

APPROVED: August 14, 2023

WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP COUNCIL  
BUDGET SESSION #1  
March 9, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: President Mandel called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

ROLL CALL: Gawas, Geevers, Mandel, Stevens, Whitfield

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

This is to advise that the notice requirement provided for in the "Open Public Meetings Act" has been satisfied. Notice of this meeting was properly given and transmitted to The Times and Princeton Packet; filed with the Clerk of the Municipality; and posted in the West Windsor Township Municipal Building at North Post and Clarksville Roads on, March 3, 2023.

ATTENDEES: President: Gawas; Council: Geevers (left 1:50 p.m.), Mandel, Stevens (left 1:47 p.m.), Whitfield; Business Administrator: Schmid; Chief Financial Officer: Mauder; Township Clerk: Huber

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Ms. Huber led the salute to the flag.

OPENING REMARKS FROM CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICE ON THE 2023 BUDGET

Mr. Mauder thanked Ms. Tina Zapicchi, Bureau Chief, Financial Regulations, Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services, for going before the Local Finance Board and getting additional exemptions for this year which allowed West Windsor to stay under the appropriation cap.

Mr. Mauder advised in Council's budget book the first page is a listing of appropriations increases and decreases for 2023. He advised the total budget for 2023 is \$50,647,886.69 which is a 15.78% increase over 2022. Mr. Mauder noted even with this increase revenues were up in 2022 and the Mayor is proposing a zero increase in municipal taxes in 2023. He advised the Administration requests the Council approve the CAP Bank ordinance this year, which will allow the Township to remain \$9,000.00 under the appropriation cap limit this year.

Mr. Mauder reviewed the increases for 2023. He advised the Council received the 2023 Budget on February 28<sup>th</sup>; the budget will be introduced on April 10<sup>th</sup> with the public hearing on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. He advised various grants will need to be added to the capital ordinance once received. Mr. Mauder reminded Council the capital budget can be amended until the bond ordinance has been introduced. He advised on page 2 in Council's budget books is the analysis of the tax levy for the Township for 2023 as well as the average tax assessment for 2023. Mr. Mauder noted the budget book is available on the Township web-site; the Departments/Divisions will go through their other expenses and capital requests; and salary and wages will be discussed in a closed session at the March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

President Mandel noted we are looking at a 16% increase and inquired what are the major increases and decreases.

Mr. Mauder advised he will review this at the March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

Department of Health and Human Services

Division of Recreation

Mr. Jacobs, Manager of Recreation and Parks advised with the exception of the pool all recreation programs and special events are paid out of the Recreation Trust Fund. He noted there is a slight increase in the pool budget due to the increased costs for pool chemicals and the opening and closing of the pool. Mr. Jacobs advised starting in 2021 the community pool facility was used for both camps and swim lessons. Mr. Jacobs noted camps are back in the schools this year and they hope to add additional programs. He reported Community Day will be held in September. Mr. Jacobs advised the following events will take place in 2023: Bike Fest, Movies in the Park, Community Day, Trunk or Treat, Holiday House Decorating Contest and Tree Lighting. He reported the basketball, tennis and pickleball courts were redone last year but due to weather conditions they didn't hold up and will be re-done this spring. Mr. Jacobs advised they are looking into additional pickleball courts and repairs will be made to the Hendrickson tennis courts.

Mr. Jacobs reviewed the capital requests for 2023 which include: \$25,000.00 for General Park Improvements - this will replace the

split rain fencing and playground equipment and Open Space Annual Park Improvement Program \$200,000.00. He advised that a grant to repair the trails has been applied for.

A review of the outstanding projects to include: dog park grass replacement and sign boards took place. It was suggested a maintenance plan be put in place.

Mr. Jacobs reviewed the capital request for 2023 for the pool which includes replacement of several doors throughout the facility, replacement of a shade structure, replacement of a pump and filter; replacement of two water fountains and either replace or repair the water slide.

Ms. Geevers requested the dog park be fixed and possibly look into adding a water source to this area.

#### Division of Senior and Social Services

Ms. Ball introduced herself as the Manager of Senior and Social Services. She advised the Senior Center offers programs for residents 55 years of age and older, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Ms. Ball noted they provide a welcoming environment and provide many classes throughout the year. She reviewed the many classes, information, and events provided for the seniors. Ms. Ball advised the Senior Center opened back up in June of 2022 with both in-person and virtual programs still being utilized. She reviewed the bus scheduled for residents. Ms. Ball advised her budget has increased by \$6,000.00 under Consultant Services (210) due to increased wages for instructors. She added additional funding for Technical/Specialized Equipment Maintenance (266) which increased to \$1,900.00 for a yearly sign in system annual license and for Vehicle Maintenance (279) for increases in costs for maintenance.

President Mandel inquired if the rooms in the Senior Center will be opening up to community groups after hours.

Ms. Huber addressed this advising currently the Township is not opening to outside groups. President Mandel inquired if the center will be providing meals as in the past.

Ms. Ball advised there is not a high need for this at this time. She noted a survey was done at the end of the year for various items.

Ms. Gawas inquired if there is still a need for virtual classes.

Ms. Ball advised they are still using virtual for some classes. She advised they are still working on technology for other classes to be able to go hybrid as well.

Ms. Geevers inquired whether the \$6,000.00 increase in Consultant Services is for current instructors or additional classes.

Mr. Mauder advised the increase is 10.5%. He noted Mercer County has reached out with the possibility of purchasing an additional bus for the Township.

Ms. Ball reviewed her 2023 capital projects which include annual funding requests of \$25,000.00 for improvements and \$5,000.00 for new furniture for the Senior Center.

President Mandel thanked Ms. Ball for the monthly newsletter and event reminders.

Department of Administration

Finance

Mr. Mauder advised this budget is flat for 2023.

Mr. Mauder noted the Tax Assessor is not available and this budget is also flat for 2023.

Ms. Kelly Montecinos, Tax Collector advised the operating budget is flat. She noted they are responsible for the collection of tax and sewer payments and handling requests from the public for Senior Programs, property tax rebates and the Anchor Program. Ms. Montecinos noted residents are happy with the drop off box and their collection rate is 99.7% for 2022. She reviewed the collection process for both tax and sewer.

Administration

Mr. Mauder advised this budget also is flat from 2022.

Mayor

Mr. Mauder noted this budget also is flat from 2022.

Buildings and Grounds

Mr. Aronson, Facilities and Maintenance Manager noted he oversees the buildings and grounds staff and supervises the IT staff. He reviewed the major projects completed last year which included: the police generator, professional engineering design for the health generator; demolition of Censoni house, re-cabling of Senior Center, installed security improvements at the Senior Center, Health, and Public Works and lastly and most importantly completion of the municipal complex multi-year project. Mr. Aronson reviewed the differences between what Public Works and his Department does. He noted he has asked for an increase in his operating budget due to increased costs for portable toilets at the parks; HVAC price increases for annual maintenance contract; increased costs at the West Windsor Arts Building and Princeton Junction Volunteer Fire Company facilities for maintenance.

Mr. Mauder advised this is a 13% increase.

Ms. Geevers inquired why the Arts Center Building costs increased.

Mr. Aronson advised due to the Annual Fire Inspection there were some repairs needed, repairs to the front steps and front door locks and service calls.

Mr. Mauder advised the lease needs to be re-negotiated this year.

Mr. Mauder advised staff met with the Historical Society of West Windsor and a Trust Fund will be setup for the site similar to other areas. He noted they will have to follow the Local Public Contracts Law since the facility belongs to the Township.

Ms. Geevers inquired about the status of the barn roof.

Mr. Mauder advised this will be discussed during Mr. Surtees' budget overview later today.

Mr. Aronson reviewed his capital requests as follows:

- Network and Computer Annual Program \$150,000.00
- Van Replacement \$ 25,000.00  
to supplement 2021 funding for this purchase
- Annual General Improvements for Municipal Complex \$25,000.00
- Annual General Improvements for Health/Recreation Building \$25,000.00
- Fire and Alarm Upgrades for Fire and Emergency Services \$75,000.00
- Security System Upgrades \$10,000.00
- Underground Fuel Storage Tank and Removal at the Police Facility additional \$125,000.00
- Annual General Improvements for West Windsor Arts Center for \$5,000.00

Discussion over when is the right time for the architectural services to occur.

President Mandel inquired about the improvements to the West Windsor Arts Council.

Mr. Aronson advised the project is currently in the Land Use Office. He also advised this project will fall under the Local Public Contracts Law.

Discussion over the renewal of the lease with the West Windsor Arts Council occurred.

Mr. Aronson continued his review of his capital requests:

- Annual General Improvements for the Interior of the Senior Center \$25,000.00 (windows, painting, tiles)
- Annual General Improvements for Princeton Junction Volunteer Fire Company \$50,000.00 (replace aging HVAC)

System and other operating systems and accumulate enough funds for parking lot refurbishing)

Clerk's Office

Ms. Huber advised all three of the budgets she is responsible for Clerk, Elections and Council are flat from 2022. She advised the Clerk's Office continued operations as normal during 2022 making changes as needed due to the building renovations. Ms. Huber noted Ms. Godin the Clerk's Office Secretary has successfully completed three of the five classes to sit for her Registered Municipal Clerk's certification and should complete the other two classes by year end. She noted the Clerk's Office is working on a campaign to get residents signed up for the Township web-site to stay informed.

President Mandel called for a Recess at 11:42 a.m. till 12:15 p.m.

Meeting reconvened at 12:17 p.m.

Department of Community Development

Mr. Surtees introduced himself as the Land Use Manager and advised the Planning Board is working on the following Master Plan Elements in 2023: farmland; conservation; historic preservation and stormwater. He noted the land use element has been completed and they are three quarters of the way through the entire re-examination of the Master Plan and should finish in 2024. Mr. Surtees noted his Land Use and Zoning budgets have had a small decrease and his Planning Board budget has increased due to litigation costs. He reviewed his capital budget items to include \$5,000.00 for municipal track landscaping to the municipal complex; an additional \$10,000.00 for the "community identification signs"; he noted that twenty-two signs will be needed to cover all the entrance points into the Township; the Council will be provided with a sample sign prior to them being ordered. Mr. Surtees advised an additional \$150,000.00 was added to the Schenck Barn Roof Replacement since the last two times the Township went out to bid. The bids far exceeded the budgeted amount. He noted \$10,000.00 has been placed in the Open Space Trust Fund for soft costs if needed.

Construction Official

Mr. Harris introduced himself as the Construction Code Official and noted his operating budget has increases due to increased costs and the need to purchase updated codes. He advised vehicle maintenance repair and printing supplies have also increased. Mr. Harris reported 2022 was the busiest year with almost a fifty percent increase in reviews/permits due to Princeton University's new campus's on Washington Road and the Avalon Redevelopment at the train station. He reported the department issued 3,363 permits in 2022. Mr. Harris advised as of today he does not see it slowing down in 2023 because of the projects approved by the Planning Board for both large commercial and housing developments. He reviewed the permit process and noted at this time they are up to date with residential plan review and inspections. Mr. Harris noted they are looking at adding additional part-time staff. He advised there is only one capital request which is for a replacement vehicle which is done annually.

Engineering Division

Mr. Taylor, Assistant Township Engineer, advised the Community Development operating budget remained flat and the Engineering operating budget increased by \$3,200.00 for additional travel expense for a new position in 2023 as well as a slight increase in their miscellaneous line item. He provided an overview of the capital budget projects for 2023 to include: additional \$225,000.00 for digital tax map conversion; Annual Bike Lane/ Bikeway Extension of \$175,000.00. He noted the Township received a grant of \$377,000.00 which will aid in the Conover Road bikeway project to include design and permitting. He advised the projects under this category are consistent with the Master Plan and noted they work with the County, and the other groups such as the West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Alliance on these projects. Mr. Taylor noted funding for the Dinky Line Trail will go to complete this to the train station. He reviewed the Annual Sidewalk Extension Project noting these funds are used for filling in gaps in sidewalks for connectivity. Mr. Taylor advised the Township has requested grant funding for



improvements for the intersection of Wallace Road and Scott Avenue and Alexander Road and Vaughn Drive to Roszel Road. He reviewed the Annual Crosswalk Improvements; Sidewalk Repair Program-Street Trees; Emergency Road and Drainage Program; Annual Road Improvement Program-Residential; Annual Road Improvement Program-Collector Roads; Vaughn Drive Extension; Signage and Striping Improvements; Grover's Mill Dam Inspection and Repairs; Wallace Road Bus Garage Remediation; Former Compost Facility Environmental Monitoring Program; Annual Flood Abatement Program; Annual Utility Maintenance and Improvement Program; Sewer Collection System & Pump Station Improvements; Southfield Pump Station & South Post Pump Station Capacity Improvements (part of this funding is from the American Recovery Funds received).

Mr. Dobromilsky, the Township Landscape Architect advised the Environmental Commission budget remains flat. He reviewed the Capital Projects he is responsible for which include: Sidewalk Repair Program-Street Trees - he noted those on the list now should be taken care of this year. Mr. Dobromilsky noted they are presently treating 300 trees and the remaining trees that need to be removed should be completed in a year.

A short discussion ensued regarding the sidewalk maintenance program.

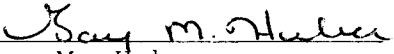
PUBLIC COMMENT


Mr. John Church, 11 Princeton Place, expressed his concerns with the use of the American Recovery Act Funding.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn: Gawas  
Second: Whitfield  
VV: All approved

The meeting was adjourned at 1:54 p.m.

  
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Gay M. Huber  
Township Clerk  
West Windsor Township

  
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Andrea Mandel  
Council President  
West Windsor Township