

BURGESS AND COMMISSIONERS OF MIDDLETOWN MARYLAND

TOWN WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

TOWN MEETING

May 23, 2022

The meeting of the Burgess and Commissioners of Middletown was called to order on May 23, 2022, by Burgess Pro Tempore Falcinelli at 6:30 p.m. Present were Commissioners Kevin Stottlemeyer, Christopher Goodman, and Rick Dietrick.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Community Groups - The Burgess and Commissioners heard the community groups requests for their respective FY23 budgets. The community groups requests totaled \$30,800.00. The Main Street Program Manager provided a summary of the program's expenses from the past year. The summary showed that 5% of Main Street's total budget went to organizational expenses and 95% was spent on programming and business promotion and support.

FY2023 Operating Funds: State law requires that the general fund budget must be passed by July 1st of each year.

- **General Fund** - State law requires that the general fund budget must be passed by July 1st of each year. The Town Board will have to approve the advertising of this proposed budget this evening so that the required advertising can take place before the budget is voted on in June. The proposed General Fund operating fund was reviewed. There is no change in the tax rate. This draft does not reflect any salary increases. There will be budget adjustments when salaries are determined. The FY23 revenue projected is \$3.76 million. Projected FY23 expenses total \$3.36 million. This leaves a surplus of \$397,181.00, which will be diverted to fund General CIP projects.
- **Water & Sewer Enterprise Fund** - The proposed Water & Sewer (WS) operating fund was reviewed. There is no planned water/sewer rate increase. This draft does not include any salary increases for employees. There will be budget adjustments when salaries are determined. The FY23 revenue projected is \$1.36 million. Projected FY23 expenses total \$1.19 million. This leaves a surplus of \$166,356.00, which will be used to fund the WS Superintendent position and another WS operator position.

The Town Board recognizes that costs for materials have been increasing. They will look at alternatives to address these increases which could include a water/sewer rate increase and an increase in the Capital Improvement fee. They asked the Town Administrator to provide examples of the budget with a 1%, 3% and 5% increase.

The Town Board agreed by consensus to proceed with the advertising of the General Fund and the Water & Sewer Enterprise Fund.

FY2023 – FY2027 Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

- **General Fund** – The proposed General Fund CIP was reviewed. There is a projected General Fund CIP surplus in FY23, FY24 and FY25, after which there is a projected deficit. The Circuit Rider is tasked with procuring other possible sources of funding for projects. The Federal infrastructure bill has given money to the States. The Town will have to access those monies through State programs. It was discussed that the Town should have a dedicated funding source in the budget. This will be a discussion over the next year.

- **Water & Sewer Enterprise Fund** - The initial draft of the Water & Sewer CIP fund was reviewed line by line. Most will be funded using the ARPA monies. This draft budget is a healthy budget due to the ARPA funding. The Town Board discussed developing a plan to address future project funding so as not to rely on development monies.

The Town Board agreed by consensus to proceed with the advertising of the General Fund CIP and the Water & Sewer CIP.

The budget workshop concluded at 7:10PM.

PERSONAL REQUESTS FOR AGENDA: None.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- **Town Meeting Minutes**
 - *May 5, 2022 – Town Workshop*
 - *May 9, 2022 – Town Meeting*

Motion: Commissioner Goodman motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Dietrick. Motion approved (4-0).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Amendments to Hydrant Meter Policy – The Town’s Hydrant Meter Leasing Policy is out of date. The Town Office Manager reviewed the policy and recommended several updates which would both update the policy and keep it from having to be updated so frequently in the future. The Hydrant Meter Leasing form has also been updated to include the question(s) if chemicals will be used in conjunction with the hydrant meter, and if yes, what those chemicals are. Hydrant meters leasing/rentals are primarily used by contractors working with developers. Town staff will attach the rented hydrant meter to a specific hydrant and lock it in place for the developer.

Motion: Commissioner Stottlemeyer motioned to approve the amendments to the Town’s hydrant meter policy and form as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Goodman. Motion approved (4-0).

Resolution 22-03 – Rescinding Resolution 20-03 – The Town Board passed several emergency resolutions during the Covid pandemic. Since the pandemic is winding down, the Town Board is reviewing the need to still have these resolutions in place. The Town Attorney reviewed the 4 emergency resolutions in place and has recommended that the Town rescind emergency resolution 20-03 (Implementing the Town Emergency Management Plan) as it is no longer necessary. Resolution 22-03 would rescind Resolution 20-03.

Motion: Commissioner Dietrick motioned to approve Resolution 22-03 to rescind Resolution 20-03 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Goodman. Motion approved (4-0).

Resolution 22-04 – Rescinding Resolution 20-04 – The Town Board passed several emergency resolutions during the Covid pandemic. Since the pandemic is winding down, the Town Board is reviewing the need to still have these resolutions in place. The Town Attorney reviewed the 4 emergency resolutions in place and has recommended that the Town rescind resolution 20-04 (Authorizing fitness/dance/yoga businesses to use Town parks to comply with social distancing guidelines.) as it is no longer necessary. Resolution 22-04 would rescind Resolution 20-04.

Motion: Commissioner Goodman motioned to approve Resolution 22-04 to rescind Resolution 20-04 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Goodman. Motion approved (4-0).

NEW BUSINESS:

Employee Retention Payments with Budget Amendments –The Town Board values its employees. To show how much staff is valued the Board is recommending an immediate employee retention payment of \$2000 be paid to each employee at the next payroll with an additional \$1000 paid to each employee in June, July, and August 2022. In addition, funds will be set aside for an Employee Incentive Program. These monies will be used by supervisors to immediately recognize employees who have gone above and beyond in their position in some way. Details for this program have yet to be determined. These employee retention bonuses, and the employee incentive program will be paid using ARPA funds and total \$100,000. This will require a budget amendment (No. 22-01) to reclassify the Scada Phase I&II, the Booster Station Roof, and the EWWTP Sludge Removal from the ARPA budget to the W/S CIP.

The Town Board asked the town employees present if they had any comments, or thoughts on the situation. JR Hawkins stated that the consensus is that much of what happens and what the staff does is lost before it gets to the Town Board. One of the challenges of having a small staff is that when a group of employees is working on a project and an emergency occurs, other staff are then pulled from what they are doing to address the emergency, or staff is split to address it. This is not a rarity; it is occurring more frequently. Town Board members may not be aware of the multiple hats staff wear daily. Town employees have a team atmosphere that work together to get things done. The town has quality employees and should not lose them. The Town Board is gathering and reviewing a variety of information to determine appropriate salaries for staff. The Board wants to retain and pay its employees what they are worth.

Motion: Commissioner Stottlemeyer motioned to approve the employee retention payments (\$73,750) and funds being set aside for an Employee Incentive Program (\$26,250) for a total of \$100,000. Seconded by Commissioner Dietrick. Motion approved (4-0).

Budget Amendment No. 22-01 – To fund the employee retention payments the Town will reclass the Scada Phase II&III, Booster Station Roof Replacement/Building Painting and EWWTP Sludge Removal projects from the FY22 ARP Budget to the Water and Sewer FY22 CIP Budget. This will reduce the budgeted FY22 W/S CIP budget from \$639,866 to \$593,866.

Motion: Commissioner Goodman motioned to approve Budget Amendment No. 22-01 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Dietrick. Motion approved (4-0).

Appointment of Board of Appeals Member – Daphne Gabb is up for reappointment on the Middletown Board of Appeals. She has agreed to another term.

Motion: Commissioner Goodman motioned to Daphne Gabb to another term on the Middletown Board of Appeals. Seconded by Commissioner Stottlemeyer. Motion approved (4-0).

Frederick Goes Purple – September Substance Abuse and Recovery Month – This is a grass roots initiative within the county to reduce substance abuse related deaths and overdoses and supports those in addiction recovery and their families. This observance will occur during the month of September (National Recovery Month). The purple light bulbs will be installed at the Municipal Center. Everyone is encouraged to wear purple every Friday to bring awareness and understanding of mental health and substance abuse disorders, and to celebrate those living in recovery.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

SHA will be installing rectangular rapid flashing beacons at both Cone Branch Drive & Lombardy AND Eastern Circle & North Pointe Terrace. They are working to find funding to be able to install these this summer.

Since the weather is getting warmer residents are reminded to make sure they close their garage doors at night and to lock their doors and their car doors.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- *Memorial Day Ice Cream Social – Saturday, May 28, 2022 – 11:00AM -2:00PM at Memorial Park*
- *Memorial Day Commemoration – Monday, May 30, 2022 – 1:00PM at Middletown War Memorial*
- *Movie Night in the Park – Friday, June 3, 2022 at Remsberg Park*
- *Vintage Vehicles in the Valley – Saturday, June 11, 2022 along West Green Street*

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Alberghini,
Office Manager