

**SOUTH STRABANE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS BUDGET MEETING**

October 28, 2021

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The October 28, 2021 Budget Meeting of the South Strabane Township Board of Supervisors (“Board”) came to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Mae C. Reynolds Meeting Room of the Municipal Building (550 Washington Road, Washington, PA 15301).

The following were present:

Board of Supervisors	Bob Weber, Chair; Mark Murphy, Vice Chair; Bracken Burns; Russell Grego; and Richard Luketich
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Absent	None
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Also Present	Township Manager Brandon Stanick; Assistant to the Township Manager Jim Sutter; Code Enforcement/Building Official Scott Heckman; and Finance/HR Analyst Marie Coffman
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2. PUBLIC COMMENT

The Township Board of Supervisors allocates a period of time during this item for those individuals who would like the opportunity to address the Board of Supervisors on any matter. Each person addressing the Board of Supervisors is asked to limit their comments to a maximum of three (3) minutes.

There were no comments from the public.

3. REVIEW DEPARTMENT EXPENSES FOR 2022

Building and Code Enforcement Department

Mr. Scott Heckman, Code Enforcement/Building Official, provided an overview of the Department’s request for 2022. He stated \$4,000 is requested for minor equipment, an increase from the \$2,285 approved in 2021. This is due to the need for the new Code Enforcement hire to have a computer. Also, additional display racks for building and construction plan sets are being contemplated.

An extensive discussion on vehicles for the Building Department ensued. With a new hire anticipated to begin in early 2022 and the recently retired Jim Barnes working in a part-time capacity, there is the need for the Department to obtain a new vehicle. A new Ford Escape in the amount of \$28,500 is proposed. The Board expressed its support for the Building Department to have a new vehicle.

Mr. Heckman discussed Meetings, Conferences and Continuing Education. The overall request is in the amount of \$3,000, the same amount approved for the 2021 budget. Mr. Heckman stated it is his goal to obtain all certifications to obtain the level of Master Code Official.

Mr. Heckman advised the line item referring to Legal Services for Building Code Comprehensive Review. Mr. Heckman summarized this will assist in the Township's review and local amendments to the updated Building Code. Mr. Stanick stated this would be a process would seek to use an advisory board to review the current standards of the International Code Council ("ICC") Building Codes and see if there are different or better ways the Township would like to regulate construction in the Township. This body would provide recommendations on potentially amending the Code.

The discussion concluded with Mr. Stanick advising of the recruitment process for the new Code Enforcement position hire before the end of year.

Public Works Department

Mr. Russell Grego, Public Works Director, provided an overview of the Department's request for 2022. He stated the Supplies line-item request is increasing to \$13,000 from \$10,000 due to supply chain issues and the resultant price increases. He stated the \$6,000 amount for Uniforms, the same as what was approved for 2021, is fixed by the contract with the union. Similarly, the request for fuel is increased to \$33,000 from \$30,000 due to elevated gas prices. Mr. Grego stated he is requesting \$25,000 for Building Utilities and Maintenance, a decrease from the \$32,000 amount approved for 2021. This smaller amount is due to the less expensive cleaning services.

Mr. Grego stated he is requesting \$40,000 for Vehicle Repairs and Maintenance, an increase from the \$33,500 that was approved for 2021. This increase is because this can be very difficult to predict.

Mr. Grego reviewed his capital requests for 2022 noting the following:

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| • Ford 600 Truck/Bed/Plow/Spreader/Hydraulics | \$106,818.00 |
| • Bobcat-E60 R2-Series Compact Excavator | \$67,792.00 |
| • Electric and Garage Door Openers in Cold Storage Garage | \$10,000.00 |
| • Toro 7500D 60" Z-Turn Mower | \$10,000.00 |
| • Green Space – 253 Zediker Station Rd. – Split Rail Fence & Landscaping | \$3,000.00 |
| • 440' Split Rail Fence, 6 Maple Trees (8'-10' high), seed | \$3,000.00 |

The most significant request for Capital expenditures is for a new Ford 600 truck in the amount of \$106,818.00. Mr. Grego stated Truck #7 is due to be rotated out according to the replacement schedule. This truck has approximately 113,000 miles and is being used in the winter. This truck can be sold or kept, but it is due to be replaced. Mr. Grego stated the Bobcat excavator would be a new piece of equipment which has a variety of uses. Everything necessary for Phase I of the Community Park Master Plan can be accomplished by using this item. It is used for pipes and grading and is a common piece of equipment for similarly sized departments. Mr. Grego stated the Toro Zero-Turn Mower requested is not a priority, but the current one will need to be replaced soon. An extensive discussion ensued on the Department's capital requests for 2022.

Mr. Grego and Mr. Stanick presented the proposed budget for Parks and Recreation. Mr. Stanick stated \$25,000 is being requested for Parks and Recreation Administration, the same amount approved for in 2021. He stated there will be no request for Professional Services, a decrease from the \$22,000 approved in 2021, as the Community Park Master Plan has been completed. Mr. Grego stated he is requesting \$423,600 for Parks & Recreation Capital. The vast majority, totaling \$408,600, will go to completing Phase I of the Community Park Master Plan. He also stated he is requesting funds to add steel siding to the outside walls of the pavilion at Billy Bell Park and for the possible construction of a parking lot above Streater Park. A discussion concerning Streater Park ensued. Mr. Grego outlined specific amounts requested for each of the four Township parks, ranging from \$1,000 to \$6,000. A discussion on a potential future standalone Parks & Recreation Department ensued.

Mr. Grego concluded his overview by noting his request for \$2,080 to create a foreman position. This would cover the cost of a \$1/hour raise for this employee. The creation of this position would enable him to focus more on managerial and administrative tasks.

A discussion ensued on the Verizon Connect GPS system. There was the consensus the system is not performing well. It was the consensus of the Board to look for a new system.

Mr. Stanick stated Parks and Recreation will be a focus in 2022. He stated a need to have better policies on facility rentals and a new park usage policy. Discussion on the Public Works Department concluded with Mr. Grego stating a desire to undertake construction projects on Cameron Road due to its heavy traffic.

Administration

Mr. Stanick provided an overview of the Department's request for 2022. Earlier this year, the Township had changed banking service provider from Huntington to Washington Financial. This switch led to a significant reduction in the amount requested for this line-item, with the 2022 request being less than one-tenth what had been requested in 2021. Specifically, banking will cost \$250 in 2022 compared with the \$2,900 approved in 2021. Mr. Stanick noted the \$9,000 requested for Professional Auditing Services had been increased from \$8,500 in 2021. This increase in cost is due to the initial discount period provided by Cypher & Cypher ending.

Mr. Stanick reviewed General Liability insurance. Costs associated with legal services provided by the Township Solicitor, Labor Counsel and Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor have all ticked higher. Labor Counsel has increased due to ongoing negotiations with the fire union and upcoming negotiations with the police union. The Zoning Hearing Board solicitor costs have gone up due to the change to a new higher quality provider.

Mr. Stanick noted the Professional Services request was adjusted to \$40,000 from the \$28,989 approved in 2021. This is due to the desire to create a Fixed Asset Register so the Township can better understand the value of its property. Undertaking this project comes at the recommendation

of auditing services provider Cypher & Cypher and will help the Township move towards meeting Government Finance Officers Association (“GFOA”) requirements.

The costs associated with the engineering services provided by KLH Engineers, Inc. stayed the same from 2021 at \$65,000. Mr. Stanick noted \$25,000 had been approved in previous years for a Municipal Building Study, but this study has yet to be completed. The request for the same amount is in the budget for 2022. A discussion on the Township Municipal Building and undertaking the Municipal Building Study in question ensued.

Mr. Stanick noted the \$20,500 requested for Dye Tests is an increase from the \$16,000 approved in 2021. He stated this increase is a result of the robust housing market that is anticipated to continue. Discussion on Administration concluded with Mr. Stanick noting the requested amount for Animal Control Services has increased as a result of the current provider asking for a raise of \$50/ month to \$375/month

4. ADJOURNMENT

As no further business came before the Board, Mr. Luketich moved to adjourn the meeting. Chair Weber seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon J. Stanick
Township Manager