



MINUTES

Borough of Ambridge – Budget Meeting of Borough Council

Tuesday, December 5th, 2023 – 6:00 PM

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Present: Mr. Basalyga
Mr. Cafarelli (arrived 6:40 p.m.)
Mr. Dunn
Mr. Gill
Ms. Gilliam
Ms. Tessaro

Also Present: Mario Leone, Chief DeLuca, Fire Chief Larrick, Assistant Fire Chief Gorecki, Mayor Miller (arrived 6:15 p.m.)

Mr. Leone outlined budget item adjustments:

- \$9.00 per quarter increase in refuse collection – generates \$100,000.00 increase
- One item in Fire Department budget increased \$2,500.00
- Grand Total of \$50,929.00 in the red.
- Chief Larrick and Mr. Leone had looked at some of the fees. Chief Larrick provided Council a copy of some scenarios in relation to rental inspections for consideration. Mr. Leone feels there are some other opportunities to increase revenues such as lien letter requests (from \$50.00 to \$75.00) and Pre-Sale Fire & Safety Inspections. (other code enforcement items). Also discussed fees for Commercial Inspections (will remain at \$100.00); may implement a Manufacturing/Industrial Inspection for larger installations (\$300.00). Will be added to Fee Schedule. Rental Inspections are currently \$125.00 for two-year period. Proposing increase to \$175.00 per rental unit (see below for final rate change). AirBnB's were discussed regarding determining which buildings are being used as AirBnB's. May want to adopt an ordinance addressing AirBnB's. Assistant Chief Gorecki brought up increasing re-inspection fees on Rental Inspections on the 2nd re-inspection from \$50.00 to \$100.00.
- Other fee changes under consideration are Coin Operated Machines, park rental fees, establishing fee for Henning Park rentals. Potential justification for increases for other fees; i.e. Fence Permits, Dumpster Permits, Zoning Permits.
- Mr. Gill asked about the K-9 unit expenses. Chief DeLuca advised the K-9 account is separate from the General Fund and is not included in the budget.
- Mr. Basalyga asked about the 1% tax. Is there potential to increase that tax to keep those revenues in Ambridge? Mr. Leone advised that a City is able to add to that tax to retain the revenue, but a Borough is not. Local Service Tax (LST) increases would require legislative action.
- Establish a Stormwater Fee – address management of all catch basins.

- Mr. Leone stated that above items address the \$51,000 red.
- Assistant Chief Gorecki asked about ticketing for high grass and snow removal. Mr. Cafarelli asked about the Police Department tickets for snow removal. Discussion ensued regarding snow removal for businesses and residents.
- Chief Larrick asked about the Firemen's Pension line item.
- Ms. Tessaro asked about the Standby pay rates for the Fire Department. Assistant Chief Gorecki explained the standby time process. The change of eliminating standby pay would increase that budget item.
- Rental Registration will be increased from \$125 for two years to \$180 for two years. This will offset the change for "Standby Time" being negotiated with the Fire Department.
- Discussion again on AirBnBs in Ambridge; short-term rentals.
- Ms. Tessaro asked about employee salary. Public Works – Superintendent; Foreman is Marty Sova's position. Does the budgeted amount include the three full-time and three part-time positions? There is \$60,000 budgeted for part-time positions in 2024. Consideration will be given to adding another full-time position as opposed part-time positions.
- Ms. Bacher asked about the costs associated with broadcasting meetings. Mr. Leone stated he has not and doesn't know when he will have those costs together. Ms. Bacher then stated that based on a question Mr. Gill had asked previously for a more in-depth audit that was supposed to be free. Mr. Gill stated it was about a year ago. Mr. Leone recalled it was a DCED representative who proposed a study for a five-year budget. There is a significant fee and significant work. When are we expected to receive the 2022 audit report? The report is complete, but due to scheduling conflicts, may not be presented to Council until early 2024.
- Ms. Tessaro stated that Board/Commission applications are due Thursday; Council vacancy applications are due Friday; bids for properties are due December 20 at 2:00 p.m.

II. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn at 9:04 p.m. by Mr. Cafarelli; seconded by Mr. Basalyga; all in favor.