

**TOWNSHIP OF MAHWAH
BUDGET MEETING MINUTES
SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 2021**

The Meeting was called to order at 9:00AM by Council President May who read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement as prescribed by law. Notice was emailed to The Record and The Ridgewood News for Information Only on February 26, 2021 and advertised in The Record on Wednesday, March 2, 2021 stating this Meeting would be held via Zoom Audio/Video Conference on Saturday, March 6, 2021 at 9:00AM.

Notice of this Meeting is posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board. The Minutes of this Meeting will be available in the Municipal Clerk's Office once they are approved by the Township Council.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR VETERANS AND THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY

A Moment of Silence was observed for those who served and those who are serving in the military both here and abroad. It is because of their valor and bravery that we can hold meetings such as these.

Present: Councilmembers Ariemma, Bolan Ervin, Ferguson, May, Paz and Wong

Also present were Business Administrator Benjamin Kezmarsky, Chief Financial Officer Joseph Kovalcik and Clerical Assistant Carolyn George

PUBLIC PORTION

On a motion by Ervin, seconded by Paz, the Meeting was opened to the public at 9:05AM. All in favor. Motion carried.

On a motion by Ervin, seconded by Wong, the Meeting was closed to the public at 9:06AM. All in favor. Motion carried.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

May extended thanks to the Police Department for keeping the community safe always and especially during the most challenging year of 2020. May stated the Police Department is an integral part of Mahwah.

Chief Jaffe, Captain Blank, Captain Bussinelli and Lieutenant Chevron were in attendance to discuss the Police Department Budget.

Chief Jaffe extended thanks to Mayor, Council and Administration. Chief explained the challenges this year with the COVID Pandemic. He thanked all of the Police Officers and Non-Sworn Administration for a great job. Also, he thanked Mahwah Emergency Medical Services, Department of Public Works and the Fire Department for their help during this difficult time.

Chief Jaffe explained there are more new challenges ahead with new Legislature and continuing concerns of COVID-19. He is proud that the Police Department Budget has the ability to provide critical needs while affording a reduction of 6% in comparison to the 2020 Budget.

Chief Jaffe stated Lieutenant Blondin reported the 1033 Program received approximately \$427,000 in valued items to the Police Department in 2020. Some items were equipment to help with COVID-19 valued at \$150,000 not needed to be spent by the Department.

Chief Jaffe explained a Grant will be researched to obtain Body Cameras in the future. The Body Camera Maintenance Agreements may be funded by Forfeiture Funds. Business Administrator explained a Meeting will be held with the Police Department and Chief Financial Officer to discuss the funding of the Body Cameras, Maintenance Agreements and Storage.

Chief Jaffe stated H.R.21 Bill (Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program Authorization Act of 202) recently passed by the US House of Representatives sets to eliminate the 1033 Program. May was concerned and will discuss with Congressman Gottheimer in a future phone conversation.

Ervin asked if the Police Department needs any equipment for 2021. Chief Jaffe stated the Department is poised very well with equipment.

Ervin asked if Cameras would be necessary within Township Parks. Chief Jaffe stated the overall low statistics do not show Cameras are necessary. Also, the cost of the Cameras is not appropriate given the low statistics.

Ervin was concerned about the recent Cannabis Legislature and its effect on the Police Department. Chief Jaffe stated much of the Law will not be in effect until 2022. The State Committees are meeting to work out the Regulations. There are many questions and concerns needing answers from the State and County.

F01-205 Training and Seminars

Paz asked Chief Jaffe to explain the decrease. Chief Jaffe explained there was very little in-person training and will continue to be limited. Due to the current COVID limitations, the training is through Videos.

Paz asked if the School Resource Officer requires additional training with the new Cannabis Law. Chief Jaffe stated there will need to be new training and policies and the Board of Education will need to adapt with the changes. School Resource Officer and Mahwah Municipal Alliance will continue to work with and support the students.

F10-219 Miscellaneous

Paz asked what items are in this Category for the School Resource Officer. Chief Financial Officer stated this Category includes the FICA, Medical and Pension.

F04-101 Permanent Full-Time (Dispatchers)

Paz asked if the increases are a result of raises. Chief Jaffe stated yes. Dispatchers Salaries increased to retain their employment.

Ariemma thanked Chief Jaffe for the 6% Reduction in their Budget.

Ariemma asked for a breakdown of the Police Vehicles. Chief Jaffe will send information to her.

Ariemma asked the status of the four Police Vehicles being purchased in 2021. Chief Jaffe explained the Vehicles were already funded and passed through a Temporary Appropriations Resolution on January 21, 2021.

Wong extended thanks to the Police Department for their service to the Community throughout 2020 and the upcoming year.

Wong asked what Account is COVID related purchases. Chief Jaffe stated it was placed in the Central Account for 2020. Chief Financial Officer stated it is currently not in the 2021 Budget. He is awaiting direction for placement of the Account from the State. Chief Jaffe explained it could be within F01-202 Equipment.

Wong asked if the Police Department has everything they need at the current time. Chief Jaffe stated the Police Department is in a good place now and has enough equipment for COVID.

Wong asked the status of Body Cameras due to the upcoming State Mandate. Wong imagines the cost to implement and maintain the Body Cameras will include many Budget Accounts. Chief Jaffe stated it will be a Budget concern due to purchasing, maintenance, software and personnel as an example.

Wong asked how the Police Department is managing with the new Administrative Compliance Requirements from the State. Chief Jaffe explained the Police Department is staying current with all of the Compliances with the help of the two Captains. Also, this is possible with the addition last year of an Administrative Lieutenant.

Bolan extended thanks to the Chief and the Police Department for their hard work and service to the Township.

F08-101 Permanent Full-Time

Bolan asked Chief Jaffe to explain the Crossing Guard change from Permanent Part-Time to Permanent Full-Time. Chief Jaffe explained the move was due to keep the Crossing Guards Salary in line with the Average Rate around the County. There are 5 Primary Crossing Guards and Per Diem Crossing Guards on an On Call List.

May asked why the movement from Permanent to Full Time Item. Chief Financial Officer explained the Classification is more a Full Time Status.

F40-219 Miscellaneous D.A.R.E. Expenses

Bolan asked the status of the D.A.R.E. Program. Chief Jaffe explained D.A.R.E. is now entitled L.E.A.D. The Police Department is still continuing the Program in addition to the Mahwah Municipal Alliance (MMA). Chief Financial Officer the D.A.R.E. Item is reflected as such because there is a Mandatory Match required for the Mahwah Municipal Alliance Grant.

Ferguson asked Chief Jaffe if there is a need for more workforce within the Police Department. Chief Jaffe stated an Administrative Sergeant, one to two additional Police Officers due to the new construction within the Township and a Traffic Unit to help with Traffic Safety as a result of the decriminalization of Cannabis would be very beneficial to the Department. These additional employees would help with scheduling of Officers and new challenges in the future.

Ferguson added even one additional Officer may decrease the amount of Overtime within the Department. Chief Jaffe agreed.

F03-1-6 Outside Detail

Ferguson wondered why there is no money budgeted for this Line Item. Chief Jaffe explained this Item is now being reimbursed by an Outside Vendor. The new Vendor's Software Program

traces the use of Outside Contracting. The Vendor now pays the Police Officer directly. Chief Financial Officer explained this Line Item was left in to show it was no longer needed.

Ferguson asked if the Police Department would require a Law Enforcement Social Worker. Chief Jaffe explained Bergen County has one on staff. He believes it would be better suited for the Township to employ one in conjunction with the Health and/or Senior Center Departments.

F03-101 Permanent Full Time

May asked for Clarification regarding the increase in this Line Item. Chief Financial Officer explained it is for Cash Flow purposes. There are a number of Police Officers retiring with payouts. Also, it is anticipated new Police Officers will be employed.

Ferguson believes since the 2021 Budget came in below 6%, this year's Budget may be a good opportunity to add another Police Department Employee.

F30-219 Miscellaneous Police Cars

Ferguson asked if any of the \$175,000 in this Line Item can be Capitalized. Chief Financial Officer explained it cannot because the Useful Life of Police Vehicles is than 5 years.

May asked how many Police Officers are within the Department. Chief Jaffe explained there are 51 currently in the Building. Two other Police Officer positions will be filled within the upcoming months bringing the total to 53.

May asked if there are any projected retirements for 2021. Chief Jaffe stated there are two possible retirements in September and another later in the Fall 2021.

May asked the status of the Reports being submitted to the Attorney General regarding the Parks Ordinance. Chief Jaffe stated the Fourth Quarter of 2020 is completed. The Township is currently in compliance with 2021.

May thanked the Chief and Captains for the increased communication with the Administration.

C06-234 Repairs and Maintenance – 1033 Program

May asked if there is enough budgeted for this Line Item. Chief Jaffe stated yes.

C06-236 Repairs and Maintenance – Police

May asked if the four new Police Vehicles could be retrofitted by the Department of Public Works. Chief Jaffe stated there is too much specific wiring involved so the Vehicles are sent out for the labor-intensive elaborate work.

May asked if Routine Maintenance could be performed by the Department of Public Works. Chief Jaffe stated possibly regular oil changes. Chief Financial Officer stated there is not enough training to repair or maintain the technical areas of the Police Vehicles. In addition, it is difficult to keep parts on hand. The Township goes out to Bid for this item due to the specialty of the repairs. Chief Jaffe stated the turnaround time for an oil change is 30 minutes at the current Vendor.

CAPITAL BUDGET

May asked the status of the 911 Phone System 2-3 Year Plan listed as Capital Projects. Captain Blank stated this Item was a Capital Improvement in 2018-2019. It will be closed out this year.

There is one radio to be updated to communicate with Bergen County. Chief Financial Officer stated it was not added to Capital Budget.

ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE AND CENTRAL ACCOUNTS

May stated Councilmember Ferguson requested this portion be added to the Budget Meeting so he will begin with his questions.

B02-103 Office Business Administration Temporary Part-Time

Ferguson asked for clarification regarding the increase in this Line Item. Chief Financial Officer explained the increase is due to his classification of different positions. There is no significant increase from 2020.

B02-204 Professional Services

Ferguson asked for clarification regarding the increase. Business Administrator indicated this increase is to hire a Consultant to gather and formulate communication for the entire Township including Press Releases, Newsletters, and other means of communicating not just through Social Media to the public.

May asked if a Grant Writer could be included within this Line Item. Business Administrator will review the placement in this Line Item.

B02-214 Rental/Maintenance Agreements

Ferguson asked for clarification regarding the amount in this Line Item. Chief Financial Officer stated the Township migrated to a new phone system with charges from last year.

B30-284 Township Attorney

Ferguson asked for clarification regarding the increase in this Line Item. Business Administrator stated there is a slight increase for the new Township Attorney.

B30-286 Special Counsel/Expert Witness

Ferguson asked why there is a significant increase in this Line Item. Business Administrator believes this is an accurate estimate due to future redevelopment within the Township.

Capital Budget for Finance

Ferguson asked why the items are very generic in this area. Chief Financial Officer explained previous Items were very specific. He stated these items include enhancements in Infrastructures to be more efficient through updating software and hardware for the Township.

Business Administrator added Police Department Computers and the Information Technology has been added to this area. It is more cost efficient to be in this location rather than in an Operating Budget.

B61-204 Professional Services

Ferguson asked why this Line Item is for the Bond Counsel. Chief Financial Officer stated the previous Budgets would bill the Bond Counsel to the actual Ordinance. He explained adding this Line Item allows him to manage it more efficiently.

Wong asked if Chief Financial Officer or Administration knows other Municipalities who have upgraded their Finance Systems. Chief Financial Officer stated there are six or seven different software option packages. He believes the Software package is User Friendly and robust.

Bolan asked Chief Financial Officer to provide a real-life estimate of savings in price to change the finance process.

Central Telephone Accounts

May asked what is SpectraTel in the Telephone Accounts. Chief Financial Officer stated SpectraTel is for the Police Department.

May would like to see if there is a savings with the Township Cell Phones for the various Departments.

Central Printing and Binding Accounts

Ferguson would like to see this area merged because many Departments do not use this Account. He said the Newsletters and Brochures are very important but need to consolidate the Account.

Chief Financial Officer stated the Township can centralize the Utility Accounts going forward. There will be other Accounts that can be consolidated with the new Finance System.

Central Account: Contingent

Ferguson asked for clarification regarding this Account. Chief Financial Officer stated this is for any Account that has a cost that could not be reasonably estimated at the time of preparing the Budget.

R01-219 Miscellaneous P.E.R.S.

Paz asked for clarification regarding this Line Item. Chief Financial Officer stated this is the Pension.

O90-254 Tax Collection

May asked if this Line Item requires an increase due to the Postage Rate increase. Chief Financial Officer stated he can transfer funds from Finance into the Tax Collection Account if necessary.

May suggested Beautification Committee Chair attend the next March 20, 2021 Budget Meeting when the Department of Public Works will be present.

On a motion by Paz, seconded by Wong, the Meeting was adjourned at 3:48PM. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathrine G. Coviello, RMC/CMC/MMC
Municipal Clerk