

February 17, 2015

A workshop meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Victory Gardens, held on February 17, 2015.

Mayor Holeman called the meeting to order and declared a quorum present.
Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of Our Country.
Please remain standing for a moment of silence for our military.

This meeting has been advertised in one newspaper, The Daily Record, in compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act.

ATTENDANCE: Councilwoman Cheatham, Councilman Glass, Councilwoman Hedgepath,
Councilman Jacobus, Councilman Lorenzo, Councilwoman Garcia Montes.

ABSENT: None

Tonights meeting is for discussion on the 2015 Budget. CFO Amy Maronpot is present for tonights meeting on the budget.

Amy said there were a few changes she had to make from the preliminary budget that we went over the last time. I did this after speaking with Bill Schroeder. I reduced Legal O & E and Engineering O & E. I reduced that by about \$5,000 so that I could add it to Clerk O & E for the website. That was just taking it out of one account and putting it into the other. Legal and Engineering are staying the same as last year.

Other Insurance is up but not as much as I thought. Group Insurance has been reduced. We can offset with the contributions that the workers pay towards their health benefits. Group Insurance is going down approximately \$42,300 this year.

Capital Improvement Fund I have in this budget as \$10,000. If you want to put this money in the CIF.

With these changes being made, if we did not put anything in CIF then we would be at the 2% cap. This would make your local tax, on an average house of \$200,000 it would be an increase of \$38.00 for the year per household.

If you decide that you want to put the \$10,000 in CIF it would be an increase of \$66.00 for the year on a house assessed at \$200,000. It would be less of an increase on a house assessed at less than \$200,000.

We have no debt and we are in good shape as far as this budget goes. It comes out to about \$5.00 more a month.

If we do anything with the playground then that will come out of the CIF line item. So if we put money in it may come right back out for the playground. Yes. The increase to the budget with the \$10,000 added for CIF would be \$22,700. If we don't put it in the increase would be \$12,700.

A motion was made by Councilman Glass to add the \$10,000 to CIP in the 2015 budget. Seconded by Councilwoman Cheatham. Roll call:

Councilwoman Cheatham	Yes
Councilman Glass	Yes
Councilwoman Hedgepath	Yes
Councilman Jacobus	Yes
Councilman Lorenzo	No
Councilwoman Garcia Montes	Yes

Our increases for salaries is 3% . That is already in this budget. You can vote on that when Bill comes for the introduction. This budget is based on the 3% that we spoke about for the raises.

Motion to open the meeting to the public by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilman Glass and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

Joan Cegelka - Joan asked Amy if she could have a copy of the budget paper we worked on tonight? Amy said that Debbe has them. I told Joan after the Council had a chance to look it over then I would give her a copy. She can have one tonight. Last year and this year taxes are going up. Why wasn't salaries reduced by \$15,000 as you no longer have Mrs. Bly here? We have Debbie now and she gets paid more than Lorenza did. Both Debbies are in the Clerk S & W. Debbie also works more hours. Clerk O & E we put money in for the website. We also have codification and Debbies overtime. Joan asked about the BOH fees. The Clerk said that in 2013 we paid \$22,000. In 2014 we paid \$22,440.00 and in 2015 we will pay \$22,889.

Councilman Jacobus said for the record he would like to state that last year our taxes went down by 3% . Even my mortgage payment went down. You should be looking at your taxes to keep them low to accommodate for the school taxes Joan said.

Jim Janone - Jim said that Clerk S& W is going up to account for OPRA requests, Debbie's salary and overtime. We also had some property maintenance in there. Now he is on his own line item. OPRA requests are done electronically now. Yes, but there is still all the time that goes into doing it. If the property maintenance man did his own work then Debbie wouldn't have to do it and on top of that they are throwing the website at her. Legal O & E we kept the same as last year because we have a lot of RVRSA issues. You are saving on the health benefits. Yes and part of that is because I am calculating the employees portion of what they pay. They make a pretty hefty contribution. RVRSA will be an ongoing thing but there are hefty increases because of Jersey City. Also, Mayor where is the money in Planning Board as asked for an increase? This is all that is going in. We were going to cut money from Planning Board.

Motion to close the meeting to the public by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Cheatham and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

The Mayor asked Amy what happens next? Amy said she will give everything to Bill Schroeder and then he will prepare the worksheet for introduction. He will probably come to the meeting in March for introduction. Councilman Lorenzo asked Amy if she thinks this is a fair budget? Yes. A lot of the line items stayed the same. All the O & E practically remained the same as last year. I know that Bill will tell you to stay with the tax cap levy of 2% . Things go up every year. If you don't maintain the 2% then you will always be behind. Then you have problems.

We will take \$2,000 out of BOH once Amy looks at the numbers. We can put that \$2,000 in Bldg & Grds. We don't want to be under the 2% cap. We may have to do a transfer resolution at the end of the year for S & W with all the overtime.

The Mayor asked Council if they are satisfied with the budget and do they think we need any other meetings for the budget? All Council agreed that they are satisfied with the budget and we do not need any more meetings. Amy will get everything together for Bill Schroeder and then he will set up with the Clerk when the introduction on the budget will be.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Councilwoman Montes, seconded by Councilwoman Hedgepath and approved on verbal vote. None opposed.

Submitted By:



Deborah Evans
Borough Clerk