

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING  
NOVEMBER 5, 2014

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for a Budget Workshop Meeting on Wednesday, November 5, 2014, in the Township Building. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m., followed by a pledge to the flag.

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Philips, Greg Waks, and Carole Kenney. Also present were: Dave Kraynik, Township Manager; Sally Slook, Assistant Township Manager; Nick Hiriak, Director of Finance. Karl Helicher, Library Director. Supervisor Spott and Supervisor Jenaway were absent

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS:

Chairperson Waks reported there was no executive session prior to this meeting.

PROPOSED 2015 OPERATING BUDGET FOR LIBRARY

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

Overall highlights as follows:

- Personnel Services increased 4.1%
- Operating Supplies increased 1.3%
- Professional Service increased 3.4%
- Total Miscellaneous increased 2.8%
- Overall increase of 3.6%

Specific highlights as follows:

- Salary items all reflect in the area of a 5% increase due to the 2014 salary not reflecting the 2.75% increase by not having a settled agreement at the time, as well as reflecting the 2015 increase of 2.25%.
- General Book Account decreasing 21.7% or \$12,375 because of reallocating \$2,373 to account 04456-2471 and \$10,000 to account 04456-2482
- Professional Service: all controllable items remain at a 0% increase over 2014
- All other shares of building, equipment, IT, maintenance reflect a 3.4% or \$12,983 increase due to budgeted increases in those operating budgets.

- Miscellaneous: All accounts for dues, memberships, training and conferences remain the same over the 2014 budget amounts.
- Equipment depreciation allocation is \$10,395 for 2015 which is \$395 increase over 2014.

### PROPOSED 2015 CAPITAL FOR LIBRARY

Highlights as follows:

- \$10,395 from equipment replacement for installation of new shades for the library windows in the public area.

Mr. Waks asked about the amount of the revenue expenditure shortfall. Mr. Hiriak responded \$151,678.

Mr. Waks encouraged the ongoing and continued fundraising efforts to support the Library.

A discussion followed about making up the shortfall which was caused by expenses outpacing real estate tax income as well as assessments which have flatlined.

Mr. Philips commented the township has a 501(c)3, Upper Merion Foundation, which will be discussed at a future workshop meeting. He pointed out the tax advantage for people to make contributions and while he appreciates the fundraising efforts and encouraged more of them, he said part of the incentive for people to give would be a tax deduction obtained through a charitable gift to a 501(c)3.

Mr. Waks noted Upper Merion Township Foundation matters will be discussed at a December workshop meeting.

### PROPOSED 2015 OPERATING BUDGET FOR PARK AND RECREATION

Mr. Dan Russell, Director, Park and Recreation, provided an overview of the proposed 2015 operating budget for Park and Recreation which increased 21.3% or \$388,604.

Highlights as follows:

- Professional Salaries/Wages for new professional staff for the Park and Recreation Department and the Community Center: The Assistant Park and Recreation Director, two program coordinators and the Marketing Specialist for a total cost of \$288,383 at 100% for those four positions.
- Salaries/wages for other departmental staff budgeted for 50% of the year (July through December) for \$83,400

- Operating Supplies decreased 3.5% due to moving the Senior Center into the new Community Center.
- Slight increase of \$1,200 for lease payment to Norfolk Southern for Heuser to Bob Case Trail.
- Cost of advertising and marketing of Community Center for \$15,000 which reflects 100% of the annual cost for the department including the Community Center.
- Utilities account increased \$87,746 due to Community Center. This account also includes all the utilities for the parks as well.
- Building Maintenance increased 11.5% or \$10,160. Majority of that is due to 50% of the annual cost of the Community Center.
- Miscellaneous increased 3.4% increase
- Concerts Under the Stars decreasing 42.2% or \$19,000. The decrease is more in line with what has actually been spent for this series.

Mr. Philips asked if there has been any thought given to partnering with the casino to sponsor or bring one of their acts to Concerts Under the Stars. Mr. Russell responded that is certainly something he could discuss.

- Recreation Supplies increased 100% due to Community Center.

A discussion followed regarding proposed timing, staffing, programming, and operations set up necessary before opening the doors to the new Community Center.

#### PROPOSED 2015 CAPITAL BUDGET FOR PARK AND RECREATION

Mr. Russell stated there are three major ongoing initiatives that are being carried over into next year as follows:

- Upper Merion Community Center
- Heuser Park to Valley Forge Park Trail which is ready to start construction shortly
- Park and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan.

Additional highlights:

- Revitalization of the Upper Merion Township Building Park pond for \$100,000 (Priority 1)
- PennDOT Multi-Model grant program to upgrade existing light fixtures and standards to LED in Bob White Park, Executive Estates Park, Heuser Park and Walker Park (Priority 2)
- Maintaining and updating older equipment in various parks, including playground safety surface for \$90,000 and putting in an additional \$50,000 into Heuser Park to keep the sports complex up and running.

Mr. Philips asked where the resurfacing under all playground equipment can be found in the budget. He mentioned during last year's budget there was a discussion about the need to do something about the rubberized playground surfaces. Mr. Russell responded that request is listed under account #7130 Park Equipment.

Mr. Philips asked why that is not listed as Priority 1. Mr. Russell responded it has not been made Priority 1 since there are two grant projects in the works. Mr. Kraynik noted this has already been identified for funding from the capital fund. Mr. Russell noted all of the parks in the park system that have rubberized surface need to be replaced.

Mr. Philips emphasized he wants to see this done even if something else has to be moved around. Mr. Russell indicated the replacement process has already begun with wood chips as a stop gap interim safety measure. He noted it will cost between \$20,000 to \$50,000 per playground to replace.

Mr. Kraynik asked Mr. Russell if the \$60,000 allocated for 2016 would finish the job. Mr. Russell responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Philips asked if the Parks Master Plan will address the kind of playground surfaces that should be installed. Mr. Russell responded in the affirmative. He said it has already been identified as one of the major items that need to be replaced in the parks.

Mrs. Kenney asked if the \$60,000 earmarked for 2016 combined with the \$90,000 would be enough to do all of the rubberized surfaces needed. Mr. Russell indicated he believes it would be possible to "attack" the whole park system with that as well as a couple of grants that might be able to offset some of that cost.

#### ADDITIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Russell passed around a handouts with expense and revenue projections and a sample fee structure for the potential operation of a swim club in the township. This information was obtained by contacting some municipally operated pools and came up with dollar figures for salaries and wages, equipment and supplies and utilities.

A discussion followed during which the supervisors asked a series of questions concerning the potential fee schedule, if a daily rate would be offered, staffing,

days and hours of operation, condition of the pool under consideration, type of capital expenses for upgrades, possibility of relocating the pool elsewhere on the property to maximize parking if the pool were ever replaced.

On another topic, Mr. Russell asked the Board about the possibility of moving the Community Fair to early October in order to create more of a harvest festival. An October timeframe would be less conflict with the hectic activities associated with the beginning of the school year.

Mr. Kraynik asked if there was any discussion with the Park and Recreation Board about this. Mr. Russell responded in the negative.

Mrs. Kenney asked if Mr. Russell spoke with any of the groups traditionally participating in the Community Fair. Mr. Russell responded in the negative.

Mrs. Kenney asked if the carnival would be held at the same time. Mr. Russell responded in the affirmative.

The discussion returned to the capital budget during which Mr. Philips asked about the line item for turf improvements at Heuser Park and if something similar is planned for Baxter Park. He also wanted to know the ultimate goal for making sure the surfaces are maintained. Mr. Russell responded that is one of the reasons why they are looking at the Master Plan. It has been identified there are several parks that are not being utilized and to move some activities and programs to these parks rather than putting the brunt of activity on Baxter, Bob Case and Heuser. Mr. Russell said the other matter being discussed is the idea of synthetic turf. With the increased use of these parks it makes more sense not only from a cost standpoint, but from a usage standpoint and other benefits would no doubt be identified as part of the master plan process.

Mrs. Kenney asked if the artificial turf is permeable or impermeable. Mr. Russell responded it has a stormwater management component so that it drains and is better than a grass field. Mr. Russell pointed out it is also plowable in the winter. One of the negatives is artificial turf gets hot in summer.

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved by Mrs. Kenney, seconded by Mr. Philips, all voting "Aye" to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. None opposed. Motion approved 3-0.

---

DAVID G. KRAYNIK  
SECRETARY-TREASURER/  
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

rap  
Minutes Approved:  
Minutes Entered: