

**CUMRU TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING**

OCTOBER 29, 2020

The Special Meeting of the Cumru Township Board of Commissioners was called to order by President William B. Miller at 5:00 p.m. Other Commissioners in attendance were Vice President Ruth A. O'Leary, David J. Batdorf, Sam Kalbach, and Chip Bilger. Also attending were Solicitor Michael A. Setley, Chief of Police Madison Winchester, Superintendent of Public Works Robert McNichols, Jr., Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Michael Yost, Business/Personnel Administrator Peggy A. Carpenter, and Manager Jeanne E. Johnston.

Pledge to the Flag.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

Todd Sheridan of TowerDirect informed the Board that his agency would now be providing ambulance transportation for Tower Health. TowerDirect is merging with SBREMS. The largest portion, 33%, of SBREMS services are provided to Cumru Township. TowerDirect wants to continue services as they are provided by SBREMS today, including the same three locations. Non-emergency transports are a separate program.

A draft agreement had been submitted. The membership subsidy is now \$180,000 per year. Under the draft agreement, the membership subsidy would be \$25/household or \$165,000 per year. All redline changes from the Township solicitor were accepted, including a continuation of the current method of reporting.

Mrs. O'Leary asked if there will be a contract with all of the municipalities in SBREMS' service area. Mr. Sheridan stated that a draft contract was sent to the membership municipalities. An offer to purchase membership is being made to other municipalities.

Mr. Sheridan requested that a Commissioner join the TowerDirect Board. There would be no non-disclosure agreement, but some HIPAA restrictions. Mr. Miller named Mr. Kalbach as the Commissioner Liaison.

Tim Musser, who was in attendance, will be the Assistant Manager.

**ON MOTION OF MR. BILGER, SECOND OF MR. BATDORF, A UNANIMOUS VOTE
AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF THE AGREEMENT WITH TOWERDIRECT FOR
AMBULANCE SERVICES.**

2021 BUDGET

General Fund

Ms. Johnston reviewed several potential cuts to the draft general fund budget. The Board agreed that staff cuts were not appropriate. The Board directed cuts as follows:

- 1) The storm sewer construction line item should be reduced to \$100,000. The public works liaisons should "triage" the projects to be completed. Mr. McNichols stated that the Hampshire Rd. culvert replacement project is the most urgent.
- 2) The cost of the snow blower attachment (\$10,000) should be deleted. Mr. McNichols informed the Board that such an attachment will be more useful after the fire station is constructed, in order to more quickly clear the aprons for firetruck ingress/egress.
- 3) The Board directed that both pieces of equipment to be purchased in 2021, a backhoe and a mower, should be leased. Estimates for the lease payments should be substituted for the appropriate capital transfer line items, including 15% of the mower from the sewer fund since it was used for mowing certain sewer rights of way.

Ms. Johnston informed the Board that the cuts would improve the projected 2021 end of year carry over, but it was still projected to be under \$4 MM. However, the estimated carry over still met the policy threshold established in 2019 of at least \$3.5 MM. She anticipated a need to increase general fund millage for 2022 in order to meet capital needs. The Board could raise the general fund millage a small amount this year or could wait until formulation of the 2022 budget to determine the exact amount needed. She asked for the current Board's policy on this matter. Different Boards have approached taxation in a variety of ways.

Mr. Kalbach stated that he did not want to increase taxes unless absolutely necessary and did not favor increasing them in 2021.

The Board determined that the Animal Rescue League and Mifflin Community Library allocations would continue. The amount budgeted for the mix shed reconstruction was an estimate only.

Mr. Bilger stated that, looking at the end of year budget report for 2019, he believed there was a lot of fluff in the budget that year because revenue was higher and expenses were lower than budgeted. Ms. Johnston informed the Board that the biggest source of unanticipated revenue was the healthcare refund. Mrs. O'Leary confirmed that the Board did not budget the healthcare refund in previous years because the Township never knows the amount of the refund ahead of receipt. Mr. Bilger suggested budgeting some amount for it. Mrs. Carpenter suggested a conservative amount of \$60,000 in the general fund and the appropriate proportion in the other funds. The Board agreed. With respect to expenses, Ms. Johnston stated that the greatest single reason for lower 2019 expenses was a delay in hiring.

Mr. Bilger asked about a steep increase in capital spending in 2018 and 2019. Ms. Johnston informed the Board that several critical infrastructure projects were done in those two years: the Poplar Neck Bridge (approx. \$1 MM), Ledgerrock Rd. (approx. \$1 MM), and the Montrose Blvd. culvert (approx. \$525,000).

Ms. Johnston stated that the Township does not have an operating deficit. The question is the amount of funding available for capital projects.

ON MOTION OF MR. KALBACH, SECOND OF MR. BATDORF, A UNANIMOUS VOTE AUTHORIZING THE MANAGER TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET CONSISTENT WITH TONIGHT'S DISCUSSION AND DETERMINING THAT THERE WOULD BE NO GENERAL FUND TAX INCREASE IN 2021.

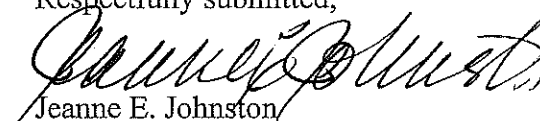
CORRESPONDENCE

Meeting advertised in the Reading Eagle on 10/4/2020.

ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION OF MR. BATDORF, SECOND OF MR. KALBACH, A UNANIMOUS VOTE ADJOURNING THE MEETING AT 6:39 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeanne E. Johnston
Assistant Secretary/Manager