

ALEXANDRIA TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
Special Budget Meeting
MINUTES
February 21, 2018

This meeting was advertised in the Hunterdon Democrat notice posted in the Alexandria Township Municipal Offices and the Alexandria Township Website (www.alexandrianj.gov) as required by the Open Public Meetings Act.

Meeting Called to order at 6:09 PM.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Mayor Garay, Committeeman Pfefferle, Committeeman Kiernan

ABSENT: None

BUDGET WORK SESSION 2:

Mayor Garay noted that the Township received several complaints regarding no light at night on the flag in the park. At the February 14, 2018 meeting the Township Committee decided to proceed with solar lighting on the flag pole. DPW Foreman Griffith would like to proceed with having electricity run from the park barn to the flag pole. DPW Foreman Griffith has concerns about the solar lighting such as the life of the battery, how long does the lighting last during the course of the night, does the solar light illuminate if there is no sun? DPW Foreman Griffith has concerns using solar generated lighting and that it will not be cost efficient to the Township nor will the lighting last throughout the night.

The Township does have a lighting ordinance for the park that does not permit illumination during the evening hours. The Township Committee wants to be in compliance with the National recommendations and also be mindful of the neighbors around the park. DPW Foreman Griffith will get quotes for having electricity run to the pole and Township Administrator/Clerk Bobrowski will contact a flag company and get quotes on solar lighting on a flag pole.

CFO Steinberg and former CFO Rees joined the meeting at 6:15 PM to discuss the Township Budget.

CFO Rees asked for direction by the Township Committee regarding following:

- 1.) Volunteer First-Aid/Fire Departments-Will there be an increase in aid this year?**

Quakertown Fire Company is requesting an increase in aid this year. Some options the Township Committee discussed were:

- 1.) Capital increase to be used towards equipment

- 2.) Increase to operating expense which could be spread out by percentages
- 3.) Maintain the current aid

The Township currently pays \$147,000 a year in aid for these services. The aid for each fire company is determined by tax assessment valuations. The Township Committee will look into what surrounding Townships contribute, when they increase aid, and when the last time aid was increased. The history of the first-aid squads is uncertain.

2.) COAH Lawsuit-CFO Rees asked if the Mt. Laurel Fair Share/Fair Housing matter has been resolved?

The Mt. Laurel suit is still open and the Township Committee will budget \$10,000 to \$15,000.00 this year towards professional fees.

3.) Insurance Bills-

CFO Steinberg noted that the insurance bill for 2018 has been budgeted in full.

4.) Delaware Valley Joint Municipal Court-What direction is Alexandria Township going with the Court?

A budget has been provided by the Court for salary and operating expenses for 2018. No budget has been provided for the construction renovation costs for a new court office or a recording system.

Other matters discussed:

- CFO Steinberg discussed surplus regeneration with the Township Committee and handouts were reviewed as this is a concern of CFO Steinberg.
- Township will need to go out for permanent financing in 2024. CFO Steinberg noted that the Township can keep the current debt level and go for permanent financing later with notes being rolled until 2024 to minimize impact.
- Township needs to consider the future capital plan. Previous ordinances will need to be funded. Once an ordinance for a capital project is adopted a three year clock begins for when payments will be due.
- In 2011, a major amount of deferred school tax was used to offset surplus of about \$1.5 million. CFO Steinberg noted that the Township Committee at that time didn't take the long term in account.
- The budget introduction deadline date has been pushed back until April.
- The Township received a NJDOT Grant in the amount \$240,000.00 for Mt. Salem Road.

CFO Steinberg noted that the Township Committee needs to look at the budget for the future. The price of fuel needs to be taken into consideration when determining road projects. If fuel prices are low, than the Township should budget more for road projects. The Township has always funded roads by debt. DPW Foreman Griffith will supply the Township Committee with a spreadsheet of roads that contain the existing life of the road, length of each road, and last time said road was paved. Comm. Pfefferle would like

to see a long term capital plan for the Township and not “kick the can down the road”. Comm. Pfefferle noted that tough decisions need to be made

The Township Committee will reach out to Hunterdon County to see if Block Grants are available to the Township.

The next Township Committee Budget Meeting will be held on Monday, March 12th at 5:15 PM.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

Former Mayor and Township Resident Harry Fuerstenberger read a statement to the Township Committee voicing his concern over the fact that the Township has just as many Attorney’s on call as there are full-time employees. That the Township Committee has discussed laying-off employees and doing away with benefits for employees is illegal. The roads in the township are all the residents have and that the town has an obligation to maintain them. Mr. Fuerstenberger noted that less than 10% of the tax bill goes towards the Township. Mr. Fuerstenberger expressed concern that School Superintendent Jennings will be getting paid over a \$1,000,000.00 for the next five years and that some members of the Township Committee were in support of this decision.

Resident Curtis Schick noted that the DPW has very little projects to do besides the roads. Mr. Schick wants the DPW to focus on roads and for the Township not to have the DPW do side projects.

Mayor Garay noted that the number one call she receives from residents is road maintenance complaints and compliments.

Comm. Pfefferle noted that he voted against a number of attorney re-appointments at the Township Re-Org meeting in January. Comm. Pfefferle noted that he did talk with Milford and Frenchtown Boro schools about merging but that Milford Boro was not interested. There was no response from area school for shared services.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Comm. Pfefferle made a motion, seconded by Comm. Kiernan to adjourn.

Roll Call: Aye: Garay, Pfefferle, Kiernan

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

Meeting Adjourned at 7:01 PM.

**Respectfully Submitted:
Michele Bobrowski, RMC
Township Clerk**

I hereby certify that I have reviewed these Minutes of the Township Committee Budget Meeting of February 21, 2018 and certify that said Minutes were approved unanimously by the Township Committee on the 14th day of March 2018.

Michelle Garay, Mayor

Dated: _____