

October 26, 2022

The East Lampeter Township Board of Supervisors met on Wednesday, October 26, 2022 at 5:30 pm in the East Lampeter Township Office: 2250 Old Philadelphia Pike, Lancaster, PA 17602. The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Corey Meyer at 5:30 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. In addition to Mr. Meyer, supervisors present were Mr. Mike Thornton, and Mr. Roger Rutt at the start of the meeting. Also present was Mr. Ralph Hutchison, Township Manager; Ms. Tara Hitchens, Assistant Township Manager; Mr. Stephen Zerbe, Police Chief; Mr. Charlie Thomas, Director of Public Works; Mr. Colin Siesholtz, Director of Planning/Zoning Officer; and Mr. Kevin Hostetter, Director of Finance. Supervisor Ethan Demme was absent.

The meeting was held using Zoom, an internet web conferencing tool. A recorded statement was played regarding the use of Zoom for this public meeting including instructions for the public to use in order to participate in the meeting.

Public Present in Public Meeting Room

None

Public Comment (non-agenda items only)

None

2023 Budget Workshop

Mr. Hutchison began explaining that as currently proposed the budget has a \$1.3M deficit, meaning more in expenses than revenues. While not sustainable for the Township, the Board will need to inform staff where to consider reducing costs for 2023. Mr. Hutchison continued that personnel is the biggest expense for the Township, as always. Further, Mr. Hutchison indicated that this is not a one department wins or loses situation, this is a team effort between all East Lampeter staff and the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Hutchison turned the personnel discussion over to the department heads.

Personnel Proposals:

Police Department: Chief Zerbe requested the ability to hire five officers which would temporarily put the total officers at 42. The Board of Supervisors had indicated during the 2022 budget workshop that obtaining a full complement of 40 officers would be desirable. Currently the department is short one officer, and there is a retirement slated for first quarter of 2023 which would leave the department at 38. Hiring five officers now would prepare for those officers that have already signed onto the DROP. Chief Zerbe stated the shortage of officers is a national issue and hiring above the 40 officers would be temporary and would ebb and flow over a 2-year stretch with some candidates needing full Act 120 training requiring 6 months and then approximately 6 months of on the job training as well.

All the while, there remains four known retirement dates for existing officers in 2023 and 2024. Chief Zerbe added there should be expected decrease in overtime but not equal to cost of additional officers. On the administrative assistant side, two persons left their positions within one month while he was also looking for a third person. Chief is in the process of hiring one position and will seek a the efforts of a temporary agency to fill the third administrative position. As for the position of the CSA, one of the two positions was filled for most of 2022 however that person is moving into a officer candidate position, thus leaving both CSA positions open at the start of 2023. It was questioned if there would continue to be 4 platoons to which Chief Zerbe noted there would be.

Public Works: Mr. Charlie Thomas, Director of Public Works stated the department continues to be shorthanded as two positions needed to be filled in 2022. Interviews continuing. For 2023 would look to hire two more Public Works employees, one for parks and one for sewer. Further, included in the draft budget is an administrative assistant for Director of Public Works and Public Works Superintendents to help with record keeping. Presently, other departments loan time from their administrative staff to accomplish this work but the amount of work that needs to be done to take some of the load off of the director and superintendents leads to the need for an administrative assistant for the Department.

Planning/Zoning: Mr. Colin Siesholtz, Director of Planning/Zoning Officer indicated that the draft budget includes a second Assistant Zoning Officer position who would specialize in the Commercial aspects for building and zoning. Currently, this is all handled by the director of the department and is reducing time that needs to be spent on other projects. Overall, permit activity has been increasing, as well as daily functions, letters, investigations, BCO responsibilities for commercial projects.

Administration: Mr. Hutchison noted that the Township staffing level is at a point where a Human Resources position would alleviate a number of hours spent by Department heads to recruit and retain good staff. This person would also handle the internal and external communications of the Township, such as Facebook posts and disseminating information regarding benefits internally. This position would also Kevin Hostetter, Finance Director, to focus on more financial issues rather than on human resource and benefits issues.

New Programs:

Recreation Director Commission: Mr. Hutchison provided that the Township has been working with Upper Leacock Township and Conestoga Valley School District on an agreement to move forward with a Park and Recreation Commission for the area which would need to have a director and budget for programing. It is not yet known which municipality will host this position but East Lampeter Township would contribute towards this commission. This figure has not yet been added to the draft budget as there was a

meeting last evening however is expected to be \$90,000. A brief discussion led to the Board of Supervisors noting that this was a worthwhile effort and fully supported providing this in the 2023 budget.

Housing/Hotel/Rental Inspection Program: Mr. Hutchison stated that this program has not been added to the draft budget because Township staff needs direction from the Board of Supervisors if this is a direction they wish to pursue. If the Board wishes to pursue this, then the program should be funded by fees charged. Theoretically, it will pay for itself with a net zero effect on the budget. Staff would need to further consider how this would be handled but is certain that additional staffing would be needed for a program like this to be successful and beneficial.

Chairman Mr. John Blowers arrived and took over the workshop meeting at 6:02pm.

Community Survey: Mr. Hutchison noted that staff did look into multiple options to begin a community survey in 2022 but the funding provided at \$10,000 was not sufficient. It was determined that a budget of \$30,000 annually was more in line with the costs associated with such a program.

Projects:

Codification project is moving forward in 2022 and will finalize in 2023 thus there are funds that in both budgets. Once complete the entire codified book will be searchable and provided on the Township website. This project will also include regular financial resources to maintain those ordinances and resolutions adopted each year by the Board of Supervisors.

Grant writing services are budgeted for in the 2023 draft budget. Although East Lampeter Township staff has been very successful with grant writing there are other grant opportunities that the Township isn't taking advantage of given the time commitment that some of the grants require. If the funds used in 2023 result in a good return on investment, then more provided for in future years. Mr. Thornton asked if other municipalities utilize consultant services. Most other municipalities either take time away from existing staff or have consultant help. Discussion continued between the Supervisors.

Mr. Hutchison moved to the OPEB Trust. Township staff and counsel researched in 2022 the efforts needed to move some or all of the OPEB funds into a trust in order to fund post-retirement benefits for police. Township staff is now looking at the same for non-uniformed employees. Mr. Hutchison encouraged the opening of the trust for funds to open additional avenues for investment. There are options for the Board of Supervisors to decide if there is a desire to move forward with this, then the funds in the draft 2023 budget would be allocated for the required legal work.

Sewer Rate study which is also a carryover from 2022 will ensure that the fees are assessed to users fairly. Either at the end of this year or early in 2023 the Board will be presented with the findings to then determine if a new sewer rate will be considered.

Mr. Hutchison added that there will need to be changes in the office layout with additional cubicles, work stations, desks, computers, software, phones, etc for staff proposed in the 2023 budget. Cost estimates are being acquired and will be added once received.

Finally, the phone system of the Township is in need of updating and Township staff is making every attempt to find a system that fits the needs of staff while also being as cutting edge as possible so that the technology is not outdated before it's purchased.

Planning/Zoning/Stormwater:

Mr. Siesholtz noted that a housing study for a total cost of \$50,000 is provided for in the 2023 draft budget and is recommended as a first step in an updated comprehensive plan. It would be anticipated that a consulting firm would complete the study, not Township staff. Mr. Siesholtz continued that the document scanning has gone extremely well and it is hoped to continue into 2023, office space alterations for existing cubicles to provide sufficient space.

Stormwater pipe inspections will be completed to determine size, type, and condition. This is a multi-year effort at approximately \$100,000.00 per year. This was originally planned for through the stormwater fee study and is beginning to be implemented given the collection of fees for a few years has provided the funds necessary.

GPS costs to maintain an accurate system, through engaging a third party consultant to capture and keep system up-to-date. Continuing to move forward with Pollution Reduction Projects, Mr. Siesholtz explained MS4 under Township permit but ELSA spends the funds. Mr. Hutchison reminds the Supervisors that ELSA is technically the group that does the projects, but ELT is responsible for meeting MS4 requirements. These are the projects we are doing to make sure the Township meets the requirements of the MS4 permit.

Police Department:

Class A holsters were never purchased with the new uniforms so there I which started about eight (8) years and haven't received to date, so the holsters are a carry-over item. Other items include a drone and drone pilot class which costs \$500.00, the document provided to the Board inadvertently indicated \$5,000 for the drone class which is incorrect. The drone would be used for aerial view for more involved vehicle accidents, fatalities, tactical and investigative purposes. Chief Zerbe continued that three vehicles will be considered for purchase in 2023, however finding vehicles has been difficult and refurbishing vehicles may need to be considered with the goal for those refurbished vehicles to provide an 2

years of service to the officers. Each vehicle accumulates approximately 50,000 miles per year and typically used for 2 years. It was questioned if there is a difference in maintenance costs between the sedans and the suvs. Chief Zerbe noted that some of the SUV's have had almost no problems and other SUVs have been to the shop multiple times for warranty work and post-warranty work. The sedans are pretty much the same and wear very well. All vehicles are all wheel drive which means they cost more. Right now there is a good balance between sedan and SUVs.

Public Works:

Mr. Charlie Thomas stated that Roadbotics requires an update from 5 years ago and is a great tool which is continually used to determine the pavement management plans for the Township. Mr. Thomas updated the Supervisors regarding Green-Light-Go as Township has received grant, our share is \$55,000 from grant program. Traffic counts have been done and the project should be complete in early 2023. Mr. Thomas added needs for the Admin building to include: HVAC system using ARPA funds as has been discussed at previous Board meetings, staff awaits one more quote for the system as it is known that these systems now have a 52 week wait period for receipt. There have been some complaints of the weight of the front doors, thus Public Works staff is determining if an assist system can be installed. Audio/Visual upgrades for the public meeting room using ARPA funds has also been previously discussed with the Board to allow for the zoom function at public meetings. Mr. Thomas noted that Park staff is budgeting for Flory playground equipment replacement, cameras for the parks to thwart negative behavior, signage noting the video recording of actions at the parks. Also included in the 2023 draft budget are the Lafayette Park pavilion design and land development plans. Mr. Thomas continued with the excessive costs estimates received for the Sewer Dump Pit Cover and that staff is determining alternate options for that enclosure to be more in line with the budget of \$138,000.00. Mr. Thomas moved to the excessive cost estimates for the proposed pole building in the laydown area and will have public works staff look at alternative options in 2023 and potentially move forward with the project in 2024. Mr. Thomas noted that the Route 30 adaptive traffic signal software will be transferred to PennDOT by the end of the year so there will no longer be software maintenance costs to the Township. Mr. Thomas touched on GPS services for sewer lines. The purchase of a bucket truck in 2023 would be used between the three (3) departments, Parks/Roads/Sewer. Working with PennDOT representatives to determine if one-third of the cost can be purchased through Fund 35. Staff is looking to fund the purchase of another salt spreader for the trucks which will result in a full complement; line painting; oil and chip projects; and typical paving projects all to be funded through Fund 35, Liquid Fuels. Mr. Thomas provided the oil and chip and paving project locations for 2023 to the Supervisors.

Capital Projects:

Ms. Hitchens explained to the Supervisors that Phase 3 of the Lincoln Highway Streetscape Plan is moving forward and that Township staff is working to move the RACP funds from the Rockvale Trail project to this project. The Strasburg Pike trail to Oakview was awarded through the County Smart Growth Transportation Funds which is now titled Connects 2040. Survey is being completed, it is anticipated that construction will begin in 2024. The Township was awarded Connects 2040 funds for the study of two routes of the Lancaster Heritage Pathway which are accounted for in the 2023 budget as there is a match of \$45,000 from the Township for both studies. There are funds for the Walnut Street Extension/Lancaster Heritage Pathway as the project comes to completion in fall 2023. Ms. Hitchens continued that the Bridgeport Study has been completed and adopted now, thus moving forward with implementation projects with the first being the improvements along Route 462 between Tennyson and Greenfield. The Township will begin design and permitting and will have construction money from the MPO. Gibbons Park design has moved forward and Township staff is working on the Fish and Boat grant application for potential funding which is a 50/50 program.

Fire Apparatus

East Lampeter Township hasn't made contributions for 3 years to this fund, thus suggest putting \$900,000 of ARPA funds into the Apparatus Fund in 2023. Hand-In-Hand in Bird-In-Hand Fire Company apparatus will require a contribution from the Township of \$450,000 however it is anticipated that the apparatus may not be available until early 2024 due to supply chain issues. LEMSA contribution requested is equal to that of 2022 at \$56,000. Library contributions increased by \$2,000.00 over 2022 amounting to \$42,000.

ARPA Funds - Regarding the ARPA funds after spending for the HVAC system, Audio/Visual additions in the public meeting room, and funding the fire apparatus, Mr. Hutchison believes there will be about \$200,000 remaining to which Mr. Hutchison recommends holding onto for potential future costs associated with the implementation of the Lincoln Highway Streetscape projects.

Mr. Hutchison noted that in the past so funds were expended for the Women's Open and there is no expectation that there would be a need for such for the 2024 Women's Open however there will be staff time to help plan for this in 2023. Mr. Hutchison continued that there are no funds allocated to the Nolt Mill property however there will need to be in the future as the roof needs attention and it is anticipated that other repairs may be needed. The tenant continues to occupy the building and sublets the house.

Mr. Hutchison has researched the conversion of streetlighting to LED, but found that PP&L no longer allows municipalities to purchase assets. Further, it has been determined that

PP&L charges more for lighting when converted to LED. From discussions with PP&L, this would not lead to a cost savings.

Mr. Hutchison stated the Sewer Authority is in the early stages of borrowing and thus the Board will hear a presentation at their next scheduled meeting regarding such.

Finally, it was noted that the health care costs for the Township will increase just over 9% in 2023.

Revenues:

Mr. Hostetter explained to the Board of Supervisors that the estate taxes assessed value is lower than 2018 when the reassessment occurred. Currently anticipating slower development rates in 2023 with interest rates rising. The Board discussed reassessments and timelines. Mr. Hostetter continued there is a 96% collection rate from real estate. The earned income tax anticipates growth of a little over 5% as provided by LCTB. Mr. Hostetter continued to explain the local services tax will have a slight increase based on the number of employees. Finally, Mr. Hostetter stated that Admissions Tax is dependent on weather and events but is coming back to prepandemic levels.

Mr. Meyer suggested the budget is conservative on all revenue numbers.

Mr. Meyer and Mr. Blowers noted that some of the projects planned in 2023 will not come to fruition and the Township management is always well aware of expenditures and reacts conservatively, thus they are not concerned with moving into the 2023 budget with a deficit spending of \$1.3M. However, all Board members recognized this can't continue for future years. All members present noted that they would be comfortable moving forward with a \$1.3M deficit spending and include the office renovations, and park and recreation commission contribution both of which had not yet been included in the draft budget.

Discussion concluded and Mr. Hutchison expressed appreciation for the support of the Board and noted that Township management will do their best to implement.

Other Business

None

Adjournment

Mr. Meyer made a motion to adjourn at 7:42pm. Mr. Thornton seconded the motion with all voting in favor, the motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Ralph Hutchison

Township Manager