

BUDGET  
WORK SESSION  
Via Zoom Communications

October 26, 2020

Council President Barbara Heffelfinger called the meeting of Penndel Borough Council to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present at the meeting

Mayor Robert Winkler – arrived at 7:10 p.m.  
Council President Barbara Heffelfinger  
Council Vice President Beverly Wolfe  
Councilman John Stratz  
Councilman Mark Moffa  
Councilman Joe Dudash  
Councilwoman Laura Germain - absent  
Councilman Gary Nickerson

Also present

Police Chief Sean Perry  
Marie Serota, Borough Secretary/Treasurer

Announcements

Pumpkins for the Penndel Pumpkins Contest are starting to be submitted to Borough Hall.

On Halloween they are going to have Drive-through Halloween in the borough. There will be prizes awarded for decorations.

The Activities Committee's Annual Halloween Parade will be on Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup> at 12:00 noon that starts at the firehouse. There will be decorations at borough hall and a goodie table for the kids to stop at on Woodland Avenue during the parade. Besides the Halloween masks, masks for Covid-19 are required to be worn.

The Mayor arrived at the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

2021 Police Budget (proposed)

Chief Sean Perry presented the 2021 proposed budget for the police department, which is attached. Mark Moffa thanked the Chief for the presentation then asked for an explanation on line 01-410-310 Legal Services. He said that the borough secretary explained to him that this was a new line item, and the police legal bills were originally taken out of three other lines the same way the other legal bills are split in error. When this was corrected, it put the line well over the budgeted amount.

Beverly Wolfe asked if the salary and wages line included hours for community policing. Chief responded that interacting with the residents is very important to him. Positive interaction with the public is great for the community. He would like to get back to bike patrols but there are challenges with scheduling due to the officers' other job responsibilities. He has been looking for programs for training for some of the officers. Bike patrol is usually in addition to the officer on duty due to restrictions in response times, which can be a hinderance. They have had events like Pizza with the Santa and Police. He would have liked to have done a trading cards activity

for kids in the borough but decided not to due to Covid 19. He has also done Faith in Blue Week with Redeemer Lutheran Church.

Mark Moffa asked how he determines the time necessary for the officers to be in different areas of the borough. Chief responded that he keeps track of the miles the officers put on the cars during their shifts. They cover all borough streets in the borough during all shifts. In addition to that they have daily patrol checks that they do once per shift. They also check on vacant buildings, businesses and residences when homeowners are on vacation.

Joe Dudash explained his concerns about residents facing lower income, increased school taxes and increasing costs. He asked if the County will be using the new Computer Assisted Dispatch System the year. The Chief said that is what he has been told but isn't sure if that will change come next year. He wants to make sure that we are prepared if it happens. If their RDA Grant application is approved, the costs will be reimbursed from grant funds. Joe asked what the percentage of the 5% increase is for drug operations. Sean responded 3% and the additional 2% would be for traffic enforcement and drug enforcement. Bev Wolfe mentioned that training expenses are down due to Covid 19. Sean said he pushes for all officers to be trained. They have had racial intelligence training and crisis intervention training which they were reimbursed for.

Gary Nickerson thanked the Chief for the explanation since he is new it was very helpful. He also thanked Bev and Mark for taking on the budget. Mark commented that the work Beverly has done with the schedules has made the budget very transparent. There is misconception that the police budget is \$700 thousand dollars which is due to the audit. It actually includes expenses that are reimbursed by grants, which isn't taken into consideration. She also added a breakdown of zoning/code expenses, which makes those expenses easier to understand.

#### New Business

President Barbara Heffelfinger was contacted by Jeff Calhoun from Calhoun Baker and they suggest we borrow \$500,000 for 20 years, which would cost us \$28,000 to \$29,000 a year. The reason is in case the grant funds don't come through. Borrowing \$300,000 would cost us \$16,500 to \$17,500 a year. The rate initially was .89% but is now 1.3% if completed by November 16<sup>th</sup>. This doesn't include the current loan. We can refinance the current debt at no charge. Mark recommends we take the additional \$300,000 and refinance the existing debt and lock it in. Barbara Heffelfinger explained that we have to do adopt an ordinance, which will require legal notice to be prepared by Hill Wallack. If they do it quickly, Jeff can bring it up on November 16<sup>th</sup>. We will need to get the specifics on the timeline for this process. Mark said that both the advertising for the ordinance and presenting the project at his meeting can possibly happen at the same time. John Stratz asked if \$300,000 will be enough to finish the sewer line project and refinance. Beverly and Barbara responded that it should be depending on what happens during the course of the project.

**MOTION BY MARK MOFFA TO AUTHORIZE REFINANCING ALL EXISTING DEBT AND BORROWING AN ADDITIONAL \$300,000 AS RECOMMENDED BY CALHOUN AND BAKER. INC. THROUGH THE DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL FINANCE AUTHORITY. SECONDED BY BEVERLY WOLFE.** The roll call vote was: Beverly Wolfe aye, Barbara Heffelfinger, aye, Joe Dudash aye, Gary Nickerson aye, Mark Moffa aye, John Stratz, aye. Motion carried 6-0.

MOTION BY BEVERLY WOLFE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:15 P.M. SECONDED BY JOHN STRATZ. Motion carried 6-0.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Marie Serota, Secretary/Treasurer