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**Board of Supervisors Budget Work Session**  
**Wednesday, September 20, 2023, 3:30 p.m.**

In-person attendance: Supervisors Elaine DiMonte, Ricki Stumpo and Raymond McKay; Mark Knightly, Public Works Director; Treasurer Peter Barsz, Treasurer Support Staff Anita Swayne.

Public in-person attendance: 0

1. **Call to Order:** DiMonte called the work session to order at 3:30 p.m.
2. **Sunshine Announcements/Announcements:** none.
3. **Public Comment Non-Agenda Items:** none.
4. **Proposed 2024 Budget Discussion:** Barsz noted today is the first time through the proposed draft. He recognized that Swayne completed the majority of the tasks required to create the draft budget. Barsz has pre-reviewed the draft and suggested focus on the highlighted items for this go round.
  - a. Preliminary General Fund Budget - \$56,000 will be moved to Fire & EMS - money is deposited in the General Fund and is transferred to Fire & EMS. General Fund entries for Fire & EMS will eventually zero-out. Barsz expects that interest rates will remain the same for 2024. The PLGIT funds are performing admirably. Barsz explained the PLGIT investment options noting the Township is utilizing the PLGIT Class and Prime Accounts that are earning over 5%. Line 355.050 Municipal Pension Aid \$16,500 is based on recent notification from the state. It is the excise tax on life insurance policies, and it is passed on to the fire and EMS auxiliary relief. Discussion ensued regarding 361.300 non-hearing zoning fees and whether previous postings were correct. Same trend for zoning fees (361.340). Agreement reached to swap 361.300 and 361.340 as more realistic. During discussion, Swayne identified the line items for the Right to Know copy costs as well as money received from district court judgments. Barsz noted the reimbursable engineering allocation is low because reimbursable engineering is low (414.314) as escrow entries for individual projects have been reclassified. Engineering and legal reimbursables for a project are "pass throughs." Secretary asked that individual project listings be removed from the draft budget as the projects listed are not active. There are 25 to 30 active projects at any given point in time with varying sequence of construction, escrow payments to the township, and requests for professional service authorizations. Swayne asked the Board about revising the rental inspection program which was put on hold during COVID. Board agreed to revise the program and include rental registration fee income. Swayne suggested the Secretary identify a set fee for stormwater management inspections. Individual project fees will be included in the proposed draft budget. Barsz asked for clarification regarding the PennDOT allocation for snow removal, particularly when last year there was no snow. Knightly commented that the 5-year contract with PennDOT provides for an allocation with or without the need for snow removal. Knightly will review the contract and provide a figure for the budget. He clarified that the 5-year contract for snow removal is different from the PennDOT turnback money. Swayne noted park recreation fees decreased for 2023. Secretary concurred noting park reservation requests have declined. The Township does not charge a fee to residents who are reserving the pavilion. Barsz is projecting a transfer from the ARPA account for any funds that will not be used for the Pocopson Creek Stream Remediation Project. DiMonte asked and Barsz confirmed that the ARPA funds must be spent by 2024. Board recognized that the streambed reclamation project has a 2024

deadline as well. To be determined if a snow removal reimbursement should be made to the General Fund. Knightly tracks hours/wages for intermittent and seasonal employees for snow removal for Public Works departmentally and the expense is absorbed by the General Fund. A transfer to General Fund will not short the Public Works/Liquid Fuels Budget. There is a \$10,000 allocation at 432.140. Swayne requested clarification for 400.210 Office Supplies to \$4,200. Board agreed to expense the issuance of email addresses for committee chair people as discussed at a public meeting so those individuals will not have to use personal emails to communicate Township business (400.325 line item increases by approximately \$1,100). DiMonte inquired as to the increased projections for professional services. Swayne indicated that the figures were calculated using an anticipated 3% increase. Brandywine Valley SPCA has notified the Township of this proposed increase in the animal control contract. Secretary indicated consultant letters received to date are trending toward keeping the same hourly rates although notice has not yet been received from Castley Valley Consultants (Zoning and Floodplain Officials) who recently merged with ARRO Engineering. Board will supply compensation numbers. Budget allocation should clearly differentiate assistant secretary and archivist. Secretary to reach back out to Sage Business regarding IT number for 2024 particularly with the recent breakdown of the Public Works laptop. Barsz suggested allocating \$12,000 for line item 407.700 to cover anticipated hardware costs. Swayne will clean up 409.360 to differentiate utilities. A note will be added to the budget clarifying fees for receptionist/zoning and building inspector. Board agreed to a regular library contribution of \$9,000 for both West Chester and Kennett Libraries with an extra \$10,000 to the Kennett Library Capital Fund. Board agreed to a \$4,000 contribution to the Scenic Byway Commission. Knightly is working through questions with Peterman Benefits Group regarding the health insurance proposals. No decision this work session on coverage. The HRA Account will remain \$5,000 per participant. The proposed transfer to EMS is \$300,000.

- b. Preliminary Liquid Fuels Budget - Knightly noted that funds for West Creek Road cannot come from this budget. Any proposed allocations here have to be moved to the General Fund. Line 433.360 needs work and potentially returned to the General Fund. Knightly budgeted paving in the cost range of \$125,000 that will include Valley, Haines Mill, and West Creek Roads. Barsz noted that with adjustments to the General Fund, there may be money for additional paving projects. McKay suggested that with the allocation adjustment if there sufficient funding, allocation should be made for additional paving projects so that Public Works can get ahead of the paving schedule. Board agreed to adjustments to the budget accordingly.
- c. Preliminary Facilities Budget - Barsz and Swayne noted the allocations are straightforward. Secretary suggested \$2,000 to \$2,500 for the additional file cabinet for the file room. Knightly stated that recent maintenance on the Public Works Garage Doors disclosed that the doors need to be replaced. A projected discussion ensued as to whether an emergency generator should be purchased for the Township Administration Building. The projected cost including the propane tank is \$83,000. The ARPA funds could be utilized for the purchase. McKay cautioned that the Pocopson Creek Streambed Remediation Project is taking longer than expected to complete and the Township should take care not to run short on the funds to complete this mandated project. The Public Works Garage is outfitted with an

emergency generator so it could be utilized as a base during an emergency. Board agreed to hold off budgeting for the purchase of an emergency generator for the Township Administration Building. DiMonte noted final payment to BSS Contractors for construction will be about \$14,000 to \$15,000. Knightly requested funding to paint the exterior of the Public Works Building on Denton Hollow Road (\$3,000) and the Barnard House "El" (\$10,000). This work will be done in-house.

- d. Preliminary Capital Reserve Budget - Knightly offered that the number budgeted is on the high side. He anticipates replacing the 2012 F350 Pickup Truck which has aged out with another 4-door pickup. He anticipates purchasing a Dodge flat bed (retrofit) and a plow with a spreader. Total price for these 3 purchases is \$95,000. He will ask the Board to authorize the sale of the F350 and a plow that may net \$25,000. Anticipated that a trailer will be purchased during 2023 (\$10,000 - \$16,000). The highway mower is working following repairs. Knightly anticipates replacing it in 2025.
- e. Preliminary Parks Recreation and Trails Budget - no action taken as the Parks, Recreation and Trails Committee have not met. Line item 454.720 is recognized for the purchase of a new all-terrain vehicle to replace the existing vehicle.
- f. Preliminary Fire and EMS Budget - McKay noted that there is not enough information at this time. EMS Commission is working through budget discussions.
- g. Preliminary General Reserve Budget - no changes other than the actual fund balance as the process moves toward finalizing the budget.
- h. Preliminary Route 52 Intersection Budget - Township Solicitor has not provided a path forward for reallocating or returning the funds. On a separate note, DiMonte noted that the Board needs to make a decision with regard to status of Wawaset Farm Lane roadbed and stormwater facilities. She suggested identifying the cost for a final topcoat in the event the Township has to bring the infrastructure to a permanent state.
- i. Preliminary Historical Committee Budget - Board agreed to an allocation of \$6,000 to relocate the HVAC system to improve the historical aesthetics of the Locust Grove Schoolhouse. McKay noted that volunteers have offered their time to facilitate the relocation so the cost would be for materials. Costs for other improvements such as indoor restroom have not been allocated for 2024.
- j. Preliminary Open Space Budget - Barsz reported balances on the 2 loans as follows: \$355,000 and \$924,000. Rate on the first loan is 2.1% and the second loan 2.7%. His recommendation is to make no changes for 2024.

5. **Adjournment:** at 5:30 p.m. DiMonte moved, McKay seconded, to adjourn the work session; motion carried.

  
 Susan Simone, Secretary

  
 Elaine DiMonte, Chairwoman