

Upper Mount Bethel Township
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UPPER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS BUDGET
2023 BUDGET ADOPTION
END OF YEAR MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2022 – 5:00 PM

*This meeting was held in person and live streamed through the Upper Mount Bethel Township Facebook page.

I.

Chairman Pinter called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

In attendance were Chairman Pinter, Supervisor Due, Supervisor Friedman, Supervisor Bermingham, Supervisor Teel, and Township Manager Nelson. Solicitor Karasek arrived at 5:15 pm.

II.

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Chairman Pinter amended the agenda, adding to Section IV. New Business, item #4, Remaining 2022 Invoices.

MOTION by Supervisor Due to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Supervisor Teel. Vote: 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mark Mezger-Scenic Ct, commented on the 2023 Budget and stated there appears to be some errors in the calculations. The proposed expenses presented as \$4,388,723, his calculations come to \$4,295,573, a difference of \$93,150. Mark stated the categories listed in the budget lack definition. Chairman Pinter stated the numbers are calculated through our Freedom Systems, not excel.

Lisa Hoagland, Lake Minsi Dr., commented on the size of the new garbage cans and the cost vs the service.

Marietta Knopp, Sunrise Blvd. commented on receiving a senior discount on the garbage. There was a discussion on the bidding process, contract, costs, size of toters, and senior discounts.

Denise Baarada, River Rd., commented on the garbage service, dumpster services for seniors, opting out, and alternate ways the Township can raise revenue. Denise suggested selling Marshfield Dr. to RPL to provide income for the Township. Solicitor Karasek responded to the question regarding opting out of garbage service, stating the Township has an Ordinance that states all residents must comply with the collection fee.

Tom Farrell, Potomac St., asked what the percentage of past due garbage bills are and what the process of recovering those bills.

Jay Parr, River Rd., commented on legislative raises, residents being responsible for their own garbage, rotating fleet, and renting to own equipment.

Supervisor Bermingham stated the budget for next year should start in March/April and to include the residents.

Eleanor Shelton, Heiden Rd., commented on the recycle program. Manager Nelson stated he is working on different ideas for recycling programs.

Fran Visicaro, N. Delaware Dr., commented on contaminated recycle and do we receive any credit from Waste Management.

Resident, River Rd., commented on damaged cans, locating the budget online, the tax increase as well as the garbage increase, the option of opting out, and the process of changing the Ordinance.

Judy Henckel, Robin Hood Rd., commented on the amount of garbage generated, and past due garbage fees increasing. Judy suggested the toters having bar codes to determine who/how much garbage/recycle is generated by, and that could determine what they pay.

III.

FINAL 2023 BUDGET ADOPTION

Chairman Pinter discussed the 2023 Budget. Inflation/stagflation. Chairman Pinter stated he does not want to take the ARPA funds back from the Fire Companies, he does not want to get a loan from RPL, these are just band aids. The millage has not been raised since 2014. Costs are rising, interest rates rising, unforeseen circumstances (rockfall on Riverton Rd). Supervisor Teel expressed his concerns for the senior citizens and would like to see taxes reduced for senior citizens. Chairman Pinter stated any increase will still require cuts somewhere. Steve Ott stated that most of the tax goes towards the roads. Supervisor Bermingham suggests taking time to go through the budget line by line. MOTION by Supervisor Friedman for the Fire Companies to keep the monies allocated to them, to increase the tax 1 mil, scrutinize the budget, and have a 30-day grace period to make any amendments, seconded by Supervisor Bermingham.

Chairman Pinter called for a 5-minute recess. Chairman Pinter stated there was a motion on the table and it was seconded. There was a discussion on whether we can re-open the budget, due to a municipal election. Solicitor Karasek will do some research. Charles Smith commented on avoiding a deficit. Solicitor Karasek stated that if the budget does get reopened, there are stipulations. Chairman Pinter called for a vote. Supervisor Friedman rescinded his motion. **MOTION** by Chairman Pinter for the Fire Companies to keep the monies allocated to them and to increase the tax 2 mil, seconded, seconded by Supervisor Teel. Vote: 4-1. Supervisor Bermingham voting no.

IV.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Review Emergency Management Procedures-Manager Nelson discussed the emergency management procedures.
2. After Hour Emergencies-previously discussed.
3. State Ethics Investigation-Supervisor Friedman read a letter from Attorney Spadoni regarding the pending State Ethics Investigation. The Township's insurance coverage includes Error and Omissions, which would pay Attorney fees. Attorney Karasek will contact Brown & Brown Insurance to ask about the error and omissions coverage, at no charge to the Township. Supervisor Teel asked the attached letter from Attorney Spadoni be part of the official record.
4. Remaining 2022 Invoices-Manager Nelson read off the remaining invoices. **MOTION** by Supervisor Teel to pay the bills in the amount of \$274330.23, seconded by Supervisor Due.

V.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Supervisor Teel to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 5-0.

Christopher T. Spadoni
Attorney at Law

November 23, 2022
File No. 2022-5

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RECEIVED

NOV 28 2022

Dear Upper Mt. Bethel Township Supervisors:

The undersigned has been retained to represent Supervisor David F. Friedman, II before the State Ethics Commission.

The allegation improperly sets forth that Supervisor Friedman used the authority of his public office by participating in deliberations and voting.

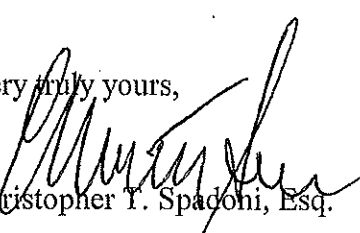
The purpose of this correspondence is to advise as to my representation and to request payment of the legal fees and expenses incurred by Supervisor Friedman before the State Ethics Commission.

Be advised that Mr. Friedman has executed a Fee Agreement employing the undersigned as counsel at an hourly rate of \$300.00 per hour. I request that this matter be listed on the next available Agenda before the Board of Supervisors for consideration.

I am forwarding a copy of this correspondence to Township Solicitor Ronold Karasek, Esq. and please advise as to this matter being considered by the Board. Should questions arise or further information be required, please contact the undersigned.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,


Christopher T. Spadoni, Esq.

CTS: ks

cc: Ronold Karasek, Esq.
David F. Friedman, II

Comments

- I have reviewed the two budget sheets provided to the public regarding the UMBT Budget request for 2023. I would like to make the following comments
- First it is my hope that the process in which this budget request was prepared gets briefed to the community so that we can understand how the figures were determined.
- Second, I would like to point out what might be errors in the calculations:
 - Proposed 2023 expenses presented as \$4,388,723. Adding the numbers in the column comes to \$4,295,573. [Δ =difference of \$93,150.]
 - According to a letter received from PenDoT, UMBT received in 2022 \$118,320 for 28 miles of road and for liquid fuels \$452,686.15. These revenues are not listed on the sheet and it is not clear what line items in the 2023 budget request these revenues are allocated.
- Third, the categories listed in the budget lack definition which makes this document very difficult to analyze critically.
 - Several categories change budget amounts significantly beyond which can be explained by inflation. I have a spread sheet that indicates the % change for each line item.
- Last, this budget contains no line item for matching funds to obtain future grants. There are many expense items that can be adjusted and a line by line review in a full public forum.