

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING
NOVEMBER 6, 2013

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for a Budget Workshop Meeting on Wednesday, November 6, 2013, in the Township Building. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m., followed by a pledge to the flag.

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS:

Chairperson Waks reported there was no executive session prior to this meeting. He reported this is the third of four scheduled Budget Workshop meetings.

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Philips, Erika Spott, Greg Waks, and Carole Kenney. Also present were: Dave Kraynik, Township Manager; Judith A. Vicchio, Assistant Township Manager; Nick Hiriak, Director of Finance, Karl Helicher, Library Director; Dan Russell, Director, Park and Recreation. Supervisor Bill Jenaway was absent.

PROPOSED 2014 OPERATING BUDGET FOR LIBRARY

Mr. Helicher provided an overview of the Operating Budget for the Library.

Overall highlights as follows:

- Personnel Services increased 2%
- Operating Supplies no increase
- Professional Service increased 4.9%

Specific highlights as follows:

- Salary Prof Staff – PT decreased \$2,500 or 2.0% (The \$5,000 Family Place grant was received last year and \$2,500 was earmarked for salaries for professional and clerical part-time staff).
- Tuition Reimbursement decreased \$2,700 or 100%
- Signs/Mailings/Postage decreased \$1,796 or 33.9%
- Travel/Food Expense decreased \$250 or 12.5%
- Equipment Depreciation Charge increased \$19,540 or 108%
- Training and Education decreased \$250 or 33.3%
- Conference Registration decreased \$365 or 20.7%

PROPOSED 2014 CAPITAL BUDGET FOR LIBRARY

Highlights as follows:

- \$10,000 for the equipment replacement for installation of new shades for the library windows in the public area.

Prompted by Mr. Waks' question about fundraising, a discussion followed during which several options were proposed such as a letter writing campaign or a "once a year" special event such as a Spring Cotillion. Mr. Helicher agreed to discuss this matter with the Library Board.

PROPOSED 2014 OPERATING BUDGET FOR PARK AND RECREATION

Mr. Dan Russell, Director, Park and Recreation, provided an overview of the proposed 2014 operating budget for Park and Recreation which increased \$181,477 or 11.1%.

Overall highlights as follows:

- Total Personnel Services increased 32.9% due to staff increases.
- Total Operating Supplies increased \$5,752 or 4.3%
- Total Professional Service decreased \$44,404 or 13.3%
- Miscellaneous increased \$6,187 or 1.2%

Specific highlights as follows:

- Salary/Wages/Professional increased \$108,000 or 145.8% due to the hiring of 4 new full time positions within the Park and Recreation Department with the anticipation of the target date of opening the Center on or around January 1, 2015.
- Salaries/Wages Clerical and Other decreased \$144,091 or 91.2% due to part time salaries and wages moving to a new account which is Account 1810.
- Older Adults Programs increased 2.6%
- Office Supplies increased \$1,875 or 75%
- Uniforms (new account) \$1,500 for new Community Center staff
- Recreation Center Expenses decreased 100% due to renovation of the facility.
- The Recreation Center received exemption of property taxes by Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals.
- Discount tickets increased \$8,000 or 25.8% (very popular and successful program)
- Recreation supplies (new account) for \$13,125
- Equipment Depreciation Charge increased \$4,125 or 108%

Mr. Russell noted there is going to be a possibility of receiving some revenue for the Community Center in 2014 because of residents wanting to purchase passes before the building opens. The importance of bringing new full time staff on board will be key to setting up these types of programs. It is hoped to strengthen the relationship with the Senior Center to market more programs and activities. There were discussions about assigning certain “down time” hours during the week when the seniors could use the walking track or weight room free of charge. It would also provide an opportunity to acquaint them with other amenities at the center.

PROPOSED 2014 CAPITAL BUDGET FOR PARK AND RECREATION

Mr. Russell provided an overview of the 2014 Capital Budget for Park and Recreation. He stated due to the reduction in the Capital Budget over the years there have not been any dollars devoted toward Heuser Park. The request for \$50,000 is for expenses related to the Heuser Park Sports Complex for increasing turf improvements, field irrigation, playground improvements, and landscaping.

A discussion followed with regard to the use of field turf versus grass. It was noted during the discussion that the proposal for the Master Plan includes a review of field turf.

Mr. Russell discussed the Upper Merion Recreation Center account. Highlights as follows:

- the cost for architect design, the business plan, the demolition and construction, parking, traffic improvements totals \$10.7 million
- As of 10/18/13 progress billings for design and business plan amount to \$319,050
- \$625,000 is deducted for traffic improvements and a specific request will be made to Transportation Authority members at their November 13th meeting.
- \$715,000 for sidewalks
- \$635,000 for the two trail segments -- one from Keebler Road and one from General Armstrong bringing the total for this project to \$11,105,950.

A discussion followed regarding supplemental financing for the Community Center. It was noted that the township’s financial advisor will provide a series of borrowing options at a December or early January workshop meeting.

Additional highlights of the Park and Recreation Capital Improvement Plan as follows:

- Merrill Young Park (used to be called Hughes Park) \$5,000 for roof repairs

- Park Equipment account: \$160,000 for maintaining and updating older equipment in various parks, including playground safety surface.
- Sidewalks and Fencing account: \$15,000 for fencing and sidewalk improvements for the park system.
- Tree Planting account : \$5,000 for tree planting at all township parks, including trees, shrubs, mulch and landscaping
- Design for Park Projects is for the Master Plan. The Board will be considering that RFP proposal at their next meeting - \$72,000 reflects the cost for completing that Master Plan.

Prompted by Mr. Philips' question about the arboretum near the Moore Irwin House, a discussion ensued about the viability of the development of the arboretum in the Master Plan. Mr. Russell noted the Master Plan itself will address all the park properties.

With regard to the Multi-Use Recreation Trails, Mr. Russell stated the trail project from Heuser Park to Valley Forge Park Trail increased due to the cost of having to install a bridge.

Mrs. Kenney noted the completion of the Tricentennial mural and a discussion followed regarding the scheduling of the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved by Mr. Philips, seconded by Mrs. Kenney, all voting "Aye" to adjourn the workshop meeting at 8:16 p.m. None opposed. Motion approved 4-0.

DAVID G. KRAYNIK
SECRETARY-TREASURER/
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

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Minutes Approved:
Minutes Entered: