

March 12, 2020
Municipal Building
121 Evergreen Road
New Egypt, NJ 08533

The Special Meeting Budget Introduction of the Plumsted Township Committee was called to order by Mayor Marinari.

STATEMENT: “This meeting is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. It was advertised for publication in the Asbury Park Press and posted on the bulletin board.”

THOSE OFFICIALS PRESENT WERE:

COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA
DEPUTY MAYOR SORCHIK MAYOR MARINARI DAVID LEUTWYLER, CDC
MUNICIPAL CLERK WITHAM

CFO Madden was also in attendance.

Mayor Marinari asked everyone to rise for the flag salute followed by a moment of silence.

Marinari opened the workshop portion of the meeting. He asked for comments from the committee members.

Committeeman Bowen said he worked with Committeeman Grilletto, CFO Madden and staff members to develop a budget. They also conducted several workshops. There is a proposed increase in the budget of \$54.06, or 1.395 cents, for the average homeowner. He spoke about the net valuations for the township, average assessment, and income per one cent of property taxes. He indicated that almost all of the increases are in health and public safety, a state required increase in employer contribution for the pension plan, slight increase in group health insurance, and union contract obligations which increases police salaries and wages slightly. A grant is being worked on to offset the increased costs.

He spoke about different categories in the budget: economic development, engineering services, and legal services. \$66,000 in expense reductions had been identified by the Finance Committee.

Grilletto said that the township has to be very careful when hiring people due to hidden costs, such as pensions and health insurance.

Committeeman Trotta said he had no comment. Deputy Mayor Sorchik asked Madden to go through the budget.

Madden said the total budget did not change from the last time that the governing body met. The major change from last time was additional revenues for construction, which is a department that has to have offsetting revenue for expenses. She said the finance committee discussed reducing the amount to be raised by taxes and reducing the anticipated surplus. The alternative for next year, if there is not enough surplus, is to defer school taxes.

Sorchik said the governing body needs to reconsider using redevelopment money to offset the budget. A promise was made to the taxpayers to pay off that loan first, before using the money for something else. He would like to settle outstanding loans and get them closed out. Taxpayers were told that the goal was to pay them off. Also, the amount that can be bonded is based on the total value of the community. If there is an emergency, the township is limited as to how much money it can borrow and it makes him uncomfortable. He spoke about the unknown costs for the construction department relative to the redevelopment project.

Madden explained how the debt service is to be paid by construction costs from the redevelopment project. In addition, the Pilot program will allow property to be taxed once a house has a certificate of occupancy. That money is also going to pay debt service.

Sorchik said people have to be living in the homes before that can happen. That is why he is apprehensive about spending the money now before anyone is living on that property. Trotta said \$19,500 per property will be reduced by the money that has already been paid by Lennar.

Madden said the construction budget reflects the amount it needs to do the inspections and issue permits. Any money that is not spent will go back into surplus.

Sorchik said it will be difficult if the township cannot accommodate both Lennar and the other taxpayers in town—if permits for other taxpayers cannot be issued because the construction office is spending time on Lennar. That is why he wants to make sure there is enough personnel in the construction department to do the work.

Madden said there needs to be a small increase in the tax rate each year to keep pace with costs.

Sorchik said he does not want to spend money that the township does not have—the anticipated money from redevelopment. People may not be investing money in homes the way they have in the past.

Madden read a memo from Glenn Riccardi regarding fees from the new homes in the age-restricted development project as of March 19, 2020. There was a discussion about the difference in the number of homes in the memo compared to the number of homes discussed in meetings with Lennar.

Madden spoke about the need for an additional person in finance to handle payments and Pilot money from Lennar. She said all of the money coming into the finance office from the homes and the Pilot monies will be going to pay the debt payment service. She said she has been asking Matt Jessup for a capital bond ordinance to get the money off of our books. Once that is done, we should know our percentage and be able to get an amortization schedule from NJIB so we will know what our payments will be. Our first payment will probably not be until 2022.

Trotta said that there is also a NJIB provision that the township has to have a repair and replacement account funded out of the same monies.

Marinari appreciates the efforts of the finance committee and appreciates the expertise of Trotta and Sorchik. Marinari is concerned about fluctuations in the stock market affecting the savings of people who will be buying property in an adult community. Most people will be retired.

Grilletto said it is his experience that with the over-55 developments, they usually sell another home to move into a new home. It is not like a young couple starting out. They usually have assets. It is his opinion that the stock market is not the economy.

Marinari said we are in a whole different world right now. It is something we have never dealt with before. There is always a question when putting together any budget.

Trotta said he will have to think about the budget since he only got the information today, but he will vote to introduce the budget and go from there.

Bowen said he does want to point out that tonight is budget introduction, that the budget is not being adopted tonight. There will be a special meeting on April 22, 2020, for public comment on adoption of the budget. The introduced budget will go on the website.

Madden said that the state is requiring only the user friendly budget at the public hearing.

Bowen said it would be great if the expenses related to the development could be turned on and turn off as soon as they start selling units. It does not seem possible. Either we are ahead of it or behind it. We do not want to be behind it and say you can start building now but we are not going to be able to inspect it until next year. You make the best, most educated projection you can.

Marinari thanked Madden for coming in and said the finance committee did an excellent job. Trotta asked about the statements to be read for budget introduction.

Mayor Marinari read the following: Resolution No. 2020-165 is a resolution to introduce the 2020 municipal budget of Plumsted Township. Be it resolved that the following statements of revenue and appropriations shall constitute the municipal budget for the year 2020. The total budget is \$4,200,746.76; surplus anticipated is \$682,728.68; local revenues, including state aid, are \$1,273,068.03; amount to be raised by taxes is \$2,244,950.00; expenses and appropriations are \$4,200,746.76. Be it further resolved that said budget will be published in the Asbury Park Press in the issue of April 12, 2020. The governing body of the Township of Plumsted does hereby approve the following as a budget for the 2020 year.

ON MOTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR SORCHIK, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, RESOLUTION NO. 2020-165 - RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO INTRODUCE THE 2020 MUNICIPAL BUDGET OF PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP WAS ADOPTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

Marinari said that notice is hereby given that the budget and the tax resolution was approved by the committee persons of the Township of Plumsted, County of Ocean, on March 12, 2020. The hearing for the budget and tax resolution will be heard in the Municipal Building on April 22, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at which time and place objections to said budget and tax resolution for the 2020 year may be presented by taxpayers and/or interested persons.

Marinari asked for any old or new business from the committee.

Deputy Mayor Sorchik said that he attended today's meeting of the Ocean County Office of Emergency Management. Normally there are between 25 and 30 people who attend. Today there were at least 150 people. Information was provided at the meeting about the coronavirus. The point of contact is the Ocean County Health Department. Their hotline number is (732) 341-9700 ext. 7411 for any updates on the virus.

Sorchik said the township needs to keep accurate records of any money it spends related to the virus. Records need to be kept in a separate account. There is a possibility there will be a national declaration of emergency which will provide funding to the township. Normally, the township is reimbursed for anything outside regular duty time. Same thing with any equipment or resources that are used. It needs to be documented. He asked Leutwyler and BA Reilly to develop a weekly log to document those items.

Sorchik said that some police departments are handling calls over the phone if they do not require an investigation. Police departments are not responding on first aid calls unless it requires a police presence. New laws and directives will be coming out and workers' compensation rules will be modified.

Sorchik spoke about the possibility of the Governor banning events of over 250 people. He talked about the accuracy of information provided by commercial media outlets. He described the process of testing for the virus. He described actions that can be taken by individuals to protect themselves from the virus.

The Ocean County Sheriff's Department sent out a resource request list that Sorchik has provided to the police department and fire department for protective equipment. The finance office can also request equipment for the township.

Grilletto asked for clarification about reimbursement. Sorchik emphasized there must be a list of actions taken in order to get reimbursement. Reimbursement will most likely come from the federal government.

There was a discussion about the township declaring a state of emergency. Bowen asked about notifying the public about the cleaning of the municipal building.

Sorchik said there is a lot of sensationalism by commercial media that is not representative of the entire situation. Marinari asked about the number of test kits. Sorchik said that currently tests are only being done in hospitals. Bowen asked about websites. Sorchik said that the Ocean County Health Department and the State of New Jersey each have a website about the virus.

The committee members discussed sending a letter to different committees about meeting in the municipal building. They also discussed SOS and the church meeting in the building and CDC guidelines concerning at-risk populations.

Trotta asked what protections are being used by personnel cleaning the municipal and police buildings and which products are being used. Leutwyler said Randy is using masks and gloves and that there is a list of cleaning products they are using from the CDC website. He said the main concern of the police is the breathalyzer room. There was a discussion about doing deep cleaning after meetings and closing the building on weekends.

A decision was made to revisit the issue with committee members on Monday. The meeting was opened to public comment. There was none.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, SECONDED BY DEPUTY MAYOR SORCHIK, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Witham, RMC, CMR
Municipal Clerk