Jim Thorpe Borough Council
November 20, 2024
Budget Work Session Meeting

Meeting called to order at 6:32 p.m. by President Gregory Strubinger with the pledge of allegiance and moment of silence for the armed forces, first responders and their families.

Roll Call of Members

Police Chief Schatz-absent	Mayor Cinicola-absent	Mike Yeastedt
Borough Manager Sterner	Connor Rodgers-absent	Ted LaRizzio
Borough Secretary Klotz	Tom Chapman-absent	Sydney Wernett
Solicitor Nanovic-absent	Joanne Klitsch	Greg Strubinger

Public Comment
NONE

Proposed 2025 Budget
Greg Strubinger explained Borough Council held Executive Session before tonight's meeting regarding personnel matters. Currently, there are no other additional Budget Meetings scheduled, but it can be advertised for if needed.

General Fund – Greg Strubinger asked about a loan that is ending on December 1, 2024 (maturing) for Memorial Hall. He questioned if it was for the roof. Manager Sterner confirmed that the loan was for the roof. Greg Strubinger explained the maturing loan frees up $44,000.00 in the General Fund, which frees up money for additional projects. He then asked about matching grant money; does it come out of the General Fund. Manager Sterner explained the Borough pays for the work up front out of the General Fund and then gets reimbursed. That money then goes back into the General Fund and becomes a wash. Greg Strubinger asked how much how much the Borough paid for Professional Traffic Control this year under 410.310 Professional Services. Manager Sterner explained it was paid for by the PMVB Grant which shows under 357.010 Carbon County Hotel Tax. Greg Strubinger reiterated that he doesn't feel the residents should pay for this expense and asked if it was known for sure PMVB would pay for this expense next year. Greg Strubinger asked about the amount budgeted under 410.301 K-9 Expenses. Manager Sterner explained that money goes to the County. Greg Strubinger asked about the barricades and fencing budget for under 410.750 Minor Purchases; a little under $5,000.00 was budgeted this year for them, why such a big difference? Manager Sterner explained the PMVB Grant covered the majority of the cost for the barricades. She explained a different kind of barricades were being looked into purchasing. She said Chief Schatz is looking into PEMA/FEMA Grants to help cover the costs. Manager Sterner explained the hours for the Zoning Officer were reduced down to 13 hours per week from the 20 hours per week originally budgeted for under line 414.131 Zoning Enforcement. This year, the Zoning Officer was budgeted to work 12 hours per week, so only one additional hour per week for 2025. Under 414.134 Property Maintenance Code Enforcement, it was dropped down to 2 hours per week. It was explained each was separated under 2 different lines to track it easier. Property Maintenance will be part of the Parking Enforcement Officer's duties. A total of 3 additional hours per week were added in 2025 between Zoning & Code Enforcement. Greg Strubinger asked if the Borough will be performing reactive enforcement. Manager Sterner said confirmed it would be reactive as that was what was discussed last week. Greg Strubinger asked if the Parking & Code Enforcement line is new. Manager Sterner explained it's not new, just separated for the budget. The current Parking Enforcement Officer is leaving to go into the Academy in January and will be returning once completed as a Part-Time Police Officer and Part-Time Code Enforcement Officer. Greg Strubinger asked if anything could be pulled from 430.313 Highways Engineer. Manager Sterner explained only construction could be pulled and Engineering should be kept in the Budget. Under 438.741 Major Improve – Paving, the roads listed (School Alley and Cherry Avenue), Manager Sterner explained the paving for these roads have not been definitively decided. The are not part of the Liquid Fuels roads, so they had to be pulled from the Liquid Fuels Budget. Greg Strubinger asked why there is such a large increase on line 448.300 Lehigh Canal Commission. Manager Sterner explained the Commission needs additional funding to help them. This year, they needed money for legal advice due to issues that arose during

their Canal Lock Project. Greg Strubinger asked how does the Borough know if the Committee legitimately needs this money. Secretary Klotz said the Borough's representative came to a meeting a few months ago and he openly stated the Committee has no money. Greg Strubinger asked if the Borough could request financial documents to show they need additional financial help. He then discussed the budgeting of money for the Kemmerer Park Stormwater under 454.450 Contracted Services. He asked what the status of the lease agreement is between the Borough and Kemmerer Park Association. Manager Sterner explained the lease with the Borough is good through 2026. Greg Strubinger said the Association had previously asked the Kemmerer family for financial assistance and asked if the Association could reach out to the family again for additional help. He explained the Borough should not put money into the park if the lease isn't going to be extended. Secretary Klotz asked about the removal of Comprehensive Plan/Ordinance Updates as needed under 492.040 Transfer to Capital Projects Fund. Planning Commission had talked about reviewing and updating the Comprehensive Plan. Manager Sterner said she would look to see if there was money put aside in this year's budget to carry over into next year to cover this. All other items Borough Council previously requested to be eliminated or reduced on the Budget was updated on this draft.

Sanitation Fund – Greg Strubinger asked if the School Street Swale under 436.371 Storm Drains is on the East Side of town. Mike Yeastedt explained yes, that the area of School Street in question is between 12th and 13th Streets. The inlets keep clogging.

Liquid Fuels – Manager Sterner explained $25,000.00 was removed out of paving and $25,000.00 was removed out of snow removal from General Fund and placed into Liquid Fuels. Greg Strubinger asked if the roads listed for the paving project would be looked at in the Spring to assess which ones are priority. Manager Sterner said they would be.

Sewer Fund – Manager Sterner explained the GIS Mapping under 427.660 Professional Fees/Legal was removed. This is a 3-year plan and in 2025, it will only be year 2 for the Water Department. Manhole and Main Spot Repairs was reduced under 427.610 General Construction Contracts. 427.703 New Equipment was reduced. All other items Borough Council previously requested to be eliminated or reduced on the Budget was updated on this draft.

Water Fund – Manager Sterner explained the only change to this draft was including the GIS Utility Mapping under 448.450 Contracted Services System.

Manager Sterner explained everything Borough Council requested to be adjusted had been. The last item needing finalization is the Teamster's contract. Once finalized, then any adjustments that are needed, can be made. The Budget must be advertised ten days prior to adopting. The Budget can be adopted at the End of the Year Meeting.

Adjourn

MOTION by Mike Yeastedt, second by Joanne Klitsch to **adjourn the meeting and move into executive session for personnel.** There were no comments. Motion carries 5-0. The meeting ended at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Klotz
Borough Secretary