$200. Public Water & Sewer Advisory Committees request reduced by \$25,000. Reimbursing BW&SA for the fly over study by \$30,000. Contracted tree trimming by \$10,000. Worker's Comp Insurance by \$8,516. One salary in Code Enforcement by \$62,791 including Social Security and health insurance number at \$8,000 is also going need to be taken out.

Increased items for fixed asset in accounting was increase by \$7,000 for 2009.

Reduction in Park and Recreation for the master plan by \$15,000 was reduced. In the capital fund raising \$135,000 was reduced from Oktoberfest as well as the projected revenue.

Ms. Lyons indicated that the reason for not doing Oktoberfest is not based on funding but because the proposed Rt. 202 Parkway will affect the property and the Park Board and Oktoberfest Committee should make a recommendation as to an alternative event.

Mr. Bennett indicated that it looks like we've reached zero and have balanced the budget. He thanked everyone for their hard work.

Mr. Wightman indicated that the capital expenditures have not changed. He also indicated that the goal was to have \$800,000 in restricted reserve and pleased to say that is over \$1 M dollars that is going to be left in the unrestricted reserve.

Ms. Philo indicated that it was a good job done on part of the department heads and Ways & Means to bring the budget to this point but she was wondering if anything further could be done to cut conferences, specifically PSATS and the tax collector.

Ms. Eisenhardt indicated that the tax collectors should be paying for themselves. She indicated that she spoke to someone in Doylestown Borough and they do not compensate the tax collector to attend training. We have budgeted \$1,500.

Ms. Philo indicated she thought that was a lot of money and perhaps we should look at that further. She also indicated that the Board could pay to go to PSATS as well.

Mr. Bennett said he was okay with that especially depending on what the variables for revenues would be in early 2009. He believes we should keep looking at the revenues monthly on an on going bases and cutting expenses if we feel we are falling short on revenues. He said that if operating deficit is at zero and we watch the revenues and do better than expected than we should leave things in. If it is worse than expected then those item can start to be cut as well. But he thinks it should be left in the budget because he expressed concern that if its taken out it would need to come out of the reserve to go back in. He said it would probably be better to show the PSATS number.

Ms. Eisenhardt indicated that we should have mandatory training only. It would be nice to go to everything but we need to cut out certain things unless its mandatory. It's a sacrifice that we all need to make.

Ms. Lyons indicated that conferences help people grow professionally and nurture the employee or the Board member. We shouldn't micro manage. The employees should check with the Manager regarding the training they're attending. She expressed that PSATS has value. She indicated that she doesn't disagree that if we don't have the money then PSATS has to be cut.

Mr. Scarborough agreed as did Mr. Bennett agreed that we need to look at educational opportunities and the values that they bring and have to justify it in order to pay for it or pay for it ourselves.

Ms. Sweeney indicated that she recently attended the Park and Recreation National Conference and found classes to be beneficial as well.

Mr. Bennett suggested that the registration fee should remain in the budget for PSATS.

Ms. Eisenhardt suggested that employees express what they've learned at the conferences, since we make a point to send them to conferences. We should know if they have attended.

Ms. Lyons indicated that we need to be more positive towards our professionals. They attend conferences and training sessions to help them do their job better. It is offensive and demoralizing to treat them like children.

Mr. Bennett indicated that he disagreed with Ms. Eisenhardt. It goes to the will of the manager to decide if the employees need to attend the conference or obtain training. He said it should be the will of the Supervisors to set policy and give direction.

Ms. Eisenhardt said she is not sure if things are just protocol or habit at the Township and whether or not there is really a worth to the Township for certain conferences or training.

Ms. Philo commented that it is our own conference that she is referring to that the Board attends, PSATS.

Mr. Wightman indicated that we don't attend conferences unless there is a value. Sometimes people won't go although things may be budgeted because there is not a particular course that would be beneficial that year, but its good to have the money available when there is a class that is beneficial.

Ms. Eisenhardt suggested that we should pursue looking into it and the benefits when budgeting for conferences for the Township.

Mr. Bennett again indicated that he believes registration fee for PSATS should be budgeted and we should not be moving from the surplus later in the year to fund the registration fees.

There was discussion about cost reimbursement from CLE's and CE requirement for various staff members and Board.

There was a question on changing policy and that the tax collector has to come to the Board for approval prior to attending conferences.

It was suggested that since we are at zero things could be left as they are and continue further discussion prior to preliminary adoption on Tuesday night, but that with the items that already been cut, adjusted.

Ms. Philo wanted to make sure that Ways and Means would be looking at the long term goals. She thanked everyone for their help.

Being no further business the meeting adjourned at 10:53 AM

Respectfully submitted by

Stephanie J. Mason