

Westfall Township, Matamoras, PA
October 17, 2022

The Westfall Township Board of Supervisors convened their first Budget Workshop on Monday, October 17, 2022 at 6:00 pm. The meeting was held at the Township Building on Delaware Drive and LaBarr Lane, Westfall Township.

Those present were Chairman, Jerry Dotey; Vice Chairman, Paul Schaldonat; Supervisors; Paul Fischer; Robert Llewellyn; and Secretary, Kaitlin Hildebrandt. Also present were Roadmaster Keith Rodriguez, Westfall Township Fire Department President, William Kofrel; Westfall Township Fire Department 2nd Assistant Chief, Kyle Innella; Emergency Management Coordinator, Mike Fischetta; Treasurer, Scott Myer; Raymond Banach ; Deborah Banach; Rollin Cook; John Dalton. No other members of the general public were present.

Supervisor Twiss was absent from the workshop.

The Board received a Draft of the 2023 Budget from Mr. Myer for review.

Proposed 2023 Highway Department Budget : Roadmaster Keith Rodriguez presented the proposed budget, which reflected the following:

- 1.) A three percent raise for the road crew
- 2.) A three percent raise for the roadmaster
- 3.) Overtime cannot be predicted, will be based on the amount of storms
- 4.) Gas and Diesel budgeted amount will remain the same
- 5.) Propane should be increased as there is no history on the heating costs due to the new building
- 6.) No large equipment purchases are anticipated to occur
- 7.) Most other expenses come out of liquid fuels
- 8.) Requesting that a code be added for equipment rentals

The Board did inquire if there were any road projects that needed to be completed, what on the new highway department building needed to be completed, and how the Township is currently stocked with salt and anti-skid. The road projects will be determined at a later date as they are typically paid for with liquid fuels, a few minor punch list items remain on the new garage and as of the meeting the Township is well stocked with salt and anti-skid, but the weather will determine how much will need to be purchase over the winter.

Proposed 2023 Westfall Fire Department Budget: Fire Department President William Kofrel presented the proposed budget which reflected the following:

- 1.) In 2022 the Fire Department spent \$207,245.15
- 2.) In 2022 the Fire Department received \$206,750.00
- 3.) In 2020 a new Brush Truck was purchased
- 4.) In 2023 renovations are planned to the Firehouse
- 5.) The cost of insurance is expected to rise due to personnel
- 6.) The cost of fuel and diesel has gone up exponentially
- 7.) The first EMT shift was to begin on Saturday, October 15th
- 8.) Cost at the Firehouse will rise due to the paid EMT's

The Board questioned if any new equipment was expected to be purchased in 2023. Mr. Kofrel stated that they were not anticipating making any large equipment purchases, but that the funds for said purchases usually come from fundraisers. Mr. Kofrel questioned the Board where the money would be allocated from to pay the EMT salaries in 2023, would the Township be putting in a mill. The Board believes that the money not spent in 2022 should act as seed money for the 2023 costs and this will allow them to not raise the millage.

Proposed 2023 Emergency Management Budget: Emergency Management Coordinator, Mike Fischetta presented the proposed budget which reflected the following:

- 1.)The base operating funds of \$5,604.89, which reflects no changes from 2022

- 2.) Request for a satellite phone with one year of service
 - a.) The satellite phone service will be essential in a time of emergency
 - b.) The cost of the phone service will be \$500.00

The Board then questioned as to whether or not newly appointed Supervisor Twiss had been provided a radio for emergency situations. This matter is to be looked into by Secretary Hildebrandt.

Proposed 2023 Eastern Pike Regional Police Department Budget : A representative was not present, but a copy of the proposed budget was provided.

The Board did confirm the seventy/thirty split with the Borough of Matamoras is properly reflected in the proposed budget. Additionally, that the police will be changing to a new pension company, as the current plan is continually losing money. The secretary for the police will also be transitioning into a part-time position in 2023. Public comment was heard from Mr. Banach who raised concerns over the pension and funding for the pension.

Proposed 2023 Liquid Fuels/ General Budget/Debt Service: Treasurer, Scott Myer presented the proposed 2023 budget which reflected the following:

- 1.) The budget is the Boards budget, and he has just placed dollar amounts as place holders for discussion purposes
- 2.) Assessed values are up \$2.6 million as a result the value of a mill used to calculate the real estate tax is up from \$47,500 to \$50,000
- 3.) Total mills are flat at 21.25. To keep mills flat while adding .8 mills Debt Service and 1 to Capital Roads, while at the same time adding \$360,00 in EMS expense, we budgeted \$418,326 from prior year reserves. Approximately \$235,000 in reserves was American Rescue Funds from prior years. Reserves would still be healthy at around \$600,000. As a note DCED recommends having a two to three months working capital as a reserve, which would be around \$350,000 to \$500,000.
- 4.) Katz Tax 5.8 mills, with annual payments in the amount of \$300,000
- 5.) Debt Services 2.8 mills
 - a. Increase mill from 2
 - b. Westfall has two loans, truck loan with Municipal Authority and Dime Bank Loan
 - c. Annual payments for these loans will be \$144,638
- 6.) Capital Roads 1 mills
 - a. Increase mills from 0 to 1
 - b. Used \$72,500 in prior years reserves plus one mill to budget \$125,000
 - c. Any possible projects would need to be discussed
- 7.) Fire Department /Ambulance/ EMS
 - a. 2022 allocations to Fire Department were as follows
 - i. \$150,000 from special mills
 - ii. \$70,000 from general funds
 1. \$20,000 annual LST (this is required)
 2. \$50,000 from general fund
 - iii. Total \$220,000
 - b. 2023 allocations as budgeted in draft:
 - i. \$155,00 for special tax (3 mills) to Westfall Fire
 - ii. \$20,000 from general fund LST
 - iii. In revenue \$100,000 is budgeted (2 mills matched from Pike County)from the new Pike

County Ambulance Tax

iv. During the EMS budgeting process this past summer it was agreed that WVFD would contribute \$70,000 of their own funds to Westfall Township to supplement EMS budget. Board needs to discuss whether they want to reduce amount allocated to WVFD by this amount instead of giving money to WVFD only to have them give it back.

v. Note: when LST was passed years ago it was agreed \$20,000 of LST would go to Fire Department and are not sure how that relates with new EMS funding.

8.) Liquid Fuels

a. \$105,436 was Westfall's 2022 allocation from the State, we do not know the 2023 amount but we are using the 2022 amount for now as we expect the allocation any day now

b. \$92,700 is allocated to pay the Public Works Department Budget (the DPW budget is funded by both the general fund and liquid fuels)

c. The remaining balance could be used to fund road projects or carried forward for future years road projects

d. There will be \$81,000 in liquid fuels reserves that could be used for any road related expenses

9.) General Fund 8.65

a. mills lowered from 10.35 to 8.65

b. EPRPD: 2022 allocation increased from \$671,220 to \$837,044 or \$165,824 increase over 2022. 70/30 split this year

c. In order to fund EMS, increase in EPRPD and lower mills there is \$418,000 from prior years reserves budgeted

10.) Miscellaneous Notes

a. Even with using \$418,000 in prior reserves in this budget, there are still adequate reserves to cover potential shortfalls in 2023

b. Public Works budget can be confusing as some funds are paid by liquid fuels and some out of the general fund.

c. Capital Road Improvements will require a discussion on what projects may be planned.

There was some discussion between the Board, Mr. Myer, and President Kofrel as to how the \$70,000 would be distributed between the Fire Department and the Township for the EMTs. It was discussed that netting would be easier and makes the most sense. Concerns were raised that the netting may affect the agreement with the fire department and that perhaps this change will need to be spelled out in any budget documents or advertising.

Public comment was heard from Mr. Banach, who raised concerns that the millage should be reduced by two. He believes that the Township has too much money in reserve and is not a bank. He does believe that there should be a reserve but, again that the allotted amount in reserve should be reduced.

Vice Chairman Schaldonat and Supervisor Fischer specifically discussed the possibility of reducing the mills by a half or one mill. Further they stated that they appreciated the input from Mr. Banach. Additionally, it was stated that the reserve funds have never been used. Finally, the Board commented that any road projects for 2023 will need to be decided.

ADJOURNMENT: The Budget Workshop was adjourned at approximately 7:23 p.m. by Chairman Dotey.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kaitlin Hildebrandt
Secretary