

Town of York
Budget Workshop Meeting
September 23, 2024
7:00 p.m.

Present: Supervisor Gerald L. Deming, Council Members: Lynn Parnell, Amos Smith Frank Rose Jr., and Jason Swede.

Absent: None

Others: Justin Bennett and Sandra Curran (BBS Accounting), Dustin Geiger and Dennis House (York Fire Dept), Kirk Richenberg and David Deuel.

Supervisor Deming opened the Budget work session at 7:00 p.m. saying that we would hear first from the York Fire Department regarding a request for a new 3-year contract with the following increases of 15%-10%-10% per year for 2025-2027.

Dennis House introduced himself as well as Dustin Geiger as representatives from the York Fire Department. Mr. Geiger was able to provide the Board with a detailed overview in the form of a presentation of the department's history, equipment, finances, and their current budgetary requests. Mr. Geiger shared with the Board the services they provide to our community while reporting on the number and nature of average responses the department responded to over the past 3 years. Mr. Geiger shared a budget breakdown for the Town Board to review relating to the Departments expenditures and revenue streams. In his presentation, Mr. Geiger detailed line items for utilities, equipment, certifications, General expenses, Insurances, health, and physical related costs the department incurs annually. It was also noted the age of the Departments vehicles and potential replacements costs for each.

Mr. Geiger then presented copies of the Department's proposed 3-year budget to the Town Board.

BUDGET LINE	Current	Proposed 2025	Proposed 2026	Proposed 2027
Natural Gas	\$3,000.00	\$3,600.00	\$3,780.00	\$3,969.00
Telephone/Internet/Cable	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Electric	\$5,000.00	\$5,750.00	\$6,037.50	\$6,339
Building Maint/Supplies	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00
Capital Improvements	\$34,000.00	\$37,000.00	\$37,000.00	\$37,000.00
Fuel & Maint	\$27,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00
Truck Payment	\$29,316.00	\$29,316.00	\$29,316.00	\$0.00
Capital Truck Purchase	\$23,866.00	\$111,984.00	\$111,984.00	\$141,300.00
Equip & Supply	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00
Radio Repair	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Capital Equipment	\$3,000.00	\$23,900.00	\$23,900.00	\$23,900.00
Radio Purchase Fund	\$2,500.00	\$12,400.00	\$12,400.00	\$12,400.00
Ems Supplies	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Certifications	\$9,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$9,000.00
OSHA Physicals	\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00
Insurance	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$20,400.00	\$20,808.00
Training	\$3,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Food/Refreshment	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Fire Prevention	\$800.00	\$800.00	\$800.00	\$800.00
Office Expense	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
Legal Expense	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Miscellaneous	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Fund Raisers	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
MONTHLY PAYMENTS	\$227,482.00	\$355,750.00	\$356,617.50	\$357,516.38

2024	\$223,191.00	
2025	\$256,669.65	15%
2026	\$282,336.62	10%
2027	\$310,570.28	10%

Councilmen Smith and Rose both questioned the current values of equipment for vehicles shown in the presentation and Mr. Geiger was able to explain replacement of used vs. new vehicles respective to their fleet.

Mr. Geiger then presented to the Board a visual of the department members apparatus as well as the cost for the protective items each firefighter is required to wear in an actual fire event, noting that the average cost of what is worn per member was approximately \$25,194.00.

Mr. Geiger did offer a brief overview of the Fire Department's income sources stating that the majority comes from the Town of York, but also includes fundraising, memorials, and grant funding. Previous years have proven to be successful with grants but noted they have also been turned down several times as well. The fire department will continue to apply in hopes of receiving funds to offset annual increasing costs.

Mr. Geiger presented a graphic of the increase to the taxpayers noting that an additional \$6.76 per \$100,000 assessment would be the result pending the department's budget approval. At that time, he then asked if the Board had any questions for him.

Supervisor Deming asked Mr. Geiger what is your membership at?

Mr. Geiger stated that they have 43 active members but at different levels of training and experience depending their roles. For example, certification requirements differ from fire police to an interior firefighter. Mr. Geiger mentioned there is funding available to entice membership statewide for volunteers to help offset the cost of courses needed for training, certifications etc. These funds go directly to the volunteer and not the fire department.

Supervisor Deming asked the Board if they had any additional questions.

Councilman Smith asked if there was a pending truck purchase with Mr. Geiger replying that monies are currently being set aside for that purpose into NYCLASS (high yield investment accounts) for future purchases and to maintain the fleet up to date.

Mr. Geiger addressed the Board saying he and the Fire Department recognize it is a large sum of money to ask for. He also explained how the York department is different from other local districts where purchases are via referendums being voted on, noting that 2 neighboring districts fire budgets are at a million dollars or close to it.

Supervisor Deming and the entire Board thanked Mr. Geiger on his presentation and commented that this was the most informative report they had received thus far from the department.

David Deuel inquired as to the breakdown of the calls and Mr. Geiger replied that he did not have that information with him at this time.

Supervisor Deming commented that in previous years he was aware that ambulance calls were too difficult to staff, but it seems like fire and accidents always have a crew...is that the case? Mr. Geiger said to his knowledge there is no record of any dropped calls this year.

Kirk Richenberg asked with the budget deficit indicated in their budget, has the department considered purchasing used vehicles that could be more affordable.

Mr. Geiger said new vehicles have a tremendously long wait time for delivery and used trucks are ridiculously expensive. They had spoken to neighboring departments who did purchase used and are now paying costly repairs for parts and labor on those vehicles.

Councilman Rose asked, despite the increased costs we have discussed tonight, what is your status on a new Fire Hall?

Mr. Geiger replied that the Department is still in the planning stages for a new facility, while trying to secure grant funding. Their intention is to move forward with a new building that has the updated necessary facilities required unlike their current existing structure.

David Deuel asked Mr. Geiger if he had a statement balance for building funds. Mr. Geiger responded that he was unsure of the departments balances in the reserve funds for dedicated expenses.

Kirk Richenberg stated that these are some of the expenses the community would like to know and be made aware of.

Supervisor Deming and the Board again thanked Mr. Geiger and Mr. House for attending this evening and providing them with a great presentation.

Mr. House also thanked the Board for their time and attention.

7:40pm-

Supervisor Deming continued with the Budget work session, starting with a review of the overall proposed budget. Mr. Deming then noted an 3% increase in wages overall and read each line individually for wages as well as personal services.

Mr. Bennett then presented the expenditures from previous years to the new proposed figures starting with the General Fund, then on to Highway and Consolidated Water/Sewer. Mr. Bennett read aloud each allocation and discussed wages and expenses associated with the respective line item.

In addition, Mr. Bennett also noted the Joint Youth program budget, comprised of \$6,000 from the Town of Leicester, \$2,500 from the Village of Leicester and \$12,000 coming from the Town of York.

Questions were asked by a few Board members relating to the expenses Mr. Bennett was reciting, and Mr. Bennett was able to clarify and answer any of their concerns.

Councilman Smith asked about the anticipated funds for the White Creek Solar project currently in the works and how those funds could play a role in changing the numbers in relation to this current budget.

Supervisor Deming stated nothing can be budgeted yet regarding those funds until we have confirmation of an agreement. There is possibility of significant financial gains for the next 25 years but that is yet to be determined.

Mr. Richenberg asked if we had any idea of the status on the current solar project. Noting that he is familiar with the large ongoing solar projects in Genesee County that have seemed to have stalled and wondered if any neighboring towns have timeline updates for those projects. The Board had no updated information to offer.

In continuing with the review of the line items, Councilman Smith inquired as to why NYS Retirement jumped in percentage. Both, Mr. Bennett, and Ms. Curran provided explanations that the payments are based on Town employees' wages and their Tier status in the NYS Retirement system.

As Mr. Bennett read along, he offered explanations as to why figures may have increased/decreased from year to year as well as future projections provided by the State.

Supervisor Deming then noted the Townwide tax increase which was 0.09% is .31per \$100,000. As a result, the Town would be over the tax cap by \$34,514.

Councilman Smith questioned Mr. Bennett as to how to get around that amount, while Councilman Rose asked if the increase in NYS Retirement costs was the reason for going over the tax cap.

Both Supervisor Deming and Mr. Bennett shared information provided by the NYS Comptroller's Office in relation to inflation and growth. Supervisor Deming reminded the Board that if we move to adopt the Preliminary Budget, we cannot raise any items only lower and mentioned that a Public Hearing would need to be scheduled regarding the Tax Cap override. The supervisor asked for comments/concerns.

Councilman Swede did state considering the increased wages and retirement costs, having the budget with an increase at only .09 was quite well.

Supervisor Deming asked the Board what they wanted to do...make any changes, adopt the Preliminary?

David Deuel inquired as to whether the increase was in re-assessments and Supervisor Deming answered no, it was from the Cheese Plant coming back on to the tax roll.

Mr. Deuel did comment as an agricultural landowner, these increases would be a shock to the system.

Motion to adjourn the budget work session:

Motion made by Councilman Smith and seconded by Councilman Swede to adjourn the Budget Work Session. Voted on and approved, Yes-5, No-0

Work Session adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia Barefoot
Patricia A. Barefoot
Deputy Town Clerk