

## Budget Meeting, October 6, 2014

Chairman Raymond Equils opened the meeting at 19:00 hours, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call was taken with Commissioners Eadicicco, Equils, Kelly, Scarlato, and Stalling being present.

Also present were Chief Jim Bailey and 1<sup>st</sup> Asst Chief Jim Bailey. However, there were no members of the general public in attendance.

Chairman Equils read the Opening Statement, noting that the meeting was advertised on Sunday, September 21, 2014, in accordance with the Public Meeting Act (Sunshine Law) in New Jersey; and that the sole purpose of this meeting was to assemble a proposed budget for 2015.

The Clerk distributed copies of the existing 2014 budget for reference and a worksheet to compile proposed figures for 2015.

. He noted that the fire district remains under a legislated "Cap Allowance" for the upcoming budget, allowing for a maximum increase of 2% in the amount to be raised by taxation, over the current year's tax levy of \$760,203.00. The Clerk stated that his calculation resulted in an amount totaling \$15,204.00 (\$15,204.06) based on his understanding of the new "Cap" rules.

The Board reviewed all amounts currently expended and the currently budgeted amounts for each Line Account in the Current Expense portion of 2014 budget.

During its own discussions, the Board approved increases in only two (2) of the Line Accounts for the 2015 Budget. These increases totaled \$7,000.00.

An enumeration of the individual Line Accounts follows elsewhere in this record.

The board agreed to the following proposed amounts:

Advertising – Maintained at **\$2,000.00.**

Commissioner's Compensation – Maintained at **\$56,000.00.**

Election – Maintained at **\$2,000.00** (With no increases in stipend payments for the Judge and Clerks of the Annual Election.)

It was agreed that the board would investigate the prospect of moving from using paper ballots to an electronic voting machine supplied by the Monmouth County Election Board. Need to look into cost differentials, process for using the machine, and training requirements for poll workers.

Fire Hydrants – Maintained at **\$75,000.00.**

Insurance – **INCREASED BY** \$3,000.00 to **\$85,000.00.**

Office Expenses – Maintained at **\$7,000.00.**

Payroll Tax – **INCREASED BY** \$3,900.00 to **\$17,000.00.**

Professional Services – Maintained at **\$25,000.00.**

Reimbursement for Expenses & Losses – Maintained at **\$27,000.00**, including the following stipend payments for Line Officers;

Chief	\$675.00
1 <sup>st</sup> Asst Chief	\$600.00

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2 <sup>nd</sup> Asst Chief	\$500.00
Captain	\$475.00
Lieutenant	\$475.00
Training Officer	\$550.00
Safety Officers	\$400.00

It was also suggested that reimbursements for Junior and Probationary Firefighters be increased from \$25.00 to \$100.00 for Juniors; and from \$50.00 to the standard percentage based reimbursement for Probationary Firefighters with 9 months or more service time; and a flat \$100.00 for those with 0 to 8 months service time.

No formal decision or action taken to affirm these discussions tonight.

Rental Charges – Maintained at **\$44,000.00**; as the Current Rental Lease runs through to December 31, 2015.

Training & Education – Maintained at **\$19,500.00**.  
(This Account includes \$500.00 for Food & Refreshments for Training and Drills and \$1,000.00 for Wildwood expenses.)

Utilities – Maintained at **\$33,000.00**.

Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) – Maintained at **\$67,000.00**.

As in past years, the Board reserved discussions on the Maintenance & Repairs Account and the Materials & Supplies Account until all the other line accounts had been reviewed and settled, and until after the chief and his line officers presented their proposals for those areas of budget and operation.

Chief James Bailey presented each commissioner an individual copy of their proposal, inclusive of multiple items relating to the aforementioned line accounts. After sufficient time for review had passed, Chairman Equils opened the floor for discussions on the proposals.

Maintenance and Repairs – Maintained at **\$80,000.00** for 2015. After discussion between everyone present regarding the cost & frequency of repairs; making actual comparisons of previous annual expenditures; noting that all costs for Maintenance, Repairs, “NFPA” Suggested Testing of Equipment & Apparatus, and Stipends paid to the Engineers; the board agreed to maintain the Maintenance & Repairs Account at its current level.

For reference - the Stipend Payments for the Engineer Staff are at the following amounts: Chief Engineer @ \$675.00 and Asst. Engineers @ \$475.00 each x 4 persons; and these stipends are to be paid out of this line account.

Materials and Supplies – **INCREASED BY \$8,304.00 to \$113,804.00** for 2015, following extended discussions on the Chief’s Materials & Supplies proposal. Inclusion of funds for most items in the proposal was approved, but further discussions and final approval will be needed, after the fate of the budget is decided, before any items can be purchased.

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The chief presented an itemized list of proposed items and anticipated costs. Each item was discussed and the board decided each item's inclusion in the proposed budget.

After completing an exhaustive review of the line officers proposed equipment purchases, during which each item was discussed with the board deciding each item's inclusion in the budget proposal; the Board finalized the Materials & Supplies Account at **\$113,804.00**; which included a **“RESERVE” of \$8,304.00** for possible replacement or upgrading of personal radio equipment.

Individual portions of the chief's proposal were accepted as follows:

Various Hand Tools, Equipment, and Mounts - **\$16,739.00**;

Firematic Supplies (Extinguishing and Training Foams) - **\$2,500.00**;

Extrication Equipment - **\$12,790.00**;

Personal Protective Equipment - **\$11,135.00**;

EMS Supplies & Equipment - **\$3,500.00**;

Turn-Out Gear, Helmets, Boots, and Uniforms - **\$21,500.00**;

Communications Equipment - **\$13,600.00**;

(Includes funds of **\$5,000.00** for Equipment/Improvements to the Radio Communications Network (Howell Fire Channels 2 through 5) operated by the Joint Board of Fire Commissioners.

Motor Fuels = **\$15,000.00**;

Convert Response Lighting on Engine 475 - **\$2,200.00**;

Restore Lettering on Unit 466 - **\$1,000.00**.

*RESERVED FUNDS - \$8,304.00 for Communications Equipment Upgrades;*

*RESERVED FUNDS – UNANTICIPATED PURCHASES - \$5,536.00.*

**Total Materials & Supplies as Proposed = INCREASED to \$113,804.00.**

As the total for the enumerated items is \$113,804.00, the board agreed to increase the amount of this account to \$113,804.00 in the budget for the 2015 year.

As stated in previous budget proposals, these items were only approved conceptually for purchase in 2015; and will need additional review and final approval by the board in 2015, prior to them being purchased. A complete copy of the chief's proposal packet is available upon request.

The total proposed expenditures for **2015 Current Expenses** portion of the budget is **\$653,304.00**. This sub-total is not inclusive of any Capital Improvement allocations.

The Board then agreed to fund the Capital Improvement Fund with a **2015 Capital Appropriation of \$200,000.00; plus the expenditure of \$65,000.00 to purchase a SCBA Air Compressor, which was previously approved by the voters.**

This concluded discussions. The Proposed Budget for 2015 was finalized at a total amount of \$918,304.00

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Therefore, the budget as proposed for the Year 2015 is as follows:

ADVERTISING	\$2,000.00
COMMISSIONER'S COMPENSATION	56,000.00
ELECTIONS	2,000.00
HYDRANT RENTAL	75,000.00
INSURANCE	85,000.00
MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS	80,000.00
MATERIAL & SUPPLIES	113,804.00
OFFICE EXPENSES	7,000.00
PAYROLL TAX	17,000.00
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	25,000.00
REIMBURSEMENT EXPENSES/LOSSES	27,000.00
RENTAL CHARGES	44,000.00
TRAINING & EDUCATION	19,500.00
UTILITIES	33,000.00
LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD PROGRAM	+ 67,000.00
<b>SUB-TOTAL PROPOSED BUDGET</b>	<b>\$653,304.00</b>
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND	+ 265,000.00
<b>TOTAL PROPOSED BUDGET</b>	<b>\$918,304.00</b>

Commissioners Kelly and Eadicicco introduced and seconded a motion to approve the proposed budget for 2015 with a total appropriation of \$918,304.00 (as enumerated above). This motion was passed on a unanimous "YES" vote of the Board.

Per past practice, the Clerk will seek direction from Mr. Osborn (the Fire District's Auditor) on possibly moving a portion of the Unreserved Balance to the Capital Fund; and if so, in what amount.

The Clerk will also find out what Mr. Osborn's projection will be for the line item titled "Less Miscellaneous Revenue & Fund Balance" in addition to any other state required modifications before finalizing the 2015 "Amount To Be Raised By Taxation" line on the ballot question.

Lastly, at the request of the chief, the board needs to decide if a **Second Ballot Question** will be submitted at the upcoming election; seeking voter approval for another **Capital Project**, for the purchase of a new Command Vehicle. However, an estimated cost for the project was not available for this meeting. A cost and a decision must be arrived at in sufficient time for the 2015 election.

**BUDGET HEARING ..... Date & Time to be set and announced/advertised by the board.**

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**PUBLIC COMMENT .....** There was one (1) Chief and zero (0) firefighters and zero (0) members of the public present. Comments on agenda items were received while the items were before the Board for action. No non-agenda questions and comments were allowed at this meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT .....** Chairman Equils thanked the chief for his assistance in tonight's process, including their written presentation and supporting information. All the other Commissioners concurred.

This concluded the business before the Board, so a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioners Stalling and Scarlato, and passed by the Board.

The meeting closed at 21:35 hours.

Respectfully Submitted:

Robert J. Kelly  
Clerk of the Board

RJK/rjk