



**MAYOR & COUNCIL
THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE,
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING MARCH 16, 2022**

The special budget meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Peapack & Gladstone was held on Wednesday, March 16, 2022 virtually via the Go To Meeting Conferencing System and began at 8:04p.m.

Mayor Skinner called the meeting to order. Borough Clerk Nancy A. Bretzger read the Sunshine Notice "Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, Adequate notice of this meeting was published in the Courier News and Bernardsville News on March 10, 2022 and posted at the Municipal Complex and the Borough Library. Action may be taken."

Mayor Skinner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call indicated the following present:

Present: Mayor Skinner, Council President Corigliano, Councilwoman Dietrich, Councilman Lemma, Councilwoman Murphy, Councilman Sweeney

Absent: Councilman Caminiti

Also present were: Dale Melville, Steve Ferrante, Kingsley Hill, Frank Laguarina, Dan Megill, John McDermott and Nancy A. Bretzger, Borough Clerk/Administrator

PUBLIC COMMENTS – 5 MINUTES PER PERSON – NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No one came forward.

DISCUSSION

Mayor Skinner turned the meeting over to the Finance Chairman. Council President Corigliano welcomed everyone to the meeting in his role as Finance Chair. He stated that the first draft of the 2022 budget has been sent to all department heads and that the second draft of the 2022 budget sent to members of the Council. He thanked the Department Heads and the Borough Clerk/Administrator for their timely submissions and help in providing the budget data. Council President Corigliano stated that the Borough came in within budget last year.

Fire Department Operating Budget – Fire Chief McDermott's 2022 budget line items were displayed and Chief McDermott stated that most line items are close to last year. Regarding the Vehicle Equipment & Maintenance account, \$28k was spent last year in 2021 and this year's budget is for \$50k. Somerset County will be moving toward a 700-radio system and he would like to purchase 3 portable radios (all-band) that will work with the current system and the new system. For the SCBA line item, Chief McDermott explained that he put \$13k in the budget for 2022 as the old bottles in the firehouse do not match up with the new SCBA and that he currently has approximately 56 bottles but needs to build back up to 80 bottles. At times, Bedminster Township will fill bottles for us depending on their availability and there is a small dollar amount in the budget line item for annual testing as well. He has since received a quote for the portable radios and is hoping that the County will help offset the cost as well. Council President Corigliano complimented Fire Chief McDermott and OEM Coordinator Kingsley Hill on the hard work they did to land the SCBA grant received last year.



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Fire Department Capital Budget – Council President Corigliano noted that the balance associated with the purchase of a new rescue truck is \$77k, which will likely be spent in 10-11 months from now and for which a Capital Ordinance still needs to be enacted for this remaining amount.

OEM Operating Budget – Council President Corigliano stated that OEM Coordinator Kingsley Hill requested a reproduction of last year's budget. An additional line item was added to the 2022 budget for \$1,000 for Vehicle Maintenance & Repair. Mr. Hill noted that there is an open encumbrance for approximately \$2,000 related to the flood and FEMA reimbursement. He stated that some equipment in the EOC Room will need to be replaced soon. The dues, conferences, and seminars budget line item is for a conference in Pennsylvania, in addition to other training conferences and events necessary in order to maintain FEMA certifications.

Public Works Operating Budget – Director Dan Megill stated that there are not many changes from last year's budget and that the department was frugal with their spending throughout the year in 2021. The operating budget for 2022 is slightly less than 2021. Mayor Skinner asked about striping related to crosswalks. Director Megill noted that the Borough is responsible for striping crosswalks on Borough roads but not County roads. He mentioned that the department purchased a line striper two years ago and that he no longer needs to go out-of-town for crosswalk striping. Mr. Megill confirmed that the Public Works department has white, yellow, and blue paint on hand and can use the line striper at any time, weather permitting.

Buildings & Grounds Operating Budget – Dan Megill stated that there had been a lot of neglect in prior years that he has been trying to work toward accomplishing that work and that locks have been changed, in addition to an office built in the Police Department. He plans to continue with improvement projects in-house and noted that the main line-item increase in the 2022 budget is for Salaries. Professional Services budgeted for \$25k include services such as water, pest control, cleaning, and HVAC and there are not any engineering services included in the B&G budget. Council President Corigliano asked about the Scout Cabin roof and gutters and Mr. Megill confirmed that the PO has already been issued and that the funds were encumbered last year. The work should be done in the next few weeks and the expense will be out of last year's budget. Councilwoman Murphy asked about the DPW line item for new decals for the trucks and Council President Corigliano confirmed it would come out of the Vehicle Maintenance account. Councilman Lemma asked about the new vehicles added to the fleet and mentioned that the new vehicles have manufacturers warranties. Mr. Megill confirmed that there would not be many repairs to the dump trucks. A discussion was held regarding potentially reducing the budget for the DPW Vehicle Maintenance line item and the decision was to reduce it by \$1.5k to keep the line-item budget flat with the 2021 budget at \$50k.

Sewer Utility Expenses – Dan Megill noted that health insurance accounted for the bulk of the overall increase in the budget and also stated that the Borough is hoping to receive grant money for Sewer Processing/EDC. Councilman Lemma explained that the STAB Transmission System line-item is for repairs to be done that were put off in the past. Borough Clerk/Administration Bretzger confirmed that the general liability insurance has increased and CFO Dale Melville stated that there was an accounting disconnect in the way some expenses were recorded.



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Public Works Capital Budget – Council President Corigliano highlighted the 2022 capital budget items for the Department of Public Works and noted that the ordinance already passed for the dump truck with plow. The F-250 pickup with a plow had been budgeted last year but was not purchased last year, which is why it is in the 2022 budget. He recommends moving both the mason dump truck body and the F-250 out of the capital budget and into the operating budget. Dan Megill elaborated that the dump truck is in good shape but that the body is not. He said that the loader is rusting out and that the cabin is rotted and that it is beyond its usefulness. The new loader would also include a 10-foot snow plow and comes with forks and would get a lot of use.

Streets & Roads and Sewer Capital Budget – Dan Megill noted that he plans to resurface Lenape Trail, Oratam Drive and Jonah Court this year as they are getting pretty alligatored. He noted it makes the most sense to do an entire neighborhood at once. The price per tonnage for milling and paving is set and will not increase. Mr. Megill stated that sewer repair will need to be done on Apgar and Hillcrest so he wants that done prior to paving those and other neighboring streets. Council President Corigliano noted that there is no request for Sewer Capital for 2022. He also mentioned that CFO Dale Melville has advised that the EDC line item budget be increased from \$620k to \$700k. Council President Corigliano stated that \$639,662 in total capital requests exceeds the amount we have for capital improvements and recommends to move some smaller items to the operating budget. He also proposed deferring the Case Loader to 2023.

Police Operating Budget – Chief Ferrante stated that most of the budget increases are due to price increases from vendors. He also stated that the body worn cameras have been purchased but have not yet arrived and that a partial reimbursement from the State will be received for those. Regarding the Education budget line-item, there are no college expenses for anyone this year so the budget was cut back. For Vehicle & Maintenance Repair, one of the officers was recently involved in a one-car motor vehicle crash in the 2018 Ford Interceptor. Borough Clerk/Administrator Bretzger stated that she is waiting to hear from the insurance company as to when they will come to inspect the vehicle. Council President Corigliano confirmed that all vehicle expenses were combined into one budget department, Vehicle Maintenance and therefore zero'd out the Vehicle Maintenance & Repair line item as it had been double-budgeted. Borough Clerk/Administrator Bretzger stated that she will check the insurance policy and will call the risk manager to ask if there is a replacement rider on the vehicle insurance policy.

Police Capital Budget – Chief Ferrante highlighted the \$55k in the budget for the purchase of a new interceptor. He noted that the Department will be receiving a Chevy within the next 3-4 weeks, which was last year's purchase. The \$55k budgeted is comprised of \$40k for a hybrid vehicle to then be upfitted once received and that we are still 6-8 months away from receiving the vehicle. Regarding the \$25k in the budget for an Aloctest instrument for alcohol testing, Chief Ferrante referenced that the instrument is in the beta testing stages and that the units are being used in Middlesex County and another southern County in the State. He agreed that the Aloctest purchase can be deferred until 2023. No further comments from the Council.



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Police Overtime Discussion – There was a discussion amongst Councilmembers, Mayor Skinner, and Chief Ferrante surrounding increasing the overtime budget line-item to account for overtime being covered at the County. Chief Ferrante stated that he can likely push back and wait until the start of 2023 to send an Officer to the County for overtime coverage. Councilman Sweeney recommended increasing the overtime budget by \$10-15k. Mayor Skinner concurred that since salaries have increased, overtime will increase as well. Councilman Lemma and Councilwoman Dietrich both agreed with a \$10k increase for the overtime line-item.

Construction Operating Budget – Council President Corigliano stated that the IT budget within the Construction budget was increased to purchase two additional SDL licenses. He asked Construction Official Frank Laguarina to brief everyone on the new process of applying for Construction permits online. Mr. Laguarina stated that Bill #1739 has been proposed to the Senate requiring all Construction departments in the State to implement online plan review. He noted that training will be needed. Council President Corigliano confirmed that the Software & Licenses line item includes SDL licenses and that the Professional Services line-item would include expenses associated with training needed for the new aspects of SDL. Councilman Sweeney asked about the Vehicle Allowance line-item in the budget and Council President Corigliano stated that it reflects a \$3k gas price increase.

Construction Capital Budget - Council President Corigliano discussed the employee reimbursements for Borough employees in the past and highlighted that the 2022 budget reflects \$40k to acquire two hybrid or electric fleet vehicles for Borough inspectors—Code Personnel, Zoning Official, and Tax Assessor to use for conducting inspections rather than using their own personal vehicles. Mayor Skinner raised his idea regarding recycling police vehicles after 5 years to possibly be used as fleet vehicles for inspectors. He stated that the police vehicles can be in-service for a total of 10 years, 5 years on patrol and then 5 years in the fleet. The vehicles can be branded for the town and recognizable to Borough residents. Council President Corigliano and Councilman John Sweeney both stated that they liked Mayor Skinner's idea to repurpose the police vehicles. Councilwoman Murphy also concurred. Council President Corigliano removed the \$40k from the budget.

Council President Corigliano lead a discussion surrounding scheduling a follow-up budget meeting to finalize the budget and a decision was made to conduct a meeting for the continuation of the 2022 Special Budget Meeting virtually at 6pm on Thursday, April 7, 2022.

Council President Corigliano spoke through further line items of the budget asking for questions or comments and if none, the 2022 requested dollar amounts were populated in the 2022 budget column. There was a brief discussion on the Miscellaneous Expenses under Mayor & Council-Other Expenses as Councilwoman Murphy questioned the expenses in that line-item. CFO Dale Melville stated that there could have been a misclassification of expenses that was not reclassified to the proper account. Borough Clerk/Administrator Bretzger noted that the actual expenses in 2021 were for Memorial Day wreaths and the 911 Memorial. CFO Dale Melville stated that he will look into the Special Projects/Events account and will circle back with Council President Corigliano. Councilwoman Dietrich asked about the Affordable Housing expenses budget and Council President Corigliano confirmed that it is for Professional Fees, mainly legal, associated with Affordable Housing.

Clerk Budget – Borough Clerk/Administrator Bretzger stated that there are no increases in the line-items for the Clerk's Office, aside from the fact that the new Deputy Clerk will be taking classes for her RMC



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certification. Councilman Lemma asked for clarification on salaries for the Clerk and Administrator, which were then explained by Council President Corigliano. No additional comments or questions from Council.

No comments or questions from Council in the Finance and Audit budgets. Mayor Skinner asked a general question about the level of confidence as it relates to IT security; Council President Corigliano noted that QuikTeks does a backup of our server every night and if the Borough were to get hacked, we would have to reset to the prior night's back-up.

Tax Assessor – Councilwoman Murphy asked about the flat vehicle allowance amount for the Assessor. Borough Clerk/Administrator Bretzger stated that the Tax Assessor will be keeping track of his monthly mileage in a log.

Legal – Discussion amongst Council regarding legal bills and Borough Clerk/Administrator Bretzger noted that the last three months of Mr. John Bruder's bills were not in the 2021 actuals. Councilman Sweeney asked that if the Borough goes to arbitration, would the attorney fees be covered under the budgeted amount for 2022. Councilman Sweeney and Councilman Lemma agreed on adding \$35k to the Legal Services-General line-item in the budget in the event of arbitration.

Engineering – Borough Clerk/Administrator Bretzger confirmed that Borough Engineer Mr. Bill Ryden bills monthly for the previous month.

No comments or questions about the budget for Cultural Heritage, Land Use Board, or Zoning.

First Aid Squad – Councilwoman Murphy asked that the First Aid squad be paid in two \$30k payments for the \$60k budgeted contribution for the year and CFO Dale Melville made a note of same.

Recap – Council President Corigliano noted that everyone can continue to review the budget document for the follow-up meeting on April 7th. He also stated that after discussions with the auditor, he will be recommending not having a reduction in the amount to be raised by taxes. He explained that the excess not spent will be rolled back to Fund Balance and that his overall recommendation is to try to hold the increase in the budget to \$100k.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – 3 MINUTES PER PERSON – AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Skinner asked if any member of the public wishes to speak about agenda items.

No one came forward.

Final Comments – Council President Corigliano thanked Borough Clerk/Administration Nancy Bretzger and CFO Dale Melville for their efforts in putting the budget together, keeping things running smoothly, and keeping taxes down.

There being no other matters to be addressed by the Governing Body at this time, a motion was made by Council President Corigliano, seconded by Councilman Sweeney, that this meeting be adjourned at 9:52p.m. This motion was carried unanimously.



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Respectfully submitted,

Nancy A. Bretzger

Nancy A. Bretzger, Borough Clerk