

**MONTAGUE TOWNSHIP  
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING**

**March 31, 2022**

**MINUTES**

Mayor Innella called the session to order at 5:00 p.m. and indicated that adequate notice has been provided to the New Jersey Herald and The Sunday New Jersey Herald for publication in which notice was given of the date, time, place and general agenda of meetings in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, P. L. 1975, c. 231.

**FLAG SALUTE:** All present were asked to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:** The Municipal Clerk was then asked to call the roll.

**Present:** Mr. Krumpfer, Mr. LeDonne, Mr. Merusi, Mr. Zitone and Mayor Innella. Also present were, Clerk DeFabiis, CFO Sharon Yarosz, and Municipal Auditor/Accountant Heidi Wohlleb.

**Absent:** None

**2022 BUDGET WORKSHOP DISCUSSION**

Registered Municipal Auditor/Accountant, Ms. Heidi Wohlleb, stated that the CFO, Sharon Yarosz, has provided the Committee with a projected 2022 Tax Rate Worksheet. Based on the information from the previous Budget Workshop Session Ms. Wohlleb projects a 1.009% increase on the local tax, which would be about a \$7 increase on the average home assessed at \$155,000. This would be using \$560,000 in Surplus which Ms. Wohlleb said did go up since last year, so she feels comfortable with the figure. Ms. Wohlleb added that these figures included all requested budget items. She then asked the Committee Members if they had any questions.

Mr. Zitone asked about the line titled "Firehouse Proceeds of Sale". CFO Yarosz replied that this line was money that was left over from the sale of the old Firehouse which was then put into Capital, and also put in as a revenue within the budget so it is offset, so the funds could be put into Capital and be used towards the Community Center. Otherwise, it would have to be put into Surplus if it wasn't allocated in this way.

Mayor Innella discussed with the other Committee Members putting aside an additional \$2,500 for the Purchase of Fire Equipment so they are prepared in the future when the Fire Department needs a New Fire Truck or some other equipment. Mr. LeDonne added that he feels comfortable with the budget even though he is still learning much of the procedure of the Budget Meetings; he is happy with the turnout. Mr. Krumpfer asked if the Township does decide to follow through with the Walking Path Project, where would those funds come from? CFO Yarosz asked if any cost estimates have been received. Mayor Innella responded saying that they are still waiting for the Engineer for some figures; therefore, they do not yet have a firm number. Mayor Innella added that in his opinion he would estimate anywhere between \$10,000 to \$20,000. Mr. Zitone added that he is in favor of having a walking path, but there are some other things such as the DPW Salt Shed that need to be addressed. He stated that the Committee has been putting money away for a new Salt Shed for years and they still do not have enough for it. Mr. Merusi asked how much is put away thus far for the Salt Shed. CFO Yarosz replied \$102,000 and the addition of whatever will be put in this year. Mr. Krumpfer said that even with the funding that is put in they are still a few years away from getting the Salt shed built, but they can put in a Walking Path now, and this is something that the Senior Citizens have wanted for a long time, and it could be done now. The Committee then asked Ms. Wohlleb to calculate the tax rate projection with the additional budget items/costs. After some back and forth of the projected tax rate, the Committee agreed to add \$10,000 in for a Walking Path, which would bring the effect on the average home to an \$11.64 increase or a 1.798% increase. The Committee then decided to take \$5,000 out of the Capital Improvement Fund – Improvements to Roads and leave the \$10,000 for a Walking Path. With these adjustments included, the effect on the average home would be \$9.47 or 1.46%. The total appropriations will be \$3,004,172.14; the total local tax amount will be \$1,513,947.28. Mr. Merusi made a motion to move forward with the budget as described with formal introduction of the Montague Township FY 2022 Budget to be on April 12, 2022. Mr. Krumpfer seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Zitone made a motion to open to public. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

With no public participation, Mr. LeDonne motioned to close to public. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

**ADJOURN**

Mr. Krumpfer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 p.m. Mr. LeDonne seconded, and the motion carried with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted:

**Eileen DeFabiis, RMC  
Municipal Clerk**