

RIDGWAY BOROUGH BUDGET MEETING
Second Ward Fire Hall
321 W Main Street, Ridgway, PA 15853
November 1, 2023

The budget development meeting of the Ridgway Borough Council was called to order by Frank Quattrone at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 1 at the Second Ward Fire Hall.

PRESENT: Council members Frank Quattrone, Brent Kemmer, Steve Caggese, Steve Lawrie, and Abbi Peters via call-in. Also present were Borough Manager Michael Handley, Mayor Ray Imhof, Finance Director Tama Foster, Police Chief Shawn Geci, and Recording Secretary Jake Mercer.

ABSENT: Council members Ralph Dussia and Ron Burkett.

General

Borough Manager Mike Handley opened up by discussing the draft general fund budget. Handley said there is a slight increase in income that they will be receiving. Handley said there is an estimated \$41,000 in real estate transfers, and he said last year they had about \$30,000.

Handley went on to say that one of the huge benefits of code enforcement and zoning enforcement is permitting. He said that permit assists with keeping up with tax assessments and that their tax assessment currently comes from 1984. Handley said the revenues have increased since they have considered stronger enforcement and asking people to apply for permits. In 2022, this stood at \$20,000 according to Handley. He said that he felt comfortable settling on \$12,000 for this current installment.

Handley stated that the employee premium contribution is now at 12% on the non-uniform side and 10% on the uniform side regarding health care.

For the two new full-time positions of a code enforcement officer and a community development and special projects position in conjunction with the Johnsonburg Borough. Handley said the total cost of the two positions would be roughly \$120,000. There is a 75% reimbursement coming from the state according to Handley. The Johnsonburg Borough is paying 50% of the \$30,000 remaining, so the Ridgway Borough will have to pay \$15,000 for the two full-time positions.

Handley discussed the monies related to the flood mitigation project with the Army Corp of Engineers and that the Ridgway Township would contribute \$94,000 towards the \$180,000 project study. Handley noted this is earmarked and not guaranteed.

Handley said he is proud of the gradual decrease in the use of trucked industrial waste funds. Last year, \$385,000 was budgeted. If council approves all the assets and projects within the budget, only \$326,000 would need to be budgeted.

Handley stated that the actual budgetary number is close to zero. He said this is done to know if they are at the appropriate millage rate or not.

In regard to the police department budget, the amount of money budgeted last year was \$692,000. This year, the proposal for this budget is \$710,000. Chief of Police Shawn Geci stated that there is only one part-time officer employed but expects to have three new part-time officers hired in December.

A lengthy discussion was had regarding essential infrastructures, specifically relating to the Ridgway Municipal Building. Handley said he intends to have \$160,000 max equated in the budget to address areas of the building that need to be updated and addressed.

Councilwoman Abbi Peters commented that Handley and others involved formulating the budget “did a really good job” of toeing the line with the budget, considering how much general costs across the board have increased.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m. and the next budget session will take place on Wednesday, November 8 at 4:30 p.m. at the Second Ward Fire Hall.