

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS of NETHER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP – October 15, 2020

Virtual Meeting held via Zoom and shown on YouTube

A public meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Nether Providence Township was called to order at 7:30 PM on Thursday, October 15, 2020 via Zoom call and shown on YouTube.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioner Cooper
Commissioner Garson
Commissioner Knapp
Commissioner McKenzie
Commissioner King
Commissioner O'Connor
Commissioner Molloy

ALSO PRESENT:

Dave Grady	Township Manager
David Fiorenza	Finance Director
Chief Splain	Police Chief

Mr. Knapp chaired meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – There was no public comment.

Overview and Understanding of the Budget

Ms. McKenzie noted that the Commissioners had copies of the draft budgets in their packets, and at this point, there are still several items for which the Township is awaiting more information. She asked Mr. Grady to provide an overview of the budget. Mr. Grady thanked Mr. Fiorenza for his work in putting together the budget.

Mr. Grady explained some of the larger revenue line items, including the real estate tax number, which accounts for about 65% of the revenue. He also covered the local services tax, the real estate transfer tax, cable franchise fees, and state pension aid. Since these numbers are still in draft form, the amounts were not available. Mr. Molloy asked about the per capita tax since he was wondering if that would increase with the pandemic as more people are working from home. Ms. McKenzie said the per capita tax is assessed on residents 18 years of age or older, regardless of employment. Mr. Fiorenza noted that the local services tax could be positively impacted, but he said we are going to budget conservatively. Mr. Grady then began to explain the various expenditure line items, including the administrative services, legal and professional charges, engineering charges, and fire hydrant rental fees. He also covered the fire relief funding, which is equal to the revenue that is received from the State Fire Relief Association. It is distributed to both fire companies. He covered recycling collection and disposal, which is B&L Disposal as the collection and Republic for the processing. Recreation and culture section includes the Summer Camp, which is budgeted as revenue-neutral. He discussed the funded organizations, including the fire companies, the library, Leiper House, and NPAA. He mentioned debt and insurance costs. He also covered the interfund transfers, and explained that when a police car is purchased, the funding is transferred to the police capital fund, and then purchased from the fund.

Police Budget

Chief Splain presented the police section of the police budget. He explained that revenues from fines are down for 2020 and expected to remain lower in 2021. He said the extra duty costs were higher in 2020 because of the security detail while a movie was filmed, and this was reimbursed by the production company. He noted that drug enforcement overtime costs are reimbursed by the Department of Homeland Security. He discussed the salaries, Heart and Lung Costs, and police contract, which he does not have control over. He said the overtime numbers are down, partly because of COVID and partly because the

recent contract allows for the usage of part-time officers. He said a new agreement with the County is being worked out for prisoner lodging, which currently happens at the Media Borough Police Department, since Nether Providence does not house prisoners. He noted that the IT costs have gone up over the years, but this was due to the switch to the new IT provider who provides quality services. He noted vehicle repairs have been kept low, in large part because of the vehicle replacement plan, the extended warranties, and the ability to do work in-house by Public Works Laborer Carl Schaeffer. He said the training costs have been well worth it, since this has been important, especially during the times of civil unrest and scrutiny of the police departments. Chief Splain mentioned that the County radio system is being overhauled, and County CARES funding will assist with those costs. Mr. Cooper asked about police contract negotiations costs. Mr. Grady said the current contract is set to expire at the end of 2021, so negotiations for the next contract will take place in 2021. These costs vary over the years as contracts near expiration. Ms. McKenzie thanked Chief Splain for the explanations of the items.

General Discussions

Ms. McKenzie said there are several contractual increases which can lead to a tax increase, even if other discretionary expenses are held steady. She said the East Rose Valley Sidewalk Project will be paid for over the next three years, in conjunction with the recent loan. Ms. McKenzie noted that the Township's fund balance has been improving over the years, but there is still room to improve. She said the original budget is very conservative to start, but it will get slimmed down throughout the budget season. Mr. Grady and Mr. Fiorenza discussed the reassessment, and said the Township is waiting on the final total assessment number from the County. Ms. McKenzie said that for 2021's administration, David Fiorenza would be joining full-time, and then instead of replacing the Assistant Manager role in 2021, a part-time position would be created. Mr. Knapp said he would like to do an analysis of the fire companies and long-term plans for them. Mr. Molloy said he felt like it was hard to cut a lot of the current increases, because it seems like they all seem necessary. Mr. Grady said that often times smaller increases are made in individual line items to minimize the budget increases. He said the additional budgets, including Liquid Fuels and the Sewer Fund, would be reviewed at future budget meetings.

Mr. Knapp reminded everyone to register to vote before the deadline. He said the next meeting would be the legislative meeting on October 22nd. The meeting was adjourned around 8:55 PM.