

Special Town Board Meeting
November 6, 2008
4:30 p.m.

Present: Supervisor Gerald L. Deming, Councilmen: Norman Gates, David Deuel and Frank Rose Jr.

Absent: Lynn Parnell
Others: Vince Burroughs

Supervisor Deming opened the Special Town Board Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

PURPOSE

Supervisor Deming reported that the Special Town Board Meeting was called to review and discuss the proposed 2009 Budget a final time before its adoption. Mr. Deming stated that he believes he and the Board are quite comfortable with the majority of the budget, but the Fire and Ambulance contract still needs to be addressed further and resolved.

Mr. Deming stated after initial discussions with the York Fire Department, the budget figure they requested would result in a 16% increase to the taxpayers if approved. Mr. Deming explained he personally finds it difficult to grant that figure, especially because to date they have not completely finalized their plans regarding the ambulance service and still chose to seek additional funds. Supervisor Deming stated he would like the Board Members to express their thoughts on the matter.

Councilman Deuel asked if the yearly physicals that each volunteer member is required to have could possibly be covered under their personal insurance. Councilman Gates and Mr. Burroughs replied that physicals can not be covered by personal insurance carriers due to New York State regulations. Each year the Fire Department's insurance company schedules the dates for the physicals and the members must attend one of the dates slated.

Councilman Rose asked if the department still plans to separate the fire service from the ambulance service. Supervisor Deming and Councilman Gates replied that the separation is already underway.

Supervisor Deming stated that the Board's intentions have always been to work together with the fire department, and the upcoming year is no exception, but we still need to be responsible to the taxpayers. Mr. Deming informed the Board that he had a conversation today with Carl Peter representing the York Fire Department. Mr. Peter confirmed that the department has been able to bank \$ 20-30,000 each year from their contract, showing that they actually have a surplus from the day to day needs. Mr. Deming added that the Board has always placed in the budget a \$ 6,000 figure for yearly physicals and questions whether or not the entire amount is used or rolled over into the equipment fund. Mr. Deming also stated in the conversation with Mr. Peter it was made very clear through an ultimatum, if the Town Board does not approve the funds requested, the Fire Department will walk away from the ambulance.

Supervisor Deming stated that last year's contract was \$ 148,000, and proposed if we were to separate out \$ 25,000 for the ambulance, the fire contract itself would be \$ 123,000. With a 3% increase the new contract would be \$ 126,700 plus the \$ 6,000 for physicals, totaling \$ 132,700. Mr. Deming stated this was a figure he prepared, but expressed the need to hear the Boards thoughts and then sit down with the Department to discuss the matter again without an ultimatum being issued.

Mr. Burroughs stated at the last fire meeting discussions were held regarding hiring an EMT at \$ 22.00 per hour, and a comment was made by member, Mr. Hasler that "we are not going to use our own money to fund the ambulance". Mr. Burroughs stressed to the Board that the money the Fire Department receives from the Town of York is not their money, it is the taxpayers money and they need to be accountable for it. Mr. Burroughs suggested that the Town Board consider offering the department \$ 100,000 and put the remaining \$ 50,000 in CDs. "Mr. Burroughs stated once a plan has been outlined as to where the money will be spent, then offer further assistance, otherwise they will continue to waste your money". Mr. Burroughs asked the Board what the percentages were pertaining to fire versus ambulance service, and what would happen if the Town disbursed a check for fire & ambulance service and the department decides not to run the ambulance. Mr. Burroughs continued by saying that the Town is not getting the services they have paid for because we do not have the manpower to run all of the trucks and equipment.

Councilman Deuel suggested that we offer the Department \$ 148,000 with a 3% increase (\$ 4,440), totaling \$ 152,440.00. The \$ 6,000 will also remain for yearly physicals, but stated we should receive the claims at the Town Hall and submit payment after the physicals have been completed.

Councilman Rose agreed with Mr. Deuel's suggestion, and stated the importance of meeting with the Fire Department to iron out the remaining details. Mr. Rose added, our entire budget is focused on a 2-3% increase across the Board and asked how can we justify a 16% increase to the Fire Department.

Councilman Gates reported that roughly 100 volunteers make up the York Fire Department, of which approximately 40 are active members and 15-20 appear for calls, agreeing that it is getting difficult to get members to participate. Mr. Deming asked if the ambulance could run with the figure of \$ 25,000, which Mr. Gates replied he believed it could and thought \$ 25,000 might be a little too much to ask for.

Councilman Deuel suggested once again to offer \$ 152,440.00 with the understanding that the Town will not separate funds for the ambulance until the Department has a better idea of what avenue they will be proceeding with.

OFFER

RESOLUTION offered by Mr. Deuel and seconded by Mr. Rose to offer the York Fire Department for Fire & Ambulance Service for the year 2009, \$ 152,440. Voted on and approved, Yes-3, No-0, Abstain-1, Norman Gates.

* The \$ 6,000 line item for physicals will remain in the budget, the Town will be responsible for payment for the members once the claim(s) have been submitted.

ADJOURNMENT

RESOLUTION offered by Mr. Gates and seconded by Mr. Deuel to adjourn the Special Town Board Meeting at 5:10 p.m. Voted on and approved, Yes-4, No-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine M. Harris, Clerk