

The Special meeting of the Lansford Borough Council for the adoption of the budget was held at the above date and place at 6:30pm. The meeting was called to order by President Martin Ditsky and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL

Secretary Treasurer Mary Fittos took roll call. Those present were Martin Ditsky, Tommy Vadyak, Mayor James Romankow, Samantha Yasson, and Rose Mary Cannon. Those absent were: Mary Soberick, Joe Butrie, Colin Jones and Solicitor Michael Greek.

PUBLIC COURTESY

No public courtesy.

ADOPTION OF 2015 BUDGET

Tommy Vadyak said it was a bogus budget. He said we are anticipating figures of \$898,000 when in this year 2014 we will take in about \$725,000. He said we are looking at a short fall. We hired 2 more police officers, added a 3rd guy at the borough garage and with health insurance, Mr. Vadyak does not see this being a realistic budget. He said by mid- Year there will be lay- offs. He thinks the police will be going back to part- time. He also stated the Sewer Transmission fund is in the red and you cannot adopt a budget that is in the red. Mrs. Fittos stated that the prior year budgets also some funds were in the red and they were adopted. Mr. Vadyak said we are heading for a shortfall and when we try to find where to get the money from, we shouldn't take it from Sewer Transmission because that would be misappropriation of funds. Mrs. Fittos asked what changes Mr. Vadyak would like to make to in order to make it more realistic and his response was to live within your means. He said the real estate tax current should be at \$750,000 and 2 more police office should not have been put on. He also said creating a light duty position at the Borough garage along with health insurance is going to cost us about \$65,000 for the year. Mr. Vadyak said we are making unrealistic moves, and there is too much overtime in the police department instead of setting up a schedule. He asked if the crimes were being deterred and said they aren't. He said to check the back where the pipe was busted; it came from the police cars. He said by mid- year we will be looking for money and we are not taking it from the Sewer Transmission fund. He says he votes no on this budget.

Rose Mary Cannon said she also has a problem with the budget. There are problems with it that she sees, not the ones that Mr. Vadyak is addressing but some areas where figures should be changed. She did say that Mary and Jill worked very hard on this budget along with the committee. She said for example, the Special Highway Liquid Fuels is very limited and we should know ahead of time what projects need to be done as the streets are a mess. Mr. Ditsky said they are working on that now, but a plan should have been done before the budget was done. She said the same thing with the police department, we are talking about making an entranceway, but were there ever any figures for it. She we are also looking at constantly looking to not raise taxes, which is great if we can, but it will also be a disservice to the town if we can't do what it needs.

Mrs. Fittos said we had several budget meetings and it was mentioned to add those items that Ms. Cannon discussed to the budget, yet no one said lets add it. Things get pushed to the backburner. She also said whether it gets adopted or not, if it doesn't, we not only can't pay a lot of bills, but will not be able to collect real estate taxes. Ms. Cannon said she knows, although she disagrees with the way it was done she will vote for it because we need a budget. She also said she doesn't see it being illegal to use money from the sewer transmission fund as Auditors have audited it and have seen nothing wrong with it. She doesn't think we should do it, but it's certainly not illegal. She thinks we didn't do it right and have to do a better job next year.

Samantha Yasson said she agrees with the comments, but we can't look at wage increase at the end of the game. Ms. Cannon said you have to look at it for the budget, but Ms. Yasson said all the chairs of the committees should have provided their figures in September, early enough not when the budget is due for approval. She also said the pool should be addressed more and the part- time police officers, but how can we discuss all that and change the budget in the last minute.

Mr. Vadyak said we can't even get locks for the gun doors in the police dept. We already had 1 fatality down there that could have been prevented if there were locks.

Martin asked if there was any more discussion on the budget. He would like to hear a motion on the adoption of the budget, although it is a bogus budget. Ms. Cannon said he shouldn't use the word bogus; we have to have some kind of basis to start with on the budget. Mr. Ditsky said people are concerned with the taxes being increased, but Mrs. Fittos said the taxes went down.

Samantha Yasson asked Mr. Vadyak the figure he mentioned he thinks was unrealistic and he responded with a yes. She asked how we came up with the number. Mary Fittos said that number is based on the assessment. Mrs. Fittos said it's a calculation. You have to multiply the milleage by the assessment and then you get that figure. Mr. Ditsky said we received the assessment in September and we were assessed at 34 million and change. Mrs. Fittos said it was originally 32 million and the assessment in December was increased to 34 million. Mrs. Fittos said it's a high assessment which is why the real estate taxes are high, but we can't just guess at the number because when the auditors come in, they want to see calculations how we came to the number. Mr. Ditsky said he was looking at the contract for public works and there is a lead Forman position in there, there always was. We have not received anything from that individual or his doctor yet.

Mr. Vadyak said there was a suggestion that we hold off on hiring another full time officer until end of the first quarter just to see how we do with the tax money that comes in.

There was a discussion between all the members and the process and rules of reopening the budget or amending certain parts to it. Several topics were brought up and discussed.

Mr. Vadyak had some issues with the way the schedule is being handled in the police department regarding overtime and covers shifts. He told Mayor Romankow that he is breaking the tax payers. Mr. Vadyak asked how many hours Officer Tom worked the other night and Mr. Romankow responded with 24hrs. Mr. Vadyak said 24 hrs. in a 24hr period. Mr. Romankow said there was no one else on to work.

Samantha Yasson makes the motion to adopt the budget. Seconded: Rose Mary Cannon vote. Opposed: Tommy Vadyak. Martin Ditsky was in favor .Motion passes.

ADOPTION OF 2015 TAX LEVY

Martin Ditsky read off the tax milleage rates: General Purposes is 26.34 mills, Debt purposes is 1.40mills, parks and recreation purposes is 0.97mills, fire protection purposes is 1.00 mills, lighting purposes is 2.61mills, Library purposes is 0.00 mills, and pension purposes is 0.50mills. Total mills are 32.82mills.

Samantha Yasson makes the motion to adopt it. Seconded: Martin Ditsky vote. Opposed: Tommy Vadyak. Motion passes.

ADJOURNMENT

Tommy Vadyak makes the motion to adjourn at 6:59pm. Seconded: Rose Mary Cannon vote. All in favor, motion passes.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Fittos

Secretary/Treasurer