

**RARITAN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING
RARITAN TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2020**

MEETING CALLED: Mayor Kuhl called the special meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL: The following were present: Mayor, Jeff Kuhl; Deputy Mayor, Karen Gilbert; Comm. Gary Hazard; Comm. Scott MacDade; Comm. Louis Reiner (arrived at 5:20 p.m.)

ALSO PRESENT: Administrator, Don Hutchins; Municipal Clerk, Lisa Fania; Chief Financial Officer, Bill Pandos; Fire Chief, Raritan Township Fire Company, Keith Paradiso; Raritan Township Fire Company past Fire Chiefs Doug Day and Steve Wetter

MEETING NOTICED: Mayor Kuhl advised that the meeting was noticed in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 January 10, 2020 to the Courier News, Hunterdon County Democrat, Star Ledger, Express Times, NJ.com and was posted on the municipal bulletin board and the Township website.

2020 BUDGET DISCUSSION #3

Fire Company

Fire Truck: Discussion continued from the previous budget meeting regarding the Fire Company's request for a new fire truck. Fire Chief, Keith Paradiso presented financing options for the amount of \$800,000.00 that included the following:

1. \$400,000.00 payment upfront for the chassis (with an approximate \$15,000.00 savings upon final payment at delivery)
2. Lease to purchase with nothing down; a \$96,000.00 annual lease payment for ten (10) years; and final payment of \$1.00.

Committee Members raised questions and concerns regarding the need for another truck during the lease period; different lease terms; and whether the Special Service box truck was in service.

During the discussion, Committee Members concurred that the goal is to keep the final amount to \$750,000.00. Mr. Pandos commented that when the Township paid \$30,000.00 up front for a new ambulance, \$15,000.00 was reduced from the final payment. He expressed the opinion that the \$15,000.00 reduction offered by the truck manufacturer should be higher. Mr. Hutchins spoke about ways of keeping the budget at .38% (\$8.06 on the average assessed home at \$404,100).

Fire Company members advised that lease terms include five (5), seven (7), and ten (10) years maximum. Chief Paradiso commented that he would like to keep the Special Service box truck in service until delivery of the new truck but offered to sell beforehand, if necessary.

It was the consensus of Committee Members to purchase the truck now for the amount of \$750,000.00 and pay for the chassis up front. Fire Company to negotiate with the manufacturer a reduction amount off of the final payment and advise accordingly.

(Fire Company representatives left the meeting at 5:22 p.m.)

At this time, Mr. Pandos provided an update on the status of the budget introduction advising that the Township can proceed with the introduction of the budget on paper per the Division of Consumer Affairs. He explained that the State's system is expected to be up and running by February 28. Mr. Pandos further commented that the Township's financial advisor and bond counsel concur that this schedule will enable the refinancing to take place by the due date of June 18. He continued to advise that interest rates on this Serial Bond will be around two and a half percent (2.5%) or lower.

Discussion continued regarding setting the date for a special meeting for the budget introduction. It was the consensus to hold a special meeting on Thursday, February 27 or Friday, February 28. Mr. Pandos to advise on date upon receipt of certification of revenues from the Auditor.

PEOSHA: Discussion continued from the previous budget meeting regarding the Fire Company's request for an \$11,000.00 increase. Mr. Hutchins commented that the Township is currently giving the Fire Company \$127,000.00 in Operating and \$45,000.00 in Capital.

Deputy Mayor Gilbert suggested an annual increase of about \$2,000.00 or \$3,000.00 going forward instead of an \$11,000.00 increase this year. Deputy Mayor Gilbert explained that an increase every year will eventually total the \$11,000.00 they are asking for over several years but will assist them in planning. Deputy Mayor Gilbert continued that the Fire Company already submits itemized expenses monthly and are attentive to the budget process. All Committee Members spoke in favor of Deputy Mayor Gilbert's recommendation. Mt. Hutchins to advise Chief Paradiso of the recommendation.

CYBER SECURITY

Committee Member Hazard reported that he had reviewed the proposal and cost for cyber security. Committee Member Hazard explained that the proposal consists of added security including an upgraded firewall and backup which is absolutely necessary; without it leaves the Township very vulnerable. Committee Member Hazard spoke in support of the \$25,000.00 annual cost. Committee Member Hazard suggested noting in the newsletter the Township's initiative for upgraded security for the protection of its citizens information. There were no objections

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

There was no public in attendance.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Kuhl asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by Reiner, seconded by Gilbert

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Fania, RMC
Township Clerk