

Borough of Somerset Council Special Meeting December 12, 2016 5:30 p.m.

Meeting was called to order by President Ruby Miller, opening with recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call

Council Members Present: Ruby Miller; Fred Rosemeyer; Judy Pyle; Pam Ream; Sue Opp; Steve Shaulis; Gary Thomas and Scott Walker, Mayor.

Also present were the following: Borough Manager Michele Enos; Director of Finance Brett Peters; Police Chief Randy Cox; Public Works Director George Svirsko; and Solicitor James Cascio.

Approval of Previous Council Meeting Minutes

There was no approval of previous council meeting minutes.

Award of Bids

There was no award of bids.

General Public Comments

There were no general public comments registered.

Administrative Business

Communications – There were no communications.

Policy Agenda

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

- (a) PA Borough Code – Solicitor Cascio reviews and explains the duties and responsibilities outlined in Section 1309 of the PA Borough Code which covers Revision and Completion of the Municipal Budget. Discussion also included addressing Capital Equipment.

(b) Tax Rate Ordinance – Discussion of a proposed ½ mill tax increase.

Council is considering a plan to acquire capital equipment for the year 2017, which would probably require a ½ mill tax increase.

The long term plan may be to consider putting money away to fund depreciation, when you have capital expenditures and other things when they arise.

Mr. Cascio stated that Council needs to specify to management if they don't want to raise taxes, and the direction that will be needed on what not to do.

Ms. Enos mentioned that she and Mr. Reilly plan to go to each Borough facility starting in January 2017 to make an analysis of the infrastructure. This will determine what is a priority, and how much it will cost.

Discussions were also held about how the tax rate increase will affect the public's reaction, and the possible negative coverage in the newspaper.

Mrs. Miller also suggested that the public should be told what the Borough's needs are so they will understand why this will entail a necessary tax increase if Council decides to vote on a tax increase.

It was discussed that the Tax Ordinance will be voted on by the Borough Council on December 19, 2017.

Mr. Peters mentioned if no increase in millage taxes is voted upon, there will be no capital, and everything will remain the same. He stated, to have a balanced budget, you have to have your current revenues match your current expenses.

(c) Water Rate Ordinance – Discussion of a proposed water rate increase.

It was brought out that the increase in the water rate would not change the General Fund Budget. The final decision, whether to raise the increase in the water rate, will be voted upon at the next Council Meeting on December 19, 2017. The need for the increase in water rates was attributed to the County increasing the rates to customers of the Que System; Hickory Hill Tank Replacement; and Capital Infrastructure improvements to the Laurel Hill Filtration Plant.

Executive Session

Council President Miller called for an Executive Session.

Adjournment

President of Council adjourned the meeting

Motion Unanimously Carried
7: 15 p.m.

Michele A Enos, Borough Secretary