CUMRU TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING OCTOBER 22, 2020

The Special Meeting of the Cumru Township Board of Commissioners was called to order by President William B. Miller at 3:30 p.m. Other Commissioners in attendance were Vice President Ruth A. O'Leary, David J. Batdorf, Sam Kalbach, and Chip Bilger. Also attending were Chief of Police Madison Winchester, Fire Chief James A. Beane, Superintendent of Public Works Robert McNichols, Jr., Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Michael Yost, Business/Personnel Administrator Peggy A. Carpenter, and Manager Jeanne E. Johnston.

Pledge to the Flag.

2021 BUDGET

SEWER FUND

Ms. Johnston informed the Board that the Municipal Authority reviewed the sewer fund budget on 10/8/2020 and recommended a sewer rate increase in 2021 due to a significant increase in the treatment rate to be charged by the City of Reading. The new annual treatment charge is effective beginning with the second quarter payment. In 2021, the treatment charge will increase from \$270.69/EDU/year to \$307.11/EDU/year, effective with the August payment. Although it is a 12% increase, the draft sewer 803 fund budget has incorporated only a 5% increase because of the level of the fund balance. A transfer from the 803 fund to the capital construction 809 fund is not budgeted because there will be no payments for the 2020 sewer replacement project until at least December 2020. However, when that project and the utility line project via Reed St. are completed, there will be a need to transfer funds into sewer capital.

Mr. Bilger expressed concern that waiting until August to raise the sewer rate might result in funds not being available to transfer into capital. He recommended raising the sewer rate in February to build up funds for transfer. The Board agreed and directed that the sewer fund be drafted to incorporate a 5% increase for the February billing, with the intent to transfer funds into sewer capital by the end of 2021, a specific amount to be determined at a later date.

The new sewer rate would be \$125/EDU for metered properties and \$175/EDU for unmetered properties. Ms. Johnston informed the Board that the unmetered rate is related to the 1990s resolution that a well property is billed 1.4 times the minimum. Mr. Bilger acknowledged that the amount of water used by a well property is not known.

Mr. Kalbach asked about the well metering project. Ms. Johnston informed the Board that that project had been delayed because the capital projects associated with the Point of Connection 8 / Angelica Interceptor Consent Order are mandated by the PaDEP. Those projects are underway, but are lengthy. It is still the goal of the Township to install well meters, but that project will also be lengthy and highly intrusive in some locations. There are over 600 well properties on sanitary sewer. In some cases, there may be property owners who refuse to have meters installed. Therefore, anticipatory ordinance(s) will be needed.

FIRE FUND

Chief Beane presented the 2021 draft fire fund budget. He proposed transferring \$50,000 from the 036 fire operations capital fund to the 030 fire fund since there are no proposed expenses in 2021 for the 036 fund. Ms. Johnston requested that the Board wait until the end of

the year to determine what, if any, transfer would be made from the 030 fund to the 039 fire capital/savings fund.

With respect to fire apparatus, Chief Beane informed the Board that he has been working with the fire Liaisons on the apparatus replacement schedule. Chief Beane stated that the engines are the foundational apparatus for the department. He recommended replacing an engine in 2021, but a specific amount had not yet been determined. Based on similar engines having recently been purchased in neighboring departments, he recommended a "place holder" amount in the 039 fund of \$675,000. The Board directed that the draft 2021 fire fund budget be revised to reflect Chief Beane's recommendation.

Mr. Bilger noted that the apparatus replacement schedule reflect several purchases in 2022 which will have to be examined more closely.

GENERAL FUND

Chief Winchester reviewed the draft 2021 police budget. Mrs. O'Leary questioned the amount for training, that the 2020 expense is much lower than the 2020 budget and proposed 2021 budget. Chief Winchester noted that, although training expenses were reduced during the COVID 19 emergency in 2020, there were certain training requirements that cannot be reduced or eliminated in 2021. Also, a refund for 2020 training had been received which was deposited against the same line item since both the expense and the refund occurred in the same year. He noted that civil service testing would have to take place in 2021. Chief Winchester presented a plan to replace the current pistols, which are approaching their service life. Switching to the new side arms has several advantages: reliability, lighter recoil, and reduced weight. Current holsters and leather gear do not have to be replaced.

Ms. Johnston reviewed the draft 2021 highway department budget. Two pieces of equipment were proposed for capital, a mower and a backhoe. The backhoe is paid 50% out of the sewer fund. The main uncertainty with respect to the highway budget is storm sewer expense. The amount of \$150,000 is an educated guess based on the fact that many metal pipes installed in the 1980s are deteriorating.

CORRESPONDENCE

Meeting advertised in the Reading Eagle on 10/4/2020.

ADJOURNMENT ON MOTION OF MR. BATDORF, SECOND OF MR. KALBACH, A UNANIMOUS VOTE ADJOURNING THE MEETING AT 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne E. Johnston

Assistant Secretary/Manager