

**JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
1033 WELDON ROAD
LAKE HOPATCONG, NJ 07849
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**FEBRUARY 24, 2021
SPECIAL MEETING - BUDGET – 6:00 PM
MINUTES**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Council President Senatore read the meeting statement as follows: this Special Meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law. Notice of this meeting, as well as a change to a meeting held via remote access only due to the Covid-19 pandemic and in response to State and Local Health Department guidelines, was sent to the official newspapers of the Township, the Daily Record and the Star Ledger, on **January 22, 2021**. In addition, notice was posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building on **January 22, 2021** and is and has been available to the public and is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk; proper notice having been given, the Township Clerk is directed to include this statement in the minutes of this meeting, as well as the purpose of this meeting, which is to hold a discussion regarding the 2021 budget as well as to discuss or act upon public business.

Council President Senatore called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

2. ROLL CALL – Township Clerk

	Present	Absent
Mrs. Bennett	X	
Mr. Birmingham	X	
Mr. Smith	X	
Vice President Dunham	X	
President Senatore	X	
Mr. Ryan, Township Attorney		X
Ms. Reilly, Township Clerk	X	

Ms. Reilly called the roll. All Council members were present remotely on Zoom. Also in attendance were Administrator Debi Millikin, Mayor Eric Wilsusen, Director of Information Technology Dave Van Valer, Chief Financial Officer Bill Eagen, OEM Coordinator Ed Mangold, Chief Paul Castimore. Township Attorney Tom Ryan was absent.

3. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Council President Senatore led the flag salute.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Senatore opened the public comment portion of the meeting with the consent of the members present and asked speakers to state their name and address for the record.

With no one wishing to be heard, Council President Senatore closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

Council President Senatore said Councilwoman Bennett had an announcement to make. Councilwoman Bennett said she would like to formally let her fellow council members and the administration know that she is retiring and resigning her position. She said she has spent over thirty (30) years of her life in an elected capacity and probably three quarters of her life in volunteer positions and is now moving on to another phase in her life. Councilwoman Bennett stated that her retirement would be effective as of February 28th of this month.

Mayor Wilsusen said he wanted to thank Councilwoman Bennett for all she has done on behalf of the residents. He mentioned her efforts with the Board of Education, Municipal Alliance, and Girl Scouts. He said he is very sorry that meetings aren't live so she could get a proper sendoff honoring her time and dedication.

Council President Senatore thanked Councilwoman Bennett for all her work on behalf of the Township. Councilman Smith said it had been a pleasure to work with her and he wished her well on her retirement. Council Vice President Dunham and Councilman Birmingham both wished her good health and lots of time with her family.

5. COUNCIL AND MAYOR DISCUSSION

**• Department Budget Presentations
OEM (Fire & EMS) – Ed Mangold**

OEM Coordinator Ed Mangold announced that the four (4) Chiefs are present on the Zoom meeting. He thanked the emergency services for their loyalty and service to residents during 2020, especially with the impact of Covid.

Mr. Mangold said he will be reviewing the budget requests for each agency but first gave an emergency services recap and overview. He stated that 2021 capital investments include protective gear, air pack upgrades, and hose replacements. He mentioned that a large portion of operating expenses are spent on yearly testing requirements. He said that Company #1 upgraded the firehouse and generator to natural gas at their own expense of \$55,000, and that this upgrade should save Jefferson money since the Township pays the heating bill.

Mr. Mangold said the emergency services will continue to use the Township mechanic for basic repairs and maintenance. He said the money saved has allowed the operating expense requests to remain stable, with no increase. He mentioned that one issue facing the emergency services is an increased shortage of volunteers on the lake side.

Mr. Mangold reported that the operating expense request for the office of emergency management is basically what is required to pay for the RAVE alert system and there is no capital request from OEM. He said the Fire Bureau has no capital request and a very small operating expense request and that the Bureau is self-funded through inspections and insurance monies received. Mr. Mangold commended Fire Inspector Vinny Corsaro and said he did a great job working with the businesses during Covid. He stated that Mr. Corsaro, the health department, building department and Clerk's office all worked as a team to keep restaurants going with outdoor dining during the pandemic. Mr. Mangold also mentioned that the Fire Bureau did more closings last year than is usual and the Bureau added a part-time fire inspector to assist. He said that position is self-funded through the Bureau fees.

Mr. Mangold stated that Fire Company #1's operating request is the same as last year but the capital request is going to be lower by approximately \$20,000-\$25,000. He said that part of the process in developing the Mayor's (10) year plan was a review and evaluation of all apparatus and vehicles with the Township mechanic. He said that per the plan, the Township is due to replace Company #1's 2004 pumper, which should be ordered this year for delivery in 2022. Fire Chief Ray Cabrera said that the initial cost of a new pumper was estimated at \$610,000 but by using the Houston Galveston Cooperative the cost is lower. Chief Cabrera said the new estimate is

\$579,413 and the Fire Company will be trading in the old truck for \$20,000-\$25,000, which is why the capital request is lower. In response to Council questions, Chief Cabrera said the budget is discussed and prepared by the Chief and the line officers. Councilman Birmingham commended the Fire Department on spending their own money for the natural gas upgrade. Council Vice President Dunham concurred and said the general public doesn't realize what they have in terms of volunteers and equipment. Councilman Smith and Council President Senatore complimented the Fire Company on coordinating with the strategic plan. Councilwoman Bennett thanked the fire company for using the trade-in to lower the capital request.

Mr. Mangold announced that discussion was needed regarding capital for Fire Company #2. He mentioned that the ten (10) year plan recommends a refurbishment of the 1995 rescue truck #719 and that the Township mechanic feels there is another 200,000 miles left on the vehicle. He said the cost of refurbishing is estimated at approximately \$233,000 versus the \$750,000 quoted for a new vehicle.

Chief Lou Loiacono offered his thoughts on refurbishment versus a new truck. He said the truck is twenty-seven (27) years old, does not meet current safety standards, and is worth approximately \$10,000 in trade-in value. He stated that truck parts are rare and hard to find, the heater and defroster currently do not work, and the truck does not have electronic stability control that is standard on all new apparatus. He said the officers feel changes need to be made to the existing truck to make it safer for their personnel, but it would be a waste of taxpayer money to refurbish something that is hard to get parts for. Chief Loiacono stated that truck #719 is the busiest apparatus as well as a critical life-saving apparatus.

Mayor Wilsusen said his administration understands the age of the truck and the amount of traffic on Route 15, as well as the pros and cons of refurbishment. He said he wanted to remind Council that the Township just purchased another set of jaws for Fire Company #2, bringing to four (4) sets of jaws between the two companies.

Chief Loiacono mentioned that members of Fire Company #2 met with representatives from Ferraro and they have developed a plan to take the tools and equipment off the old truck and use them on a new truck. He said by doing this, the new truck is estimated to cost \$600,000. Councilwoman Bennett confirmed with the Chief that he was asking to increase the budget request by \$225,000 for a total of \$600,000. Chief Loiacono replied affirmatively. Councilwoman Bennett asked the Mayor for his input and Mayor Wilsusen stated that the budget is already significantly higher in capital. He said that he feels a refurbishment is the way to go especially after receiving input from the Township mechanic that the truck still has a useful life span mechanically. He mentioned that Company #2 will need a new aerial truck in the next few years and it will be very pricey. Mayor Wilsusen said he is trying to be financially responsible while still accommodating the needs of the emergency services.

Council and administrative discussion ensued about the next few years of capital requests in the ten (10) year plan. Mr. Mangold mentioned that the plan is to try to refurbish vehicles earlier on in their life span, so the repairs cost less and the vehicles last longer. Council Vice President Dunham said he could agree to the \$600,000 request on two conditions; first, that the Fire Company gets a contract for \$600,000 in writing and also provides a letter stating that they will not request any alterations or extras, and second, that the Chief Financial Officer and Administrator say they can find the \$225,000. Mayor Wilsusen said he had no problem with the Fire Company doing a little more research. Mr. Mangold said Council has given them some homework and they will see if they can get a truck for \$600,000 and a commitment from the CFO and come back to Council before the budget is finalized.

Council thanked the Chief for his comments and for advocating on behalf of his department.

Mr. Mangold discussed the operating expense request for the Milton First Aid Squad and said the amount of \$45,000 is the same as last year. He mentioned a request for an additional \$9,122 to repaint the bubbling and peeling paint on the 2013 ambulance. He commended Chief Frank Parete for negotiating the original quote of \$18,000 in half.

Chief Parete said he would appreciate being able to repaint the vehicle as he thinks the squad can get another eight (8) years out of the ambulance. Council consensus was that this would be money well spent. Council Vice President Dunham said he would not comment as he is a squad member. Mr. Mangold said he would discuss funding the \$9,122 with CFO Bill Eagen. Chief Parete thanked Council for their support.

Mr. Mangold said the operating expense request for Jefferson Rescue is the same \$45,000 as last year. He said the squad would like to buy a new ambulance for approximately \$200,000 but this has not been funded in the budget due to concerns about their membership. He mentioned that the Township has been using St. Clare's to subsidize the squad on certain days. He reported that St. Clare's responded to thirty-two percent (32%) of Jefferson Rescue's calls through November of 2020.

Chief Ron Anzalone said the squad will be holding a membership drive. He said some members are out on medical and he also said he feels if he could get four to eight new members the squad would be back in decent shape. Chief Anzalone said the 2006 ambulance has 104,000 miles and leaks oil and that repairs would be costly. Councilman Birmingham asked if St. Clare's is charging for their services and Mr. Mangold said they will pay the patient's insurance. Councilwoman Bennett thanked Chief Anzalone for being candid about the challenges facing the Squad and said based on the membership issues she feels the purchase of the ambulance should be put on hold.

Mr. Mangold thanked everyone on the Council for their time and input. Mayor Wilsusen also thanked the Chiefs for their hard work, especially since they are volunteers. Ms. Millikin thanked the Chiefs as well as Mr. Mangold for working with all the emergency services groups.

Chief Loiacono asked Mayor Wilsusen for an update on the Weldon Road Bridge. Mayor Wilsusen said the DOT is completing its demolition work, and that once complete they will assess the bridge to make sure it is responding well before opening one lane in each direction. Mr. Mangold reported that the DOT is completing work on the emergency services U-turn this weekend.

Water & Sewer Utility – John Perry

Ms. Millikin mentioned that she forwarded Mr. Perry's rate analysis and capital update to Council via email.

Mr. Perry discussed the rate analysis and said the 2021 rate increase should provide additional revenue of approximately \$103,000, assuming the usage is roughly the same as 2020. He said the Township can also anticipate approximately \$132,000 in connection fees. Mr. Perry said the additional revenue will be welcome as costs are increasing also.

Mr. Perry reported that the replacement of the RBC#2 at White Rock has been completed and it working well and has been on line since the end of December. He discussed future capital requests and said another RBC unit will need a partial replacement. He stated that he has a \$500,000 yearly request listed on his spreadsheet for years 2022-2026, and that this money will be used for upgrades to the White Rock Water Treatment Plan. Mr. Perry explained that the plant is certified for 130,000 gallons and the Township is generally over that capacity; therefore, he would like to increase the capacity. He mentioned that increasing capacity allows for new connections/customers and also decreases stress on the plan. He said the reason the plant is not stressed now is because Moosepac

is still handling some capacity. Mr. Perry also mentioned that he would be speaking with some engineering firms about asset management grant opportunities.

Mayor Wilsusen told Council he asked Mr. Perry to present a full picture, which includes dealing with some issues that have been neglected.

Mr. Perry stated that money for pump station upgrades will be used to procure additional motors or pumps in order to provide redundancy. Councilman Birmingham had questions about capital requests for generators and Mr. Eagen said future generators will be purchased out of department capital versus the general capital fund. Councilman Birmingham asked Mr. Perry if there was interest in hooking up to White Rock once capacity is increased. Mr. Perry said he had been approached by Rich Kimble from the trailer park across from White Rock, in addition to some other inquiries. In response to additional questions about the natural gas generators, Mr. Perry said it might be possible to enter into a contract with a demand response company and explained the concept to Council. He said his old employer, the Township of Montville, made \$16,000 a year from demand response, and he thought Jefferson had the potential to receive a higher amount.

Councilwoman Bennett asked about the status of water meter replacements. Mr. Perry said Covid had impacted this project but the department is starting to gear up again. Ms. Millikin mentioned that this summer Mr. Perry will be making the painting of fire hydrants a priority. She said that additionally, the fire hydrants will be pressure tested over the next few years in order to make sure the bonnets are labelled correctly. She stated that this will help the fire department when they are hooking up to the hydrants. Councilwoman Bennett asked if the Township has placed flags on hydrants for identification purposes and Mr. Perry said yes. She asked if a homeowner is responsible for keeping the fire hydrant near their home free of snow and Mr. Perry said that is a State regulation but there is no local Ordinance.

Council Vice President Dunham asked about the SCADA system. Mr. Perry said he believes there is a system at the municipal building that needs to be reconfigured onto the server in order to be operational. Council Vice President Dunham also asked how the DEP could have approved shutting down the Moosepac plant knowing that White Rock was at capacity. Mr. Perry said he was not sure what information had been sent to them and/or reviewed. Ms. Millikin mentioned that when Moosepac was shut down, the closure ended up being very temporary because White Rock could not handle the flow. Council Vice President Dunham stated that he was very frustrated as the Council had been promised Moosepac would be shut down, resulting in savings on electricity and chemicals. He said in addition, the Township spent a lot of money to upgrade the pump station in order to pump waste over to White Rock. Mr. Eagen stated that federal EPA grant funds were available for the bulk of that project.

Mayor Wilsusen thanked Mr. Perry for his candor and for his efforts over the past year and a half. In response to Council questions, Mr. Perry said that filter upgrades on the RBC's should last 15-20 years and he wants to have all the RBC's assessed. Ms. Millikin mentioned to Council that there is also \$150,000 in water capital set aside for the water main extension project on West Shawnee Trail.

Recreation & Parks – Grace Rhinesmith, John Burns

Ms. Rhinesmith said she has three (3) items on her list. She said the first item is combination portable light towers/generators, which would help at some of the events run by Recreation and are good alternatives to permanent lighting, which is expensive to install and upkeep. She said the Recreation Department is currently borrowing the light towers/generators from Soccer. Mayor Wilsusen said these light towers are always in demand.

Ms. Rhinesmith stated that the Recreation office requires exterior improvements to the siding, which is breaking off. She said the inspection revealed asbestos. She said she hoped the project would be funded so the current siding can be remediated and new siding installed.

Ms. Rhinesmith said her final item involves the kitchen at Camp Jefferson. She mentioned that the current fridge and freezer are at least fifteen (15) years old and the freezer can no longer be repaired. She said these appliances are used not just for summer camp but for private rentals and activities. She stated that the oven also needs to be replaced as well as the prep station since the current station has cracks and is unsanitary.

Councilwoman Bennett asked how rentals have been during the pandemic, and Ms. Rhinesmith said they have been up since Camp Jefferson was one of the few spaces in town available for use, particularly as the schools were closed. Council President Senatore asked how long remediation would take and when it would be completed. Ms. Rhinesmith said she would try to get the project started as soon as she could, weather permitted, and would expect it to be completed well before summer camp. In response to Council Vice President Dunham's questions, Ms. Rhinesmith said the company is a licensed remediation company and they will perform tests to make sure the air around the building is clear. She added that the only issue she could foresee is the availability of the company, if they happen to be in high demand.

Mr. Burns informed Council that he was requesting equipment. He said he wanted to replace two (2) lawn mowers that are shutting down when overheated, buy an additional stand on leaf blower, replace the 2004 landscape trailer which is rusting and needs new brakes, and buy two (2) multi-functional spreader/sprayer/seeder. In response to Councilman Birmingham's questions about the trailer, Mr. Burns stated that the Recreation Department landscapes the fields and common areas in town. He also mentioned that the Township can sell off old equipment. Ms. Millikin said Jefferson has already had two (2) successful auctions on Munibid.

Mr. Burns said he was also requesting a pickleball court. Mayor Wilsusen told Council that Mr. Burns originally asked for two (2) courts and this was cut down to one. He stated that he gets many phone calls from residents who want a pickleball court. Councilwoman Bennett said she wanted to point out the money allocated for the pickleball court could fund all the equipment requests made by Mr. Burns. Councilman Birmingham asked if the pickleball court would be located in Dogwood and Mr. Burns said yes. Councilman Birmingham also suggested to Ms. Rhinesmith that maybe Recreation look into an app which would let residents know when the tennis courts are free for use, as well as the pickleball courts if they get approved.

In response to Council questions, Mr. Burns said a Township resident is trying to run a pickleball league in town and pickleball is very much in demand. He said the pickleball court is a quarter the size of a tennis court and the game is easy for small kids as well as seniors to play since there is less running. He stated that pickleball is what people want and he's trying to keep people happy and give them something to do. Mr. Burns said he plans to ask for another pickleball court next year. Councilman Birmingham mentioned that in other towns lines for pickleball are chalked on the tennis court. Ms. Rhinesmith said this makes the tennis players mad. Mr. Burns mentioned that his department taped the lines on the tennis court but people kept ripping the tape up.

Council President Senatore stated that the softball program will not be able to use Kennedy Field since it is hard as a rock. She said players can't slide on the field and the field needs to be upgraded. She said using Ridge and Lakeside Fields are not options as the baseball players take it over Ridge Field two times a week and leave a mound there, and Lakeside Field is too small. Ms. Rhinesmith and Mr. Burns said the baseball program should not be using Ridge Field. Mr. Burns stated that he has a load of clay that he will be using on Kennedy Field this spring. Council President Senatore also requested motion sensor lighting at Ridge Field and power so that

the softball players can put a pitching machine by the netting area. Mr. Burns said there are a few JCP&L poles at Ridge Field. Mayor Wilsusen said he would reach out to JCP&L and have Dave Cooper look into running some power. Councilman Birmingham said he hoped pickleball didn't fizzle out like roller hockey did. Ms. Rhinesmith said she still receives a lot of requests for hockey at Ackerson field.

Councilwoman Bennett asked Ms. Millikin if there was a response regarding the letter Council received from Cliff Williams and the Land Use Board. Ms. Millikin said the letter was composed by the attorney's office and she is pretty sure the inclusion of the Jefferson Diner properties is a typographical error but she is waiting for the attorney to verify.

Council Vice President Dunham asked Mr. Eagen for the Recreation Trust Fund balance. Mr. Eagen said he would send an email with the existing balance. He said there will be \$282,000 in new money for 2021 based on the tax point, and he anticipated being able to use \$125,000 for recreation projects. He stated that approximately \$140,000 will be used for the final payment on the turf field. Ms. Millikin said the turf field will need some upgrade in the next five (5) years. Council Vice President Dunham asked Ms. Millikin to find out why the ten (10) year plan for Fields and Playgrounds only goes out to 2023.

Councilwoman Bennett said she would like to review some operating expenses if Council was in agreement. Council consensus was that questions about operating expenses should be discussed now.

Councilwoman Bennett asked about the increase in Administrative Service contract and Ms. Millikin explained that this amount is to cover the cost of software maintenance for Facility Dude. Council Vice President Dunham asked when this would end and Ms. Millikin said she would get more specifics and email them to Council. Councilwoman Bennett also asked about the increase in Mayor's Public Relations and Ms. Millikin said the increase is to cover the costs associated with the Christmas Luncheon. Mayor Wilsusen added that the monies would also be used for employee appreciation lunches.

Councilwoman Bennett asked if Council public relations could be cut from \$1000 back to \$500 as it appears that the average expenses are normally between \$200-\$300. Ms. Reilly said she saw no issue with that decrease and Ms. Millikin said she would reduce the budget amount.

Council Vice President Dunham asked if more money was needed for codification as that amount went over budget in 2020 by \$5000. Ms. Reilly said Council has passed a lot of Ordinances in the past few years but she thinks the budget amount of \$4150 will be adequate as she received a quote from General Code. In addition, Ms. Reilly said the Township has cut down on some supplements since the code is on-line and physical books are not necessary.

Councilwoman Bennett stated that Ms. Reilly requested \$13,000 for Elections but only \$10,000 was funded. Ms. Reilly said she would prefer a higher amount because the \$10,000 barely covers the County bill and there are some supply costs. Ms. Reilly also mentioned that this year's election bill would have been astronomical if not for CARES funding and the 2021 election process has still not yet been finalized, so the expenses may increase. Council consensus was to increase this line item to \$12,000.

Council Vice President Dunham asked Mr. Eagen if he could lower the overtime for the Finance Department and Mr. Eagen said he thought \$6000 would be sufficient. Council Vice President Dunham asked about the increase for the audit. Mr. Eagen said the contract went up about two percent (2%) but agreed that the line item could be reduced to \$34,000.

Councilwoman Bennett asked about the funds set aside for tax collection training and travel/conference. Ms. Millikin said two employees are receiving training and that is why the amounts are increased. Council Vice President Dunham asked why legal services are funded at \$10,000 when expenses have been very low and Ms. Millikin said the Township hopes to begin foreclosing on certain properties.

Councilman Birmingham said that in the past there has been a lot of money spent on training which didn't result in certifications. He asked if the expectation was that these courses and monies are going to be leading towards employees taking a test and getting certified. Mayor Wilsusen stated that absolutely no one takes a course unless they are going to get certified. He said that employees were getting raises before they got their certifications but that is no longer an occurrence and no one gets raises or promotions unless they get certifications. Councilman Birmingham asked if employees are allowed to go to classes if they aren't going to be receiving a certification. Mayor Wilsusen said there are certain classes that don't get a certification but if a class requires a test at the end the employee is expected to pass the test.

Council Vice President Dunham said he wanted to call attention to the \$14,000 decrease in the salary line item for the assessor's office and that was good for the taxpayers. He asked about engineering services used in the assessor's office and Ms. Millikin said this money would be used for tax maps. She mentioned that Mr. Tighe is trying hard to settle old tax appeals. Council Vice President Dunham also questioned the special assessments amount of \$12,000. Mr. Eagen said that these assessors perform the added and omitted appraisals and Council usually passes a resolution in June for \$15,000. He said the amount normally comes in under \$15,000 and that's why there is \$12,000 in the line item.

Council Vice President Dunham asked about the budget line item for the Land Use Board Attorney. Mr. Eagen mentioned that the Board doesn't have a track record yet since it was just combined. Ms. Millikin mentioned the Board has a lot of applications this year. Council Vice President Dunham also noted the large increase in the retainer for the Labor Attorney, from \$12,000 to \$42,000. Ms. Millikin said the Labor Attorney was used for arbitration and Mr. Eagen mentioned contract negotiations. Mr. Eagen said a lot of the extra funds expended on the Labor Attorney last year came out of the special litigation line item.

Council Vice President Dunham questioned the increase in the Engineering salary and wage line item. Ms. Millikin said Jim Lutz has been hired as the Assistant Engineer and will take over from Ed Haack in July or August. She said the Township has also hired a part time draftsman who will graduate at the end of May and then become full time and also possibly become the Assistant Engineer. Council Vice President Dunham commented that training and education funding is also increased in Engineering and Mr. Eagen said the department is anticipating with new people they will need more funding for training.

Council Vice President Dunham commented that the Historical Society programs were over budget last year and asked if \$625 was enough for 2021. Mr. Eagen said if Council looked at the bottom line the Historical Society still spent within their overall budget total. Council President Senatore asked what the rent and storage line item was used for and Mr. Eagen replied that the Society has to store some of their artifacts. He said the amount has been increasing in the last five (5) years and it's the single biggest item in their budget. Ms. Millikin said the storage facility has to be climate controlled.

Council Vice President Dunham asked about the increase in engineering services for the Land Use Board and asked if this was due to the lack of history. Mr. Eagen said last year he combined the amounts designated for the planning board and board of adjustments and that after a few years he would check trends. Council Vice President Dunham mentioned the amount for Building Department training

and education and said only half this was spent last year. Ms. Millikin said a lot of classes were cancelled in 2020 due to Covid. Mayor Wilsusen said it's very difficult to compare 2020 with 2021 because of the pandemic.

Council Vice President Dunham asked about the line item of \$5,000 for Code Enforcement Property Maintenance. Mr. Eagen said this is a rainy day fund for when the Township might need to landscape an unkempt home or demolish a structure. Mayor Wilsusen mentioned that since the Township's registration of vacant homes has resulted in revenue for Jefferson. He said the registration fee increases each year depending on how long a property is vacant. Mr. Eagen said the first year he thought there were about twenty (20) registrations and now the number is in the thirties.

Council Vice President Dunham remarked on the 1.2 million and 1.7 million dollars appropriated for health insurance and hospitalization and said if the public wants to know why their taxes are going up to, to note these amounts. He commented that the liability insurance went down and Mr. Eagen said Jefferson was lucky with the way the rates came in. He also noted that worker's compensation increased by \$18,000 and Mr. Eagen explained that the number will probably decrease since some of that money is for the camp worker's compensation. Council Vice President asked about the Liability Reserve for Deductibles and Mr. Eagen stated that the accident deductible is \$1000. He mentioned that occasionally the Township can recoup the deductible from the other party involved in the accident but that is not always the case and that's why there is money set aside in that line item.

In response to Council Vice President Dunham's questions about police overtime and the police budget, Mr. Eagen said the overtime amount is the same for 2021 as it was in 2020, and that he doesn't feel that departments need to fluctuate every line item as long as the total budget stays in line. Council Vice President Dunham said he noticed the new line item for police mobile cameras and Ms. Millikin explained that the \$30,000 is for maintenance associated with the vehicle cameras. Mr. Eagen said the maintenance is an ongoing cost so it can no longer be a capital expense. Council Vice President Dunham asked if this amount will increase when the Township has body cameras and Mayor Wilsusen said yes. Ms. Millikin confirmed that there will be a maintenance fee associated with the body cameras and said she thought it was about \$9100 over the next five (5) years. Councilman Birmingham mentioned that body cameras are a state mandate, state pay situation and one of the major costs is storage. Mayor Wilsusen said he was on a call with the Governor's Office yesterday and the State is still setting up its program for financing the body cameras, even though the program is supposed to be implemented by June.

Council Vice President Dunham asked about the \$50,000 set aside for a communications equipment lease and Mr. Eagen said he was not certain what that was for. Ms. Millikin said she would find out and let Council know.

Council Vice President Dunham had questions about the fire department budgets. Mr. Eagen stated that the money set aside for meals and dinners is used largely for the installation dinners, which Ms. Millikin mentioned were cancelled this year due to Covid. In response to Council Vice President Dunham's questions about the line items for parts, subscriptions, and travel and conference, Mr. Eagen said the Township guarantees each Fire Company \$90,000 in operating funds each year. He said he is less concerned about their sub accounts and more concerned that they come in within their \$90,000 operating budget. Councilman Birmingham mentioned that Fire Company #1 spent \$55,000 on upgrading to natural gas and Mayor Wilsusen reiterated that the Fire Company paid for that themselves and the Township did not contribute. Council Vice President Dunham asked if the \$200 set aside in the Fire Bureau for fire hydrants would be used for painting and Ms. Millikin said the money to paint the hydrants would come out of the Utility budget. Mr. Eagen agreed to cut the \$200 in the fire hydrant line item as well as the \$650 in the internet frame line item. He said he believes the fire bureau system was incorporated into the overall IT system and therefore the \$650 was not needed.

Council Vice President Dunham asked why the amount allocated for the Road Department Seasonal/Temporary was \$42,000 when only \$12,400 was expended last year. Ms. Millikin said the Township did have a permanent part-time employee who left mid-year last year. Mr. Eagen thought it was possible that money for regular temporary staff is not being charged correctly. He and Ms. Millikin said they would look into this and Council Vice President Dunham asked them to find out if the number is valid and if not to reduce it.

Councilwoman Bennett inquired as to why there is \$3000 set aside for data processing in the Road Department when there has never been more than \$125 spent on that line item. Mr. Eagen said he would have to double check with the department and Ms. Millikin said she would ask. Council Vice President Dunham recommended decreasing the amount from \$3000 to \$500 if possible. He also mentioned the \$180,000 set aside for road department parts and said he thought with all the new vehicles the Township is buying there should be some improvement in the cost. Mr. Eagen said the costs used to be more. Mayor Wilsusen stated that the diesel emissions are an issue because every time there is a clog in a filter it's a \$2000 hit. Council Vice President Dunham said he is a big proponent of electric vehicles.

Council President Senatore had questions about the amount set aside for tires and rims. Mr. Eagen said that all fleet vehicles, including police cars, get charged to that line item. Ms. Millikin said the request had been cut back to last year's amount of \$23,000. Mayor Wilsusen said a big issue is that every time Ford changes their model year they change the rim size on the tires.

Council Vice President Dunham had questions about the allocation for the Road Department's Equipment Lease & Rental. Councilwoman Bennett said that historically, the money has not been expended. Ms. Millikin said she thinks the Township is renting space for the vac for the winter but she will double check. He wondered why the Township was budgeting \$120,000 for road supplies when only \$90,000 was spent last year. Mr. Eagen said the department did fewer projects because of Covid.

Council Vice President Dunham said he was concerned about last year's over-expenditure on the wash rack. Ms. Millikin said there is money in capital this year for this item. He also mentioned the over-expenditure on street and building signs and Mayor Wilsusen said this was his fault as he requested a lot of sign replacements.

Councilwoman Bennett wondered why no money had been expended for two years on the crack sealer. Mr. Eagen said this equipment is shared with Randolph and they are the lead agency. He said that whenever there is maintenance or supplies needed Randolph bills Jefferson. Ms. Millikin said the Township did not crack seal anything last year.

Council Vice President Dunham remarked on the money set aside for tree removal. Mayor Wilsusen said tree removal is tough and that the Township is fortunate that JCP&L did a lot of work in town. Ms. Millikin mentioned that Forester Tim Slavin is very involved in tree issues and makes sure that trees are removed if necessary.

Council Vice President Dunham said that money set aside for Public Works meals and dinners has never been spent and wondered if the \$1000 could be cut. Mr. Eagen said he thought the money was for meals and dinners for clerical staff who may be called in during an emergency but maybe was being charged off to another line item. He agreed that the \$1000 could be taken out of the budget. Councilwoman Bennett said she realizes that Mr. Eagen is most concerned about the bottom line but isn't each department supposed to represent where the monies are actually being spent. Mayor Wilsusen said he prefers things to be reported that way. Mr. Eagen stated that he didn't think it makes sense to adjust a line item up or down \$100 per year based on what happened the past year. He said he reviews for trends over a number of years.

Council Vice President Dunham requested that the \$2350 allocated for Public Works office supplies be decreased to \$1500 as the expenditures historically have been low. Mr. Eagen agreed. He also agreed with Councilwoman Bennett's recommendation to cut in half the \$400 set aside for Building & Grounds Paint & Lumber since historically there has been no expenditures to this line item.

Councilwoman Bennett asked why there was \$5000 set aside for HVAC cleaning but no expenditures for the past two years. Mr. Eagen said he thought money was being set aside in case there is a major repair needed. He reminded Council there is a bid coming in for new units so maybe this amount can be tweaked. Ms. Millikin mentioned that maybe the money is used for duct cleaning. Mr. Eagen said he thought the 2017 increase in the line item was in fact to implement a maintenance program. He said it's possible the department is charging the maintenance to another line item, like facilities or service contracts. He said he will check with the department to see if they are keeping up with the maintenance program and charging it elsewhere.

Councilwoman Bennett mentioned that the \$100 set aside for Health Department meals and dinners has never been spent. Councilman Birmingham said he thought departments should be commended or rewarded for not spending money. Council Vice President Dunham said he agreed and had asked about doing so years ago. He said he was told by the previous administration that it is against the law.

Councilwoman Bennett asked if the \$1000 allocation for Health Department training and education could be adjusted. Mr. Eagen said he would check with the department to see if they had specific training plans. She also asked about cutting the allocation for travel and conference and uniforms. Ms. Millikin said the department is getting shirts so she would not recommend cuts.

Council Vice President Dunham commented on vehicle repairs for Dial-A-Ride and asked if there was a plan for this department. Ms. Millikin said there is basically one full time driver and currently no demand for the service.

Council Vice President Dunham asked why \$25,000 was being set aside for Animal Control Standby and Part-time when only \$12,000 was spent in 2020. Ms. Millikin stated that the pound attendant left last July and so far the Township has not been able to fill the position. In response to Councilman Birmingham's questions she said that funds for the substitute ACO is also part of that allocation. Mayor Wilsusen said the attendant was hired to help ACO Kim Smith and they do not respond to calls, and Ms. Millikin said the attendant only worked four (4) hours a day.

Council Vice President Dunham questioned the \$10,000 allocation for animal control contracts and Councilwoman Bennett pointed out that this is a new line item. Ms. Millikin said the Township needs to find a new vet as the previous vet can no longer assist and Jefferson currently has a temporary vet. Council Vice President Dunham asked if the amount could be decreased to \$7,000 and Ms. Millikin said she did not recommend a cut since she does not know what the cost will be. Mr. Eagen reminded Council that the department originally requested \$15,000 and this was cut to \$10,000.

Councilwoman Bennett asked if the line item for Recreation mileage could be cut in half and Ms. Millikin said yes because there is a recreation vehicle that can be used. Councilwoman Bennett also asked to cut the \$1000 allocated for Recreation printing since it is not being expended. Ms. Millikin agreed that this could be cut to \$500 and said it can be cut further next year if it is not being used.

Council Vice President Dunham mentioned that there was a large over-expenditure for Recreation Special Events. Council President Senatore said she thought that might be a result of hosting the drive through events, which was necessary due to Covid. Councilwoman Bennett asked if Recreation travel/conference could be cut from \$1,500 to \$1,000 and Ms. Millikin said yes. Councilwoman Bennett also requested cuts to training/education. Mr. Eagen reminded Council that camp funds are depleted. Councilwoman Bennett inquired about the \$1500 set aside for White Rock. Mr. Eagen said this amount was for upkeep at the facility.

Council Vice President Dunham mentioned the over-expenditures in the Parks Department for clothing and new equipment. Mr. Eagen said he left these line items at last year's budget amount and the department will have to learn to live within their budget. Councilwoman Bennett asked about the money allocated for meals and dinners. She said there is \$500 in the account with no money spent and asked if this could be cut in half. Mr. Eagen replied that there has only been a Parks budget since 2019 so these expenditures might still be charged to Recreation. He said he would check with John Burns.

In response to questions from Council Vice President Dunham about Jefferson Fest, Ms. Millikin said the intention is to continue with the event. Councilwoman Bennett mentioned that student government day has not happened in a while and there is \$600 allocated to this program. Council Vice President Dunham said the school doesn't want to participate. Mr. Eagen agreed the amount could be cut.

Councilwoman Bennett mentioned the money set aside for the gazebo concerts and said she had heard the Jefferson Arts Committee had disbanded. She explained that the Arts Committee is normally given a donation from the Township and they coordinate the concerts. Mayor Wilsusen said he wasn't aware of the process. Council President Senatore suggested leaving the money in the budget for this year and Council agreed.

Council Vice President Dunham confirmed with Mr. Eagen that \$50,000 would be allocated to the salary adjustment account and Mr. Eagen said yes and that this was probably the lowest amount ever allocated to this line item.

Council Vice President Dunham requested a reduction to the Dial-A-Ride maintenance and repair line item since there is \$1,000 set aside and historically no expenditure. Mr. Eagen agreed the amount could be reduced to \$500. Council Vice President Dunham mentioned that he hopes the Township will see a reduction in electricity expenditures now that Jefferson adopted the cooperative program. Mayor Wilsusen reminded Council that the cooperative program is for residents and the Township already participates in an energy cooperative. Ms. Millikin said the Township conducts an auction for energy rates. Mayor Wilsusen stated that once the municipal building is converted to natural gas he expects to see a savings.

Councilwoman Bennett expressed concern that maybe the Township was not budgeting enough for fuel as prices are rising quickly. Council Vice President Dunham asked why there was \$5,000 allocated for fuel for Fire Company #1 and Ms. Millikin said she believes that is for the Cozy Lake substation. Councilman Birmingham said the substation should be getting a natural gas line nearby within a year.

Council Vice President Dunham referenced the increase in pension (PERS) from \$673,000 to \$755,000. Mr. Eagen said that in theory, the Township should be paying five percent (5%) of salaries but there are other costs levied to make up for some of the decisions the State has made in the past. Councilman Smith said the pension fund has gone broke. Councilman Birmingham asked if the PERS increase was more than the PFRS increase. Ms. Millikin stated that PERS went up 18.4% and PFRS went up 9.3%.

Council Vice President Dunham asked why there were almost no expenditures in the Municipal Alliance budget. Mr. Eagen said there was a freeze and the Municipal Alliance was not permitted to spend money. He stated that the Township has to budget 25% of the County award, which has decreased from \$13,000 to \$6,000 and that he has already made adjustments to that account.

Councilwoman Bennett asked about cutting the \$160 allocation for Court meals and dinner since the money is never expended. Mr. Eagen said he thought this money was probably used years ago when they were called out in the middle of the night, but that practice has become obsolete so he agreed with cutting the funding. Council Vice President Dunham asked about cutting Court education and training from \$1500 to \$1000. Councilwoman Bennett requested \$750. Ms. Millikin said she recommended \$1000 since she didn't know if the staff would need to obtain any continuing education units (CEU's). She reminded Council that the Court budget is also sent to the County for review.

Councilwoman Bennett also asked about the increase in public defender legal fees from \$2500 to \$14,000. Mr. Eagen explained that the Township has implemented a contract and monthly retainer in order to level off costs and prevent fluctuations. He said traditionally, costs were paid out of the trust account but with the change in bail and court laws the Township does not collect as much in fees. Mayor Wilsusen said Court Administrator Betsy Mertz brought this situation to his attention. Councilman Birmingham commented that the Township is losing money because of the legislation and Mr. Eagen said yes.

Council Vice President Dunham mentioned the increase in the amount allocated for capital improvement and Mr. Eagen said this is part of the long range plan to fund more projects without incurring debt. Council Vice President Dunham asked about the increase in the capital improvement – project engineering line item. Mr. Eagen said the engineering and road department staff spend a lot of time on capital projects. He explained that he takes the bottom line of the salary account and then deducts this amount because it's out of the budget cap. He said that in years when the Township has had a tight budget cap this money has been used to offset the capital budget, and therefore he would like to keep the money there in case there are tight cap issues in the upcoming years.

Council Vice President Dunham commented on the increase amounts allocated to debt service and to temporary debt service and offered kudos to his fellow Council members and to the Mayor for efforts to reduce the Township's debt even more. He noted that the interest on bonds is going down and Mr. Eagen said the Township has not issued any long term debt since 2016. Council Vice President Dunham said it is good for the taxpayers to know that the Township is not putting them in long term debt. He mentioned the increase in the amount of note principal and Mr. Eagen explained that is because the Township carries more short term debt by not bonding.

Council Vice President Dunham asked if the Township would be following the five (5) year capital plan or the ten (10) year plan. Ms. Millikin said the Township will adhere more to the five (5) year plan but that the ten (10) year plan gives a snapshot of what to expect. She said the administration will be adding a tenth year to the plan every year. Mayor Wilsusen stated that the plan helps the Township know where it's going and the impact of budgetary decisions.

Council Vice President Dunham thanked everyone for their indulgence in reviewing the line items. Councilwoman Bennett said she thought hearing from the department was a very important part of the budget process and that it's an education for Council members to go through the line items and learn what the money is being allocated for. Mayor Wilsusen said he appreciates the fact that Council is willing to go through the budget and he doesn't expect to be rubber stamped. He thanked Council for their time. He commended Mr. Eagen for having good answers to the questions. Ms. Millikin said she appreciated Council input and said she will provide answers to their questions. Councilman Birmingham commented that Council had spent quite a bit of time on the budget and it amounted to seven and a half (7 ½) hours over the last two (2) meetings.

6. ADJOURNMENT AT 10:09 PM

Motion made by Council Vice President Dunham, second by Councilman Birmingham, to adjourn the meeting at 10:09 pm, with all members in favor signifying by "Aye."

February 24, 2021

Michele Reilly, Township Clerk

Melissa Senatore, Council President