

**WARMINSTER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
FINAL BUDGET MEETING OF 2008 ON NOVEMBER 13, 2007
PUBLIC MEETING**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard J. Luce, Jr, Chairman
Donnamarie Davis, Vice Chairman
Leo I. Quinn, III, Secretary/Treasurer
Fred L. Gold
Gail Johnson

STAFF PRESENT: Bob Tate, Township Manager
Barbara Sultzbach, Assistant Township Manager

CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting of the Warminster Township Board of Supervisors Preliminary Budget Meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m., Chairman Luce presiding. The meeting was held in the Warminster Township Building.

Mr. Tate started the meeting by stating that there are some items that had not been resolved from the first budget meeting. These are requests by the police department, funding for the senior center, purchasing of speed bumps for traffic common measures and the open space fund.

PRESENTATIONS

Police Budget Requests

Chief Murphy presented his defense for requests made that the Board denied in the 2008 budget for the police department. He started by stating that he requested an additional deputy chief to act as his right hand man and the Board denied it. This would make the lieutenant's position vacant, which he requested to be filled on July 1, 2008.

Chief Murphy commented on the salary request for the administrative assistant who works for the chief and 2 lieutenants. He said that he had presented her salary request in 2007, half of which was deferred to 2008 and ultimately ended up being reduced by \$2,000. He had intended to bring her up to the top paid salary tier as a senior clerk. He mentioned how he had researched local departments and the salaries made, and Warminster did not compare. He calculated the difference requested by the police, and the allocation given, and determined it is \$58,000. He told the Board he was there to answer questions regarding the reason behind the need for additional staff and the justifications in the salary asked for himself, deputy chief, lieutenant and administrative assistant. He stated these are non-union contractors and the only people whose salaries are based on decisions made by the Board. He said how he knew some Board members think that the addition of a deputy chief would make the department top heavy administratively. He said there are currently 2 administrative sergeant positions in the department that were created to fill specific goals and objectives. One is a sergeant who acts as an administrative officer, and is their accreditation manager, who has been working on a project that is to be completed in early 2008 and then would return into a more police/investigative oriented position. The second position was created for a senior sergeant who is in the drop program and being transitioned into civilian life over the next few years. He has done a lot of work organizing the crossing guards and evaluating in office tasks by records and data collection. He has also been working on reducing the use of paper by setting up systems for electronic use. Chief Murphy stated these positions were created for a short-term basis for the individual officers. Chief Murphy then went on to state the number of complimentary staff in the townships of Bensalem, Bristol, Falls, Newtown,

Horsham, Warrington, Norristown, Plymouth, Upper Merion, and Abington in order to illustrate the difference in staff that Warminster has compared to local townships. He pointed out that by stating these numbers, the Board can see he is not requesting a large amount of staff. He also said that the salary requests are not to put him or the rest of the department in the top tier, but only moves them to the middle. He feels a more highly compensated salary for the valuable staff will keep them working for the township and not feel the need to find a job elsewhere. He asked the Board to reconsider cutting the positions requested and not to make salary cuts.

Mr. Luce asked the Board if they preferred to hold a public discussion or an executive session regarding the Chief's concerns. Ms. Davis, Mr. Luce, and Mr. Quinn agreed that this was a private matter. Mr. Johnson asked if there were any questions before going into private discussion. Mr. Johnson then asked if it is unusual for police departments to have administrative sergeants and do other townships have staff and administrative sergeants. Chief Murphy said that this is common.

Mr. Luce asked if there was any public comment. There was none. He then announced the Board would enter a private meeting to discuss this issue.

At 7:35 p.m., Mr. Tate announced that the meeting is back in session. Mr. Quinn had removed himself from the meeting. Mr. Luce reiterated that personnel issues cannot be discussed in public. He then asked Mr. Tate to review the results.

Mr. Tate said that overall for the year the total budget staffing was originally 52 full time personnel. The Board is approving 52 for this year and it is not to exceed this number. In the 2007 budget, 50 personnel were approved and currently there are 48. This means the department has room for 2 more officers. In 2008, there will be additional full time positions. One of which will be the deputy of chief, and the Chief will determine the 2nd position if it will be a lieutenant or sergeant. The lieutenant that the chief requested be made effective July 1, 2008, will be approved if the number of officers does not exceed 52.

There will be a salary adjustment that goes along with the deputy chief position. A Breathalyzer has also been approved. He stated that the administrative assistant position and the other requested adjustments would remain as the Board's decision from the prior budget meeting. Mr. Luce said they have a commitment for a certain amount of traffic safety officers. Mr. Tate backed him up by stating that the Board will have a commitment to traffic safety in this township. He also stated that the Enrad unit had been ordered. Ms. Davis emphasized that there are 2 additional traffic enforcement officers.

Senior Center Funding

Mr. Luce asked the Board if anything is in the budget for the Senior Center. Mr. Tate confirmed that they had stated \$500 in the previous meeting. In lieu of the surplus of \$266,000, he then asked the Board what amount they wished to dedicate towards the center. Mr. Luce mentioned that the center had asked for painting and tile work to be done and verified that this money would solely be for financial assistance. Mr. Tate said that this money would be used to pay operating expenses, heating bills, insurance premiums, and other monthly expenses. He said that the center estimated the help of approximately \$10,000 to provide services to the seniors. Mr. Gold confirmed that the center would be happy with \$10,000 in addition to some things they had requested such as painting and tile. Mr. Tate said that he did tour the center with Buddy Mullen and was able to identify the rooms that they want finished.

Mr. Johnson said that right now they have \$15,179.00 in the budget which includes insurance, repairs and maintenance. He pointed out that the township also does work automatically such as shoveling. Mr. Tate said that they will be doing some painting inside and replacing ceiling tiles. Mr. Johnson asked if we do their landscaping which Mr. Gold and Mr. Tate confirmed that it is part of their lease.

Mr. Johnson said that these are ongoing operations every year. Mr. Gold suggested they rent out the place more in order to increase revenue. Mr. Luce said that he wants everyone to understand this is a one time deal and he does not want the township involved in this year after year. He mentioned that at one time the center was run by the township, but they came to the Board and said they wanted to manage it on their own. He informed everyone that they do get money from the county and other sources. He said that the center has lost money due to their non smoking policy but it is state law.

He then asked the Board to put in a vote. Mr. Johnson asked that the amount given to the Senior Center be reduced to \$5,000. Mr. Luce asked for a vote on the amount of \$5,000. Mr. Johnson and Ms. Davis agreed on this amount as so did Mr. Luce who added as long as this was a one time contribution. Mr. Gold disagreed by stating that \$5,000 was not a sufficient amount.

A contribution of \$5,000 to the Senior Center passed with a vote of 3-1.

Speed Bumps

Ms. Davis stated that the first traffic common policy for Warminster is about to be completed. In order to implement this, 2 temporary speed bumps are needed. These cost approximately \$6,000 a piece. Mr. Luce verified with Ms. Davis that 2 are indeed needed. Mr. Gold asked for the location. Ms. Davis said that the policy process is that when a street has issues with traffic and volume, 50% of the street would need to sign a petition. Once this is signed, the street would come before the traffic safety committee and then go through the traffic common process. Ms. Davis mentioned there is an alternative such as installing a Shikane (sp?) which is curbing that comes out and forces traffic to slow down and narrow into different areas. The speed bump is what people are more familiar with. The temporary bumps would give the street the opportunity to see if it works and what the street would be like with them on it. If the street is warranted for traffic control after the study, then either a shikane or speed bump would be permanently installed. Ms. Davis stated that traffic in the township has become a priority and cannot be ignored. She said there is too much construction and reiterates how she had been against a lot of it. She believes that is where the volume is increasing and when roads are being repaved, people tend to speed on them. She announced the first road to use this new traffic common measure will be Delmont Avenue. Delmont Avenue has already come to a previous traffic meeting which approximately 25 people attended. Currently, they are waiting for 50% of the petition to be signed. In this particular study, speed bumps will be utilized. She feels if the Board does not obtain these speed bumps, then they are sending a message that they will not do anything about the traffic in the township.

Mr. Johnson said that the Board allowed the chief to hire 2 more traffic officers. Mr. Gold added that he would like to see Norristown Road become part of this study, since residents are complaining about traffic from Christ Home. He felt no one complained about Delmont Avenue. Mr. Luce and Ms. Davis argued saying that residents have. Ms. Davis verified again that the bumps are approximately \$6,000 a piece. Mr. Luce asked if they are reusable which was answered with a yes. Mr. Luce asked if both bumps would be out in 2 different locations or just one and Ms. Davis explained that the 2 bumps together form one bump long enough to cover the entire width of the road.

Mr. Luce asked for a vote for \$12,000 to purchase these bumps. Ms. Davis, Mr. Gold and Mr. Johnson agreed. Mr. Johnson stated that he feels this may be a good experiment and may help the township traffic. Ms. Davis thanked the Board on behalf of the traffic committee.

Open Space Fund

Mr. Luce proposed that the Board permit \$5,000 to go towards the open space fund. Ms. Davis said that she is very happy with this amount. She mentioned that she had received an email from a

resident who has offered to donate money to the fund once it has opened up. She has passed this email onto Mr. Tate.

Mr. Johnson, Mr. Luce and Mr. Gold agree that \$5,000 is to be given to the Open Space Fund.

Ambulance Corps

Ms. Davis said that she wants the Board to permit \$5,000 to be given to the ambulance core. Mr. Gold pointed out that they are already buying them an ambulance. Ms. Davis also mentioned that Dee Young gave them \$10,000 to go towards bicycles, but feels that they need \$5,000 in addition to that. Mr. Gold and Mr. Luce vote no. Mr. Johnson voted that they could use the \$5,000. Since the vote is 2-2, it is a defeat.

Senior Health Advisory Committee

Mr. Johnson stated that he wants the Board to give money to the Senior Health Advisory Committee. They could use money for things such as postage and recommended the amount of \$500.00. Mr. Luce, Mr. Gold and Ms. Davis agree.

Mr. Tate mentioned that \$500 is already in the budget and directed the Board to the specific line item. Mr. Johnson admitted he did not see this and the Board agreed that the amount will stay at \$500.00.

Additional Issues

Ambulance Corps

Mr. Tate announced that each year there is an auction of old vehicles. The list will be published shortly.

Ed Hoffman, deputy chief of the Warminster ambulance core, approached the podium to ask the Board for a request. He stated that he had spoken to Mr. Tate a few months back about replacing 2 vehicles- 1991 Blazer and a 1992 Suburban- with 2 Expeditions (1991 and 2001). Originally, they were told they could have 2 Crown Victorians but they were found to be in too poor of condition. He then asked the Board if they could trade their 2 vehicles with the 2 Expeditions. His current vehicles are old and failing. He stated that both parties' vehicles have high mileage but the core wants vehicles that are more conducive to the environment and able to carry more of their equipment. Mr. Luce asked if a new engine had been put in the chief's car, which Mr. Hoffman confirmed with a yes, and that they are still looking to get rid of the vehicle. Mr. Luce asked if the light bars would stay on the vehicles. Mr. Tate said they are stripped down. Mr. Hoffman explained that he had spoken to Andy at the township building who had said that the bars are inadequate (MX7000) and that the core would need to change one lens in order to make it red on all sides. He said that Andy confirmed that they are using older equipment that is standard to the ambulance and not the township since the township is currently using LED. Mr. Hoffman offered to strip down their vehicles for the township. He mentioned how he had already previously brought the Blazer and the Suburban to the township for inspection because one was going to go to the golf course. Joe at the course had wanted the Blazer, but Andy did not feel that vehicle was suited for their needs so he opted to give them the Suburban. The Suburban is the vehicle with the new engine.

Mr. Luce, Mr Johnson, Ms. Davis and Mr. Gold agreed and approved the exchange of vehicles. Mr. Luce pointed out that even though the core had been denied their \$5,000 request, the vehicles are worth a higher amount. Mr. Hoffman commented that he is very happy with this agreement.

Traffic Committee

Mr. Luce asked the Board how much the traffic committee has in the budget. Mr. Tate answered that there is \$250. Mr. Luce made a motion to provide them with an additional \$250 bringing them to a total of \$500. The Board agreed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Joy Capozzi, Penrose Lane, thanked the Board for their hard work and for the additional \$250 for the traffic committee which she said will go to good use. She said that Ms. Davis did a good job of explaining the process of the traffic common measure. She then asked the Board if they could look into a better recycling program because she feels Warminster is behind other townships. Mr. Johnson said that he has been looking into it and even has a few people that already volunteered to get involved.

Ed Hoffman asked if the speed bumps would present a problem for EMS vehicles to get over. He said in the past, that vehicles had their chains ripped off that were used in the snow. He asked the Board if the bump levels would be appropriate. Ms. Davis said yes and that the engineer took this into consideration when working on the project and even pointed out that the bumps will only slow their vehicles down by 5 seconds. She said the engineer went above and beyond by researching all spectrums.

Mr. Luce said that when the corps gets their new ambulance he wants something on the vehicles stating it was donated by the residents of Warminster Township. Mr. Hoffman confirmed that it will be, and also on 2 other vehicles.

Joy Capozzi, Penrose Lane, stated that PennDOT regulates any work involving speed bumps and there are certain ways to set them up without causing any problems to emergency vehicles. She wants people to know there is more to the traffic common policy than just setting up speed bumps. However, with the temporary bumps it allows residents to view the change on their street without making permanent decisions right away and it is a great way for the township to regulate traffic without spending a lot of money.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

None

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Luce led the Pledge of Allegiance and observed a moment of silence. He asked everyone to keep the 2 officers that were shot today in Philadelphia in their thoughts. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leo I. Quinn, III / Secretary

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