

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BUDGET MEETING
MINUTES – NOVEMBER 10, 2022

A Budget Meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on November 10, 2022. Dr. Weiss called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. and called the Roll.

Those present:

Board of Supervisors: Fredric K. Weiss, Vice Chair
Suzanne Blundi, Treasurer
John B. Lewis, Supervisor

Others: Kenneth Coluzzi, Interim Township Manager
Kurt Ferguson, Former Township Manager

Absent: James McCartney, Board of Supervisors Chair
Daniel Grenier, Board of Supervisors Secretary

2023 PRELIMINARY BUDGET DISCUSSION

Chief Coluzzi stated Mr. Ferguson and some of the Department Heads are present this evening to discuss their Budgets.

Mr. Ferguson stated the proposed Budget maintains the current overall rate of 20.51 mils and a year-end fund balance for 2023 of over \$3 million. The Budget contemplates the hiring of a full-time laborer in the Public Works Department and converting a part-time Finance position to full-time.

Mr. Ferguson noted the header “Updates, Errors, and Omissions,” adding that there are some changes to the document that the Board was provided a week ago. He noted Page 58 under Capital Budget Year End Projection which had \$25,000 for engineering expenses, and that should be \$225,000. He stated that requires an additional \$195,000 from the Rescue Plan to be transferred in 2023 that had been planned all along. He stated that will change the Rescue Plan transfer from \$465,000 to \$660,000.

Mr. Ferguson stated Fire Inspection Fees will raise an additional \$24,000 and there are additional expenditures of \$47,000 for items Mr. Chamberlain has discussed with the Board previously including recruitment and training,

uniforms, etc. and the net cost to the Fire Services Budget is \$23,000. Mr. Ferguson stated these had been in the tentative Budget, but did not get transferred over.

Mr. Ferguson stated with regard to Public Works under leaf collection where there is labor assigned that number needs to be updated from the \$136,000 listed to \$156,000 for an additional cost to the General Fund of \$20,000. The Fund Balance will still be above \$3 million.

Mr. Ferguson stated in the Park & Recreation Budget, the Department will have the need for two mowers next year, one of them will be a little more than \$10,000 which is proposed to be purchased outright, and a much larger John Deere tractor at almost \$59,000 is recommended to be financed as has been done for more expensive pieces of equipment. He stated the total Capital cost next year would be \$23,000 more than shown in the Budget, and it would lower the Fund Balance in Park & Recreation at the end of 2023 to just under \$56,000.

Mr. Ferguson stated there were a variety of projects that were approved by the Board earlier this year that have been memorialized in the Budget. He stated the funding for Schuyler tennis courts, Veterans Park ADA, and the Memorial Park shade structure and Secret Garden surface will be coming from the Sewer Proceeds account, and the amounts for each project have been shown.

Mr. Ferguson stated Park & Recreation projects include Caiola lights, the pocket park at Veterans Park, Heacock Park, and updates to the Pool bathrooms.

Mr. Ferguson stated the Maplevale drainage project was approved very early this year and was discussed originally in 2021. He stated the cost for that is split between 2022 and 2023 as shown in the Budget. He stated the Woodside bike path project is also listed; and although no dollar amount has been put in, it is in the Budget for two years to make sure we capture that cost adding that it is being covered by a Grant.

Mr. Ferguson stated with regard to the Township Building renovations, there was an amount budgeted in 2022 of \$135,000. He stated this is to be funded from the American Rescue Plan, and has been carried over if the Board is interested in pursuing this. He stated the number has gone up to \$200,000 adding it was Bid out this year, and the Bids were rejected as the prices came in over.

Mr. Ferguson stated with regard to Fire Services the first item is financing a Tahoe for the Fire Services Director. He added the Fire Services Director oversees the volunteer service. The Director would have his own Township vehicle, and that would be financed over five years with \$14,442 from the Fire Fund being recommended. Mr. Ferguson stated the other item is an air-bottle filling station that Mr. Chamberlain will discuss further. He stated it is recommended that come from the Rescue Plan funding. He stated the Board has been very equitable in putting those funds out for stormwater, Park & Rec, and safety issues; and he feels this item also falls under the umbrella of an extraordinary expense that Mr. Chamberlain will discuss further.

Mr. Ferguson stated originally it was not contemplated that we would be going in aggressive on Capital equipment in the Public Works Department. He stated there has been significant delays in getting equipment delivered; and some of the equipment could be fifteen to eighteen months out. He stated the concern that Mr. Fuller, Public Works Director had strongly expressed was that if we wait another year to order things and the delays continue, we could be looking years out to get pieces of equipment that we feel should be replaced fairly soon. He stated a ten-wheel dump truck is being recommended with money coming from the Rescue Plan to be purchased outright.

Mr. Ferguson stated the Budget is also recommending a six-wheel dump truck and a pick-up truck to be financed out of the Road Machinery Fund. He stated because the Road Machinery Fund did not anticipate having two pieces being funded from this Fund, the Fund just for this year would be a little bit short. There is a recommendation that \$20,000 from the Rescue Plan Account go into the Road Machinery Fund. He stated we have leased pieces of equipment over time which have been staged, and there will be pieces of equipment coming off this year, so there is room that will open up to accommodate expenses moving forward.

Mr. Ferguson stated costs this year have gone up, and the recommendation is that \$50,000 be used from the Rescue Plan to stay on the paving schedule that had been outlined under the current Three-Year Plan.

Mr. Ferguson stated there are other items in the Rescue Plan that were outlined in his letter to the Board of Supervisors. He stated one of those is \$100,000 to be dedicated to tree maintenance/tree removal. He stated one of the challenges that we have had this year, and in Park & Recreation as well, has been the abundance of trimming of limbs and dead trees that

have to be taken care of regardless of whether or not it was budgeted for. He stated \$100,000 is being suggested to come from the Rescue Plan Fund into the General Fund to assist the Public Works Department with dealing with this.

Mr. Ferguson stated what has been put in the Budget for Park & Recreation to do the same thing with the trees is a fraction of what it needs to be. He stated that Budget could not sustain a \$50,000 to \$60,000 allocation for trees in the parks although it is likely justified as we have spent about that much this year even though we had not planned on it. He stated the Board should consider this further.

Mr. Ferguson stated there is \$100,000 from the American Rescue Plan being suggested to come over to assist for all the IT upgrades we had to make as a result of the breach we had earlier in the year. He stated those expenses were far in excess of what we had anticipated for this year. He stated we have upgraded for greater security for next year, and that is a strain on the Budget. He stated the Board could chose to use that money to offset those costs moving forward.

Mr. Ferguson noted the Golf Budget - Page 46. He stated with the Golf Course not having a Debt payment mandated to be made, one of the items that was put in place last year was using the excess Revenue to go toward other things. He stated the General Fund is still owed \$1,365,000. He stated on Page 46 492001 – it shows that budgeted from the Golf Course to go to the General Fund is \$455,000. He stated that amount could be applied in 2023, 2024, and 2025.

Mr. Ferguson stated the funding for Park & Rec Capital which was put in last year which helped fund the bike path would be \$150,000, with \$75,000 going to the Golf Bond Repayment Fund. He stated there is a page included which outlines what the aggregate debt was that was paid off. He stated the \$75,000 is being transferred to the new Golf Capital Account which is meant to sit and assist for long-term Capital costs such as the irrigation system that Mr. Attara has talked about over the years. Mr. Ferguson stated the Golf Course Budget as contemplated will be able to support all of the transfers outlined in 2022. He stated the Budget for Golf next year will still show a Fund Balance as seen on the bottom of Page 46 of about \$97,000 which gives room for unexpected events and having more money to potentially go to one of the transfer items or a new one if desired for next year.

Golf – Mike Attara

Mr. Attara stated he is President of Spirit Golf which manages Makefield Highlands Golf Course. He stated the Golf operations have been running well ahead of Budget this year. He stated the Board was provided numbers through September. He stated Greens Fees may hit \$1.65 million this year, and we are budgeting \$1.55 million as we want to be careful given the weather and other factors that could take place, and still meet the needs of the transfers and the other balances they are looking at for year end. He stated we started the year at a “negative 120,” and with that we are still in a good position to make the transfers.

Mr. Attara stated Food and Beverage has been doing well, and this will be our best year at over \$900,000. He added that we still feel there is more opportunity as we continue to come out of COVID and look to book more parties and events. He stated we are hopeful that will continue to grow, but they want to be mindful of the Budget, and he feels the number of \$3.54 million on the Income line is a safe number.

Mr. Lewis stated Top Tracer was introduced which started out well, and he asked where we are in terms of revenue for Top Tracer, and he asked if we have paid off the costs associated with it. Mr. Attara stated the numbers are close to \$200,000 on the practice range which is where that money is being applied, and there is an increase in the driving range activity. He stated they were doing \$160,000 to \$170,000, and Top Tracer has increased that. He stated we are about \$50,000 to \$60,000 ahead of where we were, and it is getting close to being paid off; and he feels that by June/July of next year it will be fully paid.

Mr. Lewis noted the Revenue numbers on Page 42, and he asked if that has been corrected to the actual numbers as of 11/3. Mr. Attara stated that number is as of September 30 for the 2022 Actual. Mr. Ferguson stated if they would have done some updates, they would have done them as of 11/3 so some of those items could be updated again. He stated there is a trail sometimes between the software they have and when we update. Mr. Ferguson stated the \$1.368 million is as of September 30, and Mr. Attara stated all of the Revenues are as of September 30. Mr. Ferguson stated the year-end numbers done were with Mr. Attara’s software.

Mr. Attara stated on the Expense side, he does not feel there were any big changes in any of these numbers that had any impact versus the Projected. He stated the only question we will have is water/irrigation. He stated we generally do not spend what we spent this year, and there have been two

years with very high expenses in this area with 2010 being the other year and then in 2022 which was a very dry summer. He noted Line 363 with regard to water, adding that is generally an average and is a number that is hard to predict. Mr. Attara stated the good news is that when it is dry, there are less rain days and the Revenue tends to go up and cover that cost. He stated one or two days missed due to weather could be \$40,000 to \$50,000, and that revenue would pay for a lot of water.

Mr. Attara stated they anticipate saving a little money on Golf Maintenance. He stated one of the equipment leases ends in 2023, and there should be a savings there. Mr. Attara stated they will continue to track the range; and there were some extra expenses this year, and there are extra golf balls going into 2023, and they anticipate spending a little less there as well.

Mr. Attara stated there is nothing significant on the Expenditures, and some of them are relative to Revenues. He stated the Pro Shop salary is hourly, and that fluctuates based on Lesson Income; and if there is more Lesson Income, those numbers go up. He stated we had a pretty strong lesson year so that went up.

Mr. Attara stated Handicap Expense is a Revenue-driven number, and if we sell more handicap services to customers, we will see an increase there, and there will also be an increase in the Revenue.

Mr. Attara stated with regard to Food and Beverage, there were some increases relative to 2022 because of increase in Revenues that we are seeing, and this drives up labor and some of the food costs. He stated some of those are higher numbers than previous Budgets, but very much in line with the Revenues projected. He stated they are trying to keep the Expenses in line with Revenues. Mr. Attara stated we will probably have some savings on Outside Services because the tent was paid off so there will not be any costs involved with the tent beyond putting it up and taking it down.

Mr. Attara noted Repairs and Maintenance, and he feels what has been shown is a good number.

Mr. Attara noted Marketing. He stated they have been trying to increase the advertising for Top Tracer as well as the banquet business moving more into weddings.

Mr. Attara stated they are trying to manage credit card fees; and as Revenue goes up, the credit card fees go up. He stated they are looking to get better rates to try to reduce them.

Mr. Attara stated Club House Maintenance can fluctuate due to equipment needs and they needed to deal with that this year with regard to the heat and air conditioning. He stated they need to provide for breakdowns or emergencies.

Mr. Attara stated under Capital Purchases they are pushing to finish the bunker renovations, and they are in a position to have those done this spring.

Mr. Attara stated with regard to equipment, there is a year lead time on equipment; and there are things they would like to address as far as 2024 making sure that we are thinking about putting together a plan so that we can at least get orders placed since they will be looking at fairway units and some other pieces of equipment that will be needed in 2024.

Mr. Attara stated he received a call recently that a vendor had a roller that we were interested in purchasing that we did not feel that we were going to be able to acquire this year because of the supply chain; however, the vendor did get one in, and the Board may want to consider the purchase of this. It is \$28,000 and since it is double-wide, it speeds up the process of what we do currently in rolling greens and takes a lot of pressure off the greens mowers. He stated he would like the Board to consider purchasing this. He stated he feels that since it is in now, we could commit to it now and put it into next year or if it could be paid for this year, it is available. Mr. Ferguson asked if this was an item that was on CoStars and previously been Bid, and Mr. Attara agreed. He stated he can forward the CoStars Bid. Mr. Ferguson stated if the Board decided to proceed with this, there would not be any impediment that it had not been Bid properly, and Mr. Attara agreed.

Chief Coluzzi asked Mr. Attara to speak to the Capital projects. Mr. Attara stated some items do have lifespans including irrigation, pond liners, and cart paths and we do want to plan for those by having the Reserve Fund build and money put aside so that we are prepared when the time comes. He stated there are also some items at the club house including roofs and the HVAC that will be items in the future. He stated they did some smaller Capital improvements with the HVAC in the club house so we are okay at this time, but we do want to be planning ahead for these items.

Mr. Lewis asked where we are with the wedding and special events business versus where we expected to be. Mr. Attara stated it was very good this year overall. He stated we did back off the Budget from where we were in 2018 planning for 2019. He stated coming out of COVID, we are seeing weddings again and booking more parties and other large events that use the tent including charity events. He stated they hit numbers this year that they never hit before and over \$900,000 is very good for the Food and Beverage Department. He stated they feel it is doable to get to \$1 million with the banquet business, and they are trying to capture weddings for the future. He stated they are focusing on this with their marketing. Mr. Attara stated they get very good reviews from their events. Mr. Lewis stated the events that he has gone to there have been very good.

Mr. Lewis noted the Pro Shop and asked what is the net on merchandise sold versus cost of goods. Mr. Attara stated they would like to see this a little stronger. He stated clubs have a two-year cycle and two years ago we had tremendous club purchases, and we were up \$30,000 in club sales; and that was off this year so that impacted us. He stated the manufacturers are on two-year cycles and there will be new equipment coming out next year and new excitement about the clubs which generally drives more revenue.

Mr. Lewis stated with regard to credit card processing he assumes we are paying 3% to 4%. Mr. Attara stated we are locked in at 2.6%, but there are extra charges with “card not present charges.” He stated with COVID they went to a model of card on file so that everybody could book on-line; and while that was a great opportunity and helped us manage through COVID, some of that has lingered where the customers liked having the card on file but it does cost us a little bit more. He stated we are trying to re-train the customer to use their credit card in person and save that expense. Mr. Lewis asked if they could shift the people who are there all the time from drawing from a credit card to drawing from a debit card or a checking account and give them a benefit for that. Mr. Attara stated they could look at debit cards, but they do not have the availability in the system for an “ACH.”

Park & Recreation – Monica Tierney

Mr. Ferguson stated he did not cover in the slides shown earlier this evening projects that were listed in the Park Fee-In-Lieu Fund which Ms. Tierney can discuss in more detail.

Ms. Tierney stated there is a significant amount of money in Fee-In-Lieu, and we anticipate getting more in the near future. She stated projects they are looking to do with Fee-In-Lieu funds include Memorial Park East which was budgeted last year; and we are still waiting to find out about the Grant, and hopefully we will know about that by the end of the month. She stated the other project that was put in Fee-In-Lieu was the Five Mile Woods/ADA/PECO Green Region Grant match which was recently discussed with the Board.

Ms. Tierney stated she would also like the Board to consider a bike gap project for a Fee-In-Lieu project. She stated this would fill in some of the path gaps and the ones that have been identified are the Woodside to Taylorsville bike path gap, three linkages within Edgewood Village, and continuing the Community trail. She stated she would like to look for Grant opportunities for these, and having that money set aside for specific bike path extensions would fit into the Master Plan and should be considered moving forward.

Mr. Ferguson stated in the Budget under Revenues – on the Revenue side for Fee-In-Lieu are Grants that Ms. Tierney has outlined for possibilities that total \$610,000. He stated there is also Revenue in there that is consequential that are the Fees that developers pay. He stated all of these projects that Ms. Tierney has just talked about are not coming from tax dollars and they are coming from developers and looking into Grants as well. He stated part of this would be predicated on the fact that we get the Grants.

Ms. Tierney stated the Fees were changed at the Pool this year, and it went fairly well. She stated our projected numbers for this year based on “visiting the Pool more than one time in a season” was 7,318; and we ended up with 7,001 members this year. She stated we may be able to consider alternate fees. She stated there was a good discussion about different opportunities to make money at the Pool. She stated this is still being evaluated, and she will be back to the Board on this. Ms. Tierney stated she is getting a lot of feedback from people who went to other pools and were disappointed with the amount of time they were able to get in at those pools, the amenities that they did not have, and the absence of special events; and a number of people have reported that they plan to come back to our Pool. Ms. Tierney stated we are one of the only pools in the area that operated at such a high level this season.

Ms. Tierney stated we have boosted the Fees for Special Events. She stated with the Play For All Plan it was recognized that we needed more art in our parks. She stated she met with the Artists of Yardley and they came up with

a project to include art in the parks in different ways. She stated we reached out to Grounds for Sculpture to see if there was something we could do to get sculptures in our parks. She stated we worked with the Artists of Yardley and the Artists of Yardley applied for a Grant in anticipation of the Township contributing \$5,000 and Artists of Yardley contributing \$5,000 for the match Grant to be able to get eight to ten sculptures within the parks. She stated this would be supplemented with programming which could be charged for as well as some free programs. She stated we could also do sponsorships to supplement some of the \$5,000. Ms. Tierney stated we are looking to bring in theatre, dance, etc. as part of this program, and the Artists of Yardley will help with art programming so that it is a true community engagement and partnership program. Ms. Tierney stated while this was not discussed at a Board of Supervisors meeting in the past, it was included in her Board reports.

Ms. Tierney stated it was a difficult year with trees and fuel. She stated the fuel costs were much higher this year than anticipated, and our busing fees were a lot higher. She stated she plans to increase the Camp Fees next year across the board.

Mr. Ferguson stated the Pool did not break even; however, it only required subsidy of about \$14,000 from the Park & Rec Fund. He stated there were a lot of draws from the Park & Rec fund which added up to pulling down the Fund Balance more than what had been anticipated. He stated the recommendation as noted earlier was to move money from the Rescue Plan to help with the trees for Public Works, and this is something that they might want to consider for the Park & Recreation Budget as well.

Ms. Tierney stated we get billed for Contracted Services “all together,” and she has to try to divide them between parks; and she did try to merge some of those funds together so this year it will be seen that Fund 300 has been expanded, but in other Sections it was reduced.

Mr. Lewis asked how many total members did we have at the Pool this year, and Ms. Tierney stated it was 7,001. Mr. Lewis asked how many we had the prior year, and Ms. Tierney stated we had approximately 7,400. She stated the number she worked with was 7,300 because approximately 100 of them had never visited the Pool. Ms. Tierney stated we had only anticipated 498 Seniors to sign up at the Pool, but we had 815 local Seniors and 285 Seniors who were non-residents. She stated they are identified as an underserved population, so we were able to serve them this year. Ms. Tierney stated the Senior Fee was reduced. Mr. Lewis stated he feels that we probably lost

some members with large families. He stated this year the structure of the pricing was changed pretty significantly. He stated we did about \$60,000 to \$70,000 more in Revenue than last year, but we did not hit what we felt we would hit; and Ms. Tierney agreed.

Mr. Lewis stated there are a number of Capital expenditures planned for the Pool including the bathrooms. He asked if there is another area which is felt would potentially be a Capital expenditure that was not put in but might be coming up. Ms. Tierney stated there is another Pool filter which is not as big as the one we did this year and we will also have to sandblast the Pool in the next few years as opposed to just painting. Mr. Lewis stated the filter which was replaced cost \$200,000 and he asked if the other one will be much less. Ms. Tierney stated she would hope that it would be half the cost since it is half the size, but she would need someone to give an estimate. Mr. Lewis asked if that would be in the 2024 Budget, and Ms. Tierney stated potentially it would be in the 2024 Budget. Mr. Lewis asked about the sandblasting, and Ms. Tierney stated that needs to be done every five to ten years, and it is believed that it was last done ten years ago. Mr. Lewis stated he would like there to be reserves set aside each year so that we are planning for these future expenses.

Mr. Lewis asked if there are any other potential expenses. Ms. Tierney stated she and Mr. Fuller have been working on a Capital Improvement Plan, and there should be more information moving forward.

Mr. Lewis asked if anything is proposed for Snipes planning or engineering for next year. Ms. Tierney stated one thing to consider is the Natural Lands visit to Snipes, which she has not received a price for yet although she does not feel it will be very much. She stated she would like to have that assessment done, but it is not in the Budget at this point.

Mr. Ferguson stated with revenues being down at the Pool, he feels Ms. Tierney very effectively managed the expense side so that the gap only ended up being \$14,000.

Road Department – Derek Fuller

Mr. Fuller stated equipment that was ordered for this year is still not here and one piece of equipment cannot pass inspection so we are going into the winter months without a truck that we need. He stated the two trucks that they want

to replace are twenty-one and twenty-two years old now so he would like to order those now. He stated if they come in early there is funding for them, and they can get rid of the trucks sooner that are costing them money. He stated if he were to order the trucks in July of 2023, he might not see them until 2025. He stated he is trying to be proactive before we start seeing more equipment go down.

Mr. Fuller stated he is also requesting to hire a new full-time laborer with a May 1 start date. He stated there are fifteen employees in the Department including himself and the Administrative Assistant. He stated he has seven employees at his disposal to fix potholes and do repairs during the main season. He stated there a number of employees who have been here for many years, and they get a lot of vacation and a lot of sick time; and on average they are taking about thirty days a year. He stated there are also three employees who are nearing retirement, and he wants to start building the force up.

Chief Coluzzi asked how this could impact snow plowing. Mr. Fuller stated we depend a lot on sub-contractors for snow plowing services and typically bring in three or four contractors. He stated with a full-time hire, that would be one less contractor they would have to pay. He stated this is also true for leaf collection.

Mr. Ferguson stated Mr. Fuller did talk about an asphalt kettle in the Budget. Mr. Fuller stated this is in Minor Equipment. He stated while the Department owns an asphalt kettle, it is from 1986 and is inoperable. He stated when we paved East Ferry with an in-house crew, we had to pay someone to come in at a cost of \$1,500. He stated the asphalt kettle would cost \$15,000, and this is a critical piece of equipment to be able to do in-house patching and paving. Mr. Ferguson stated \$38,000 is Budgeted for Minor Equipment and there has been a placeholder every year for \$14,000 or \$15,000 for things that the Department may need. He stated there is \$15,000 for the asphalt kettle and \$8,000 for a sweeper box. Mr. Fuller stated we own a street sweeper, but the sweeper box will help sweep up the millings. He stated these pieces of equipment will help get the Road Program in better shape than it is doing more in-house work.

Mr. Ferguson stated a Three-Year Road Paving Plan has been provided, and the numbers have been updated looking at current pricing. He stated this is why the recommendation came forward to provide \$50,000 from the Rescue Plan to stay on that Plan because we are anticipating those costs

will go up. Mr. Fuller agreed adding that he looked at the numbers we paid this year. He stated we actually had better pricing this year because it was such a large paving program, and he did adjust the 2023 Plan with revised numbers to take into account inflation. He also projected 2024 and looking into 2025 if the Board chooses to take the loan out again.

Mr. Fuller stated he feels that eventually more funding needs to be put into the Road Program and he feels we are about \$4 million to \$5 million short as to where we need to be right now, but that can be discussed at a later time. Mr. Fuller stated he feels there is \$5 million worth of roads that need to be done in the next four/five years. He stated the Three-Year Program is a great model for twenty-five-year replacement on every mile of road. He stated we have about 140 miles; but when you have roads that are from 1986, you have to pay to get them up to the standard.

Mr. Lewis asked how much will we be able to do in-house on road work since there may be the opportunity to think about the structure of the Road Program and the kinds of roads that possibly we can do in-house that do not require full-depth reclamation and could be fixed and sealed to see if that would extend the life of existing roads. Mr. Fuller stated that is the goal with getting an additional laborer and equipment that he is requesting.

Mr. Ferguson stated Mr. Hucklebridge was considering a twenty-year blended model which would be 6.9 miles a year and some roads that had cul-de-sac might be every thirty years and others might be every 10 to 12. He stated he believes Mr. Hucklebridge was considering two or three tenths of a mile a year could be done in-house. Mr. Ferguson stated typically we have done Liquid Fuels which is about \$700,000, and next year that would be three miles. Mr. Ferguson stated for 2024, at three miles or so, the Loan Program allows us to ramp that up. He noted that this year's Program added Rescue Plan money which was about eleven miles.

Mr. Fuller stated another large cost are the ADA upgrades which have to be done so it is not just the road paving. He stated next year it will be two miles for the same cost that three miles was this year because the development to be done has a lot of curb ramps versus a neighborhood that does not have curbs and curb ramps where you can get more miles out of it. Mr. Ferguson stated when you pave those roads, you are obligated to upgrade the ramps.

Mr. Lewis stated he is in support of purchasing the trucks in advance because we do not know where we will be on the supply chain. He asked if we are at risk if there are major snow events this winter, and Mr. Fuller stated in terms of this winter, he does not believe so as we have a “couple of spares.” He stated we also have the contractors.

Mr. Lewis stated there are problems plowing the cul-de-sacs and where to put the snow. Mr. Ferguson stated one of the trucks being recommended is a ten-wheel that Mr. Fuller has asked come from the Rescue Plan. He stated the others would be coming from Road Machinery. He stated the Budget would need to be approved for the ones from Road Machinery because they are being paid for with tax dollars. He stated if the Board were inclined, they could approve the ten-wheel dump truck from the Rescue Plan money because that is not tax dollars. He stated it could be put in the 2023 Budget, but if the Board were to advise Mr. Fuller that they would approve that at a future meeting to get a “one month jump on it,” they could do that. He stated it would still be listed in the 2023 Budget, but they would not be mandated to wait for the Budget to pass to do that. Mr. Lewis stated he would be okay with that.

Mr. Lewis asked where we are with the leaf collection, and Mr. Fuller stated they are “struggling” and they are about a week behind. He added it was his choice to do some emergency paving; and also to be proactive, they spent about a week to get the salt boxes on the trucks so that if there is a storm, they can stop the leaf pick-up and do salting. He stated we are about four days behind where we should be now with regard to the leaf collection, and they are trying to get caught up. He stated waiting a week has actually allowed them to collect more compared to historic data, and he feels the second round will be a clean-up round.

Mr. Lewis stated we could also communicate to the public so they know what is coming. He stated he feels we should be communicating to the residents how to make the leaves easier for them to collect. Mr. Fuller stated while he would not want to give an exact date, he feels we could be better; and he wants to work toward that. Mr. Lewis stated there are 8,000 households on e-mail, and he asked if they are tied to a postal address; and that could be considered for future communications.

Mr. Fuller stated another goal he has is upgraded software for the Department. He stated there could be automated e-mails to residents although there is a cost to that. Dr. Weiss asked if Public Works needed \$50,000 to

\$75,000 to upgrade their IT systems we could do that; and Mr. Ferguson stated we could. He noted that like with the Open Gov software, there will be annual recurring costs that would need to be incorporated.

Mr. Lewis stated given what was learned in April, we need to have a comprehensive data strategy for the entire organization. He stated the Open Gov software that is hopefully near implementation has storage associated with it, and we should consider how to use that so that it can be applied in different ways. He stated we should think about that collectively across the entire Township which could save us a lot of money and problems by not storing data in multiple places where it is at risk. Mr. Lewis stated we could allocate Relief Funds for that. Mr. Ferguson stated because it is Relief money if they were to come up with a plan in May, that money can be used for whatever the Board wants as long as they make a Motion and observe Bidding procedures. Mr. Lewis stated before that process there should be consideration as to where we have data stored, and Mr. Fuller agreed that would be the first step.

Ms. Blundi stated she likes the way Mr. Fuller is thinking what we might be able to restructure next year as he goes through his first round of leaf collection.

Mr. Fuller stated they were able to complete the micro-surfacing today on Edgewood that was part of the traffic calming.

Fire Services – Tim Chamberlain

Mr. Ferguson stated he had earlier discussed the items on Expenses and Revenue for inspections; and he will add that in prior to the Budget going out on Friday. He stated the changes can be made in time for the Board to consider the Preliminary Budget next Wednesday.

Mr. Chamberlain stated he worked with Mr. Ferguson and Chief Coluzzi and put together a Budget to start getting equipment and materials to best serve the community.

Mr. Ferguson stated one of the items Mr. Chamberlain was tasked with was the idea that as partners with the volunteer company, they could undertake certain Capital expenditures, and Mr. Chamberlain would be a facilitator to give input regarding the timing of those purchases with the idea that the Township would

participate with the volunteers. He added that the volunteers have undertaken significant Capital expenses over the last few years that Mr. Chamberlain will discuss as well.

Mr. Chamberlain stated the Fire Company replaced their "SCBA" and had to buy forty-nine packs as they were fifteen years old, and that was at a cost of \$374,000 during COVID. He stated they also replaced their ladder truck which was \$1.2 million adding apparatus today is anywhere from twenty-four to thirty-six months to make, and the cost has gone up 50% to 60%. He stated they also had to fix their curbs and sidewalks for about \$31,000 and get all new HVAC units at the one fire house. He stated they also had to replace the generator at the Woodside Station across from McCaffrey's as they had the original generator there since 1986. He stated that was \$99,000. He stated all of the controls went at the garage doors, and they also replaced the engine at the Woodside Station for \$920,000. He stated they signed the paperwork in June for that credit approval and then signed the paperwork to replace the engine out of the Borough Station which was the identical truck, and the cost went up to \$970,000 in six months. He stated they were told it was going to go up another \$40,000 by the end of the year. He stated that is why they signed for it when they did, and it will take two years to get built. Mr. Chamberlain stated we do get good return on our apparatus. He stated there are other items that will be coming up including the floor at the fire house and some drainage issues with the sewer which will have to be repaired; and they have quotes between \$90,000 and \$100,000 to repair that. Mr. Chamberlain stated he is trying to see if we can offset some of this to take the burden off the Budget of the volunteers.

Mr. Chamberlain stated the old packs that were replaced were bought in 2006. He stated there are air filling stations at each Fire House so that when they come back from any incidents any time they use the SCBA cylinders they can refill them which saves time. He stated that was bought in 2005 right before the new packs came in, and now they are eighteen years old and it is difficult to get parts for them as they are obsolete. He stated they were told that they are one or two parts away from being out of service, and they are very concerned about that. He reviewed what is done by the air filling stations insures that the air that is in the cylinders that they are breathing is clean.

Mr. Ferguson stated Mr. Chamberlain is managing the Inspection Program, and he was doing inspections before he came on full-time. He stated part of what is being proposed will enhance that program.

Mr. Ferguson stated also in the Budget is \$10,000 for volunteer recruitment which the Board had tasked Mr. Chamberlain with. Mr. Chamberlain stated the Volunteer Fire Company put out almost \$11,000 in recruitment material including post cards, banners, etc.; and it was very successful as they recently had four firefighters complete Fire School and there are five more attending in January. He stated four came in with previous experience, and about five joined as Fire Police so the Fire Police force is up to about ten which is very good. Mr. Chamberlain stated he will not know what the benefit is until about one year out to see how active they are. He stated the Recruitment Committee has done a great job with training and keeping them involved, and he wants to continue that. He stated this is why he put that category in the Budget so that we can help take over the burden to send out the post cards to all of the residents.

Mr. Lewis asked of the \$11,000 spent, what was the total number of recruits, and Mr. Chamberlain stated it was about fifteen. Mr. Lewis asked how many they do feel they will “net,” and Mr. Chamberlain stated he hopes to net half. He stated he believes that there were thirty inquiries, and eighteen of them actually joined. He stated a couple were lost during Fire School because of time commitments. Mr. Lewis asked about the volunteer gap. Mr. Chamberlain stated there are still retirees, and hopefully the new members coming in will fill the gap. Mr. Lewis stated if they continue with the Recruitment Program we will likely be in a position three to four years from now to fill the gap. Mr. Chamberlain stated they can also look into different ways to fill the gaps by including overnight stays by the volunteers with better incentive, etc. Mr. Chamberlain stated one problem is that many of the recruits cannot afford to live in the area.

Mr. Lewis stated we know we have an average age problem so if we can lower the average age, it would be better. Mr. Lewis stated this is not an issue that Lower Makefield alone has and every other Municipality in Bucks County is having the same problem. Mr. Chamberlain stated it is difficult for volunteer fire services as we do not know when the volunteers will be needed, and they could get a call at any time. He stated unfortunately people today are not as flexible as they used to be.

Mr. Ferguson stated a lot of Managers regionally have discussed that even if you fill the gaps and the difficult hours during the night, that there are some hours, especially if you attract younger local volunteers, that they may not be available from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. regardless of their commitment because they are at work. He stated that gap will always be hard to fill.

Mr. Ferguson stated while it is not in this year's Budget, going forward he feels there will be other Revenue sources. He stated the Fire Fund is supported by 1.1 mils. He stated there are other items that Mr. Chamberlain has requested including a slight increase to Yardley-Makefield Company, and a slight increase to the Morrisville Company to assist them with their service. Mr. Ferguson stated Mr. Chamberlain helps with development reviews, and moving forward beyond this Budget the proposal is to split that out and have part of Mr. Chamberlain's review go into the Fire Fund; and when that Fee is collected, it will help support all of these services in that Department.

Dr. Weiss asked if we are using Enterprise for the Tahoe or are we just buying it. Mr. Ferguson stated he used an interest rate of 5.5%. He stated Chief Coluzzi, Mr. Chamberlain, and the new Manager would make the determination as to what they believe is the best way to get the vehicle and finance it. He stated Tahoes are not easy to get at this time. Mr. Ferguson stated the dollar amounts in the Budget are 5.5% over three years so there is flexibility.

Community Development- Jim Majewski

Mr. Ferguson stated Mr. Majewski and the Department worked to have Open Gov added, and one of the new expenses in the Fund is the ongoing expense that would be a Contracted Service. He stated this past year, we added a Planner to the Department to assist Mr. Majewski. Mr. Ferguson stated Inspection Fees are substantially higher, but this was planned because we have projects underway. He stated a lot of Revenue came in this year, but the costs for the inspections are listed at \$360,000 for next year.

Mr. Majewski stated this year we had a record year in Revenue for Building Permits, and we are up almost 50% what was Budgeted. He stated there were a number of large projects including Prickett Preserve and Permits were issued for the Wegman's and the apartment buildings. He stated we also had a large number of home improvement projects that are continuing on in the Township. He stated Revenues are very strong, but Expenses are up as well because there is more work being conducted by the consultants to keep up with the extra inspections. Mr. Majewski stated he feels that in the coming year that will balance out more because we were collecting a lot of the money this year, but the inspections will be next year.

Mr. Majewski stated we are going through the configuration and testing process for the Open Gov software, and it is hoped that will be running the beginning of the year or shortly thereafter. He stated that will be a portal that citizens can use to interact with the Township. He stated every Permit except for Police items will be on there. He stated people will be able to put in Right-To-Know Requests for requests for information on-line through the portal, and they will be able to ask questions and get information. He stated this will allow the staff to assign the tasks to the people who are available to do the work. He stated it will also set alarms for the staff on when things are due to keep us more on task. Mr. Majewski stated we will be collecting monies automatically through the system so there will be fewer checks to copy. He stated it will be an electronic system that he feels will be beneficial to all of the residents and will help with staff time and provide a better reporting and tracking mechanism for all of our processes.

Mr. Lewis stated the only Capital Improvement we have is less than \$5,000, and Mr. Majewski what is listed is all we need since we are going more electronic, and we do not have a need for a lot of things. He stated they got a vehicle a few years ago which is still fairly new.

Mr. Ferguson asked Mr. Majewski to speak to the Building Inspections company which was replaced a few years ago. He stated when he was here he felt we were satisfied that they were responsive getting back to people, managed their time well, and the bills that he reviewed were fair. Mr. Majewski stated he feels they are doing a fine job although because they have such a large volume of Permits and large-scale Permits that the time for processing has been elongated a little bit because of the sheer volume of work involved. He stated he feels we are still getting good service for a fair price. He stated next year there will be a lot of inspection work compared to this year which was a lot of Plan reviews.

Mr. Lewis asked if we anticipate any large developments coming into the Township in the next year or so that we should plan for. Mr. Majewski stated there are none currently in the pipeline. He stated any projects coming on line are one lot to five-lot subdivisions. He stated people are finding every last piece of land including some lots that have been around for some time that may be less than desirable.

Mr. Lewis stated there was discussion at the last meeting about re-development of Boehm, and there was discussion about the Permits, and the hope would be that we would not concede or lose any money in that process. He stated he feels

we should stay with our original plan that at minimum captures our total costs. Mr. Majewski stated for their last project, we had given Pennsbury a “great bargain” on the Permit Fee which he felt was in some ways unfair to the Township; and he feels what he proposed was a little more equitable to the School District them and is a common break that most Municipalities give to a School District which would be about a 30% to 35% cut in the Building Permit Fee understanding that the prices are higher for public projects. He stated since a lot of the Fees are geared toward the cost, if the costs are higher, the Fees are higher. He stated lowering it does not necessarily jeopardize our ability to cover all of our costs on the project.

Mr. Ferguson stated that has been generally established, and when he was in Newtown, Council Rock was updating their Middle Schools; and they worked together with the Superintendent at the time. He added that it has been litigated in the Courts regarding Townships not overcharging School Districts, and the generally-understood amount that would be accepted is 70%. He stated there are at least a half dozen local examples where they have done this which could be provided as back-up.

Mr. Lewis stated that would have some Budget impact in terms of our Revenue and Expense side. He asked if that would be this year or next year. Mr. Majewski stated the Permit would probably be issued this year for work to start next year so we would have the Revenue this year, but we would have the Expense next year. He stated this is why we are running a little ahead from prior years but next year it will be closer to even.

Dr. Weiss stated he feels we have a fair fee schedule for the School District. Mr. Majewski stated at the last Board meeting the question was asked if anyone else gives Pennsbury a break, and it was found subsequently that they do.

Police – Chief Ken Coluzzi

Chief Coluzzi stated with regard to the Tahoe, the Police Department had to defer three marked Tahoes to 2023 because we could not get them.

Chief Coluzzi noted the Police Budget, Page 10, and stated the difference between this year to the 2023 Budget shows an increase to the salaries and other reoccurring benefits tied into that. He stated they doubled the gas costs this year. He stated we do not anticipate asking for any additional

Officers. He stated one officer is injured and one is deployed to a peace-keeping mission. He stated that is an eighteen-month deployment which is difficult for staffing.

Chief Coluzzi stated moving forward with regard to Revenues, we were fortunate enough to get a Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency Grant in the amount of \$21,200; and that is to supplement the body cameras and also for Police training. He stated we also received a Grant from the Federal Railroad Administration in the amount of \$40,000 to patrol the Railroad tracks, crossings, and any suspicious activity or terrorism on the Railroad.

Chief Coluzzi stated no additional overtime hours are requested. He stated the increase in overtime is due to the increase in salaries. Chief Coluzzi stated the figures represent the Contract which was just approved.

Mr. Ferguson stated he understands that there is going to be discussion in the future about Pension contribution of Command Staff so there is a 3% provision in the salary amount if agreeable by the Board. He stated there had been discussion that they would not really get the long-term benefit of the decreased Pension contribution or the benefit by the time they retire. He stated there is a 3% extra provision in there for Command staff.

Chief Coluzzi stated they will also be talking about the Ordinance change for the Pension at the next public meeting, and that will include the new Contract terms and a cap of 2% for Commanders' contribution to Pensions.

Ms. Blundi asked if we were ever able to recover anything from the opioid litigation, and if any of that money was put into the Police Budget. Chief Coluzzi stated there is nothing in the Budget from that. He stated we do have a recovery but he is not sure if that money hit Finance yet. Mr. Ferguson stated he does not believe that it has. Chief Coluzzi stated he will follow up with Mr. Truelove to see when that is expected.

Mr. Lewis stated the changes in the Police Budget are mostly personnel and benefits, and those are all Contracted Services. Chief Coluzzi stated you will see that most of the other line items remain flat. Mr. Lewis stated the total investment in Police services is increasing largely because we are paying Officers as related to the Contract. He stated the total Officers remains flat although over the last year, we have increased the total Officers. He stated we have invested significantly in equipment as well. He stated people are attuned to Police investment, and it is important to remind people that the Board has

made those investments over the last couple of years so that we are in better shape now. Chief Coluzzi stated he agrees with that, and he added he appreciates the Board's support over the years in keeping public safety where it should be in Lower Makefield Township. He added that last year we did not anticipate needing any additional Officers, but there were injuries, and the Board agreed to hire an additional Officer last year which he appreciates.

Mr. Lewis asked if we have done the full transition to Enterprise for the leasing of the cars. Chief Coluzzi stated while we have done the full transition, with the Enterprise deal we are not obligated to do that. He stated there was a case this year where we bought a car outright because we were not able to take advantage of the CoStars discount, and he made the decision not to go through Enterprise but to buy the car outright. He stated that was an expense we did not anticipate; however, there was a savings which he felt was fair to the Township. He stated that is the advantage of having the options that we have with Enterprise. He stated they have not made the decision yet on Mr. Chamberlain's car, and they will see what is the best decision for the taxpayers.

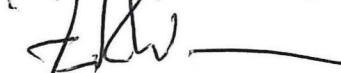
PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one from the public wishing to speak at this time.

Dr. Weiss stated that the Preliminary Budget will be considered at the Board's next meeting on Wednesday. Mr. Lewis asked if the version the Board gets for Wednesday will have everything we have covered today. Mr. Ferguson stated he will make sure the Chief has the updates by tomorrow, and that will be re-printed and sent to the Board. Mr. Ferguson stated there are no limitations on any changes the Board wants to make at the next meeting. Chief Coluzzi stated this will be on the Website after the 16th and advertised in the newspapers for twenty days. It will also be available at the Township for anyone to look at.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Fredric K. Weiss, Vice Chair