

RIDGWAY BOROUGH BUDGET MEETING #3
Ridgway Municipal Building
108 Main Street, Ridgway, PA 15853
November 6, 2024

The budget development meeting of the Ridgway Borough Council was called to order by Steve Caggese at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 6 at the Ridgway Municipal Building.

PRESENT: Council members Steve Caggese, Steve Lawrie, Chris Matheson, Brent Kemmer, and Abbi Peters. Also in attendance was Borough Manager Mike Handley, Mayor Ray Imhof, and Recording Secretary Jake Mercer.

ABSENT: Council members Zack Pontious and Ron Burkett.

Borough Manager Mike Handley shared with Council that this is the final planned budget session. The Council will tentatively adopt the proposed budget during the November 18 regular Council meeting and vote to advertise.

At the December 16 regular Council meeting, Council will vote to adopt budgets and the 2025 tax ordinance/resolution. He said that they have no intention of increasing taxes this year.

General Fund Budget

Handley said he spoke with the solicitor about the amusement device license fees and other municipal fees. It was determined that they are not required to re-write the ordinance but update the fee by a resolution. He said the fee will be \$500 for profit businesses and \$100 for non-profit businesses as requested by the Council.

Handley spoke with RASD Superintendent Heather McMahon regarding the school resource officer position. She shared that the Board desires to have a four-year commitment for the school resource officer but only have funding for two years through the PCCD Grant Program.

The statement that Handley received that these programs may be phased out so there is no guarantee that the funding would be available for the school district for a third year. Handley said that the District has about \$114,000 available to them to fund the position for two years.

Council had a lengthy discussion about the contract commitments related to the position and Handley said he will speak with the solicitor before entering into the contract. Handley said that he will contact the Superintendent to enter a four-year agreement with a District option to terminate the agreement if funding is unavailable after the second year. Council was supportive of this action.

Sewer Funds Budget

Environmental Manager Josh Quattrone said they are expected to hit their budget this year. Handley said they are trying not to depend on trucked industrial waste and trying to budget for what they need. He said most of the budget reflects operational costs and general improvements they are required to make. He noted some of the optional improvements.

Handley said a new sludge truck is necessary. Quattrone said their current truck is a 2012 Freightliner. He said the price for a new truck comes out to about \$270,000. Quattrone shared with Council that a new truck like this is needed and is critical to keep the plant running. After lengthy discussions about the usage of the truck and the status of the current vehicles.

Councilman Lawrie made a motion to purchase a new truck. Councilwoman Peters seconded the motion and it was approved by the following vote:

Councilman Cageso: Aye

Councilman Lawrie: Aye

Councilwoman Peters: Aye

Councilman Matheson: Aye

Councilman Kemmer: Aye

Other capital improvements were discussed, presented and approved tentatively.

Water Funds Budget

Handley broke down the numbers for the Borough bill for water facilities for Borough and Township customers. He said they take 80% of that total bill for water and deposit 80% of that into the water fund. The other 20% is deposited into the water capital fund. He said in the past few years the allocation split 78% to 22%.

Handley reported Ridgway Township did not receive the LSA Grant for the sewer flow meter installation. Handley said they will have to wait until the December meeting to potentially modify SCR fees. But he believes the Township has good intentions to install soon or at least put the project out to bid as discussed previously.

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Quattrone said this is a “big year” for the water capital budget because of their SCADA systems. He noted a mile long water line could come with a significant cost. Mayor Ray Imhof said there is only one water line going from the water plant to the main reservoir. Quattrone said that he will look into companies that specialize feeding pipes into new pipes and look into further strategies to employ if there is a water line break.

After no further discussion, Council went into an executive session to discuss a legal and personnel matter and adjourned the meeting at 5:26 p.m.