

**READINGTON TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
BUDGET MEETING – February 15, 2023**

Mayor Huelsebusch *calls the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.* announcing that all laws governing the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting has been duly advertised.

PRESENT: Mayor J. Huelsebusch, Deputy Mayor A. Mueller, Mr. J. Albanese, Mr. J Heller and Mr. V. Panico

ALSO PRESENT: Administrator R. Sheola, Chief Financial Officer T. Ferry and Municipal Clerk K. Parker

ABSENT: None

2023 BUDGET DISCUSSION

Administrator Sheola and Chief Financial Officer Tom Ferry presented the preliminary budget for 2023. Administrator Sheola reviewed the anticipated appropriations and revenues for the coming year, highlighting the increases and decreases in the various line items. Chief Financial Officer Ferry reviewed the surplus balance.

James Curry, Public Safety Director, presented his request for additional patrol officers due to pending retirements and capital project requests.

Gabrielle Bolarakis, Recreation Director, presented her request for an increase in salary and title change for personnel within the department and capital project requests for the parks.

Pat Fisher Olsen, Chairperson of Historic Preservation, appeared before the Committee to request funding for the preparation of vision statements for planning grants and the nomination of Three Bridges district to the National Historic Registry.

Margaret Smith, Museum Director, presented her request for funding for needed building repairs to the Bouman Stickney Farmstead and Cold Brook School museums.

Jeff Herzog, Chief of Whitehouse Rescue Squad, presented his request to replace an emergency first response vehicle due to aging and deterioration of current vehicles.

Matt Hoffman, Chief of Readington Fire, spoke to the need to replace self-contained breathing apparatus for the firefighters.

James Traynor, Chief of Three Bridges Fire, presented the need to upgrade and refurbish firefighter equipment and vehicles.

Bill Wallace, Chief of Whitehouse Fire, requested funding for additional fire gear for the volunteers, self-contained breathing apparatus and spoke to the pending replacement of aging fire trucks.

Ron Christy, Director of Public Works, and Joe Lucash, Road Supervisor, presented the list for capital requests. Mr. Christy also addressed the need for additional personnel due to pending retirements.

Rob O'Brien, Township Engineer, reviewed the proposed listing of the 2023 capital improvements for the roads.

The Committee discussed a proposed bond ordinance to fund the capital projects. The Committee spoke to the necessity to prioritize capital projects and road reclamation to continue to ensure the health, safety and welfare of residents while maintaining a fiscally responsible budget.

The next budget meeting will take place on February 28, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were none.

As there was no further business, A **MOTION** was made at 9:30 p.m. by Mr. Albanese to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Mueller with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

Submitted:

Karin M. Parker, *RMC*
Municipal Clerk