

TOWNSHIP OF MOORESTOWN
TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
BUDGET WORKSHOP
April 12, 2019

The Budget Workshop of the Moorestown Township Council was called to order by Mayor Petriello at Town Hall, Council Chambers, 111 West Second Street, Moorestown at 8:06a.m. Attendance was as follows:

Lisa Petriello, Mayor	Thomas H. Neff, Township Manager
Brian Donnelly, Councilmember (via Phone 8:10 am)	Thomas J. Merchel, Deputy Township Manager/CFO
Nicole Gillespie, Deputy Mayor (left 10:28 am)	Patricia L. Hunt, Township Clerk
Michael Locatell, Councilmember (Absent)	
Victoria Napolitano, Councilmember	

Staff in Attendance: Doug Nims, Public Works Director; Theresa Miller, Recreation Director

Mayor Petriello advised that notice of the meeting was given in accordance with law.

Mayor Petriello introduced Doug Nims, Public Works Director and Theresa Miller, Recreation Director.

DISCUSSION ON 2019 BUDGET:

Department of Public Works

Mr. Neff gave a brief overview of the Department of Public Works budget.

Mr. Nims gave an explanation on the need for additional employees with the increase in the required work load of the department. Much discussion was had on the current number of employees and why there has been a reduction in staffing. There was a discussion held on the regulations and fines that have been imposed by the DEP for Stormwater Management. There is a need for a Stormwater Coordinator who can also handle recycling. Mr. Merchel stated that the employee would need to go to classes for both. Discussion continued on the position. There was a discussion on the increase on the equipment budget line. There was continued discussion on the Coordinator position. There was discussion on the stormwater flooding issues. Deputy Mayor Gillespie feels that we need to educate the residents on ways they can help elevate the problem. Continued review of the line items was had. There was a discussion on contracted breakfast and dinner allowances during snow plowing. A discussion was had on the proposed overtime amount included in the budget. A discussion was had on the decrease in the sidewalk reimbursement line item. Mr. Nims stated that budgeted amount used depends on the number of requests for reimbursement from the residents that are received in a year. There was a discussion on the drainage line item. Mr. Merchel explained the how Snow Removal Trust Fund works and how funds can be transferred. Continued discussion on the budget was had.

At 8:53 am, Mayor Petriello stated that they will not get to Ms. Miller's budget today and Ms. Miller could leave the meeting. It was decided that Ms. Miller's budget would be discussed on April 29, 2019 at 6 pm. Mr. Neff stated that he would like to discuss Strawbridge Lake before Ms. Miller leaves the meeting.

Mr. Neff stated that he had Ms. Miller handle the capital projects on Strawbridge Lake. He went into a brief discussion of what the projects are. There was a discussion held on the costs associated and funding of the projects. There was discussion on the cost to maintain after the project has been completed.

Discussion was had on lawn maintenance. Contracting the lawn maintenance services has reduced a need for an additional employee for mowing lawns. A discussion was had on what is covered under the contract and what the Department of Public Works will continue to maintain. Mayor Petriello asked how they are making out on the no mowing areas. Ms. Napolitano said she has been suggesting for years to plant wild flowers in small areas in town to save time from loading and unloading equipment to mow. Mr. Merchel stated that they have been slowly rolling it out. There was a discussion on the areas in town.

Discussion was had on the equipment line item. There was a discussion held on the recreation department playground equipment and field improvements. There was a brief discussion on the turf and the testing that is done every year. There was a discussion on the bathrooms at the parks and their condition.

At 9:28 am, Ms. Miller was dismissed from the meeting.

Continue review of the Department of Public Works line items was had. Discussion was had on the maintenance of motor vehicles and the great job done by staff.

Discussion was had on seasonal laborers and the need for the employees.

Continue review of the Department of Public Works line items was had. Mr. Merchel explained why there was an increase in sanitation collection line item. Stated there is not much that can be done until we go out to bid again. He stated that it was still a big savings over what the Township had paid in the past. Required NJDEP permits were discussed.

Mayor Petriello discussed the condition of the trash receptacles on Main Street. Mr. Nims explained how Department of Public Works employees are cleaning the cans. He stated that it hadn't been done for about 10 to 15 years.

Continued discussion of the budget line items was had.

Discussion was held on the appearance on Main Street. Mayor Petriello would like to see funding in the budget for benches, plantings to renew the foundation beds. Much discussion continued on this topic.

Continued discussion of budget line items was had.

Discussion was had on snow removal and costs associated with it.

Much discussion was had on road improvements.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Petriello opened the meeting to the public.

Monique Begg, 209 Parry Drive, stated that she believes that the stormwater issues need our attention. They will increase in time. She said we have been lucky so far. We cannot count on luck to protect the environment. We have no choice but to spend money on essentials. We all share the environment. There is more that the residents can do. Strawbridge Lake has become a natural resource.

Joan Ponessa, 215 Locust Street, thanked Mr. Nims. She stated that MEAC is pleased with the progress this year. Stormwater Management and flooding are their goal this year. She thinks it is important to educate citizens and promote proper stormwater management. As the Chairperson of MEAC, she is the representative to STEM and she knows STEM is concerned with Open Space funding. It seems like there is going to be a lot of funding going to maintenance and it should be going to purchasing open space.

Pamela Richards, 304 Colonial Avenue, stated that she will put her questions in writing. She believes the staff did an outstanding job with the Department of Public Works budget. She has lived here for over 40 years. Main Street was gorgeous when she moved in. As she said in March, accountability. She agrees with Ms. Napolitano that enough is enough. Dr. Richards believes there is an obligation to make Main Street look good but if Passarella's can make it look beautiful why can't everyone else. She thinks that there are too many of those flower beds and the number should be reduced. She stated that we should not be investing money without something in writing. She stated that they should have a plan. Dr. Richards asked about the Children's Pond. She suggested that if Council hasn't talked to Harvey Howard they should before doing anything. There are trees that need to be cut back. She believes that climate change is creating a lot the situations. Dr. Richards stated that the Dog Park parking lot is a disaster. The time it will take to fill the pot holes is ridiculous. She asked who is responsible for the fencing. Mr. Nims said Public Works. Dr. Richards said we have the same size fencing in the small park as the large park. A small dog can go right through the wire to the large park. She would like Mr. Nims to take a look at it and get pricing. Maybe Dr. Richards can raise money for the whole thing. There have been complaints about dogs digging in the field. Mr. Nims stated that dogs dig. Dr. Richards stated that she cannot believe that we cannot maintain our street signs. There is a lack of accountability and planning. When you have guys on the road and they see a sign that needs to be replaced, have them jot it down and report it. The Tree Preservation should be able to tell what signs are needed. I would volunteer. Mr. Nims stated that he has a list but it is the man power. Dr. Richards said that recycling is her pet peeve. She said that Mr. Nims has instituted a fine system at Public Works Garage Recycling Center. She suggests that if the opportunity ever comes up that we should think about keeping the same person there Monday through Friday instead of Monday through Wednesday. This is an outstanding employee just like Tom Merchel and Doug Nims are. We have more people dropping off trash there and if that continues and when the time comes to replace the dumpsters, we should invest in larger ones so that we don't have to dump so often. When the wind blows recycling out of the top of dumpsters, she thinks that a chain link fence is needed around the back so that the recycling doesn't blow into the basin. It would be a one-time expense. She hopes that Council supports the Department of Public Works trucks. She added with affordable housing coming, we don't want to overburden the system.

ADJOURNMENT: At 10:55 a.m., there being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn.

MOTIONED BY: Mr. Donnelly
SECONDED BY: Ms. Napolitano
VOTE: All in favor

VICKI M. GOUGH, RMC
Deputy Township Clerk