

MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
WORK SESSION
March 8, 2022
6:47 P.M.

Present: Councilmember Fenwick, Councilmember Cozzi, Councilmember Capilli,
Councilmember Epstein, Council President Metzdorf and Mayor Misciagna

Absent: Councilmember Ferguson
Also Present: Magdalena Giandomenico, Borough Clerk
Julie Falkenstern, Borough Administrator
John Schettino, Esq., Borough Attorney
Connie Carpenter, Borough CFO
Paul Longo, Director of Operations
Michael Mintz, Utility Board Member

Service
Community

Mayor Misciagna read the compliance statement earlier as required by the Open Public Meeting Act, P.L. 1975, and Chapter 231.

- I. Water Rates Increase:** Director of Operations stated that there will be a need for a 14% increase in the water rates.

Old rates: \$4.64 per 1,000 gallons, an avg of \$41.76 on an avg household

New rates: \$5.29 per 1,000 gallons, an avg of \$47.65 on an avg household

*There is an increase of \$5.85 per month due to the 14% increase

*Average household uses 1,000 gallons per month

Suez current rate is \$6.35 per 1,000 gallons

$\$6.35 \times 9 = \57.15 current average household rate per month

The increase is proposed as of May 1, 2022, and the rates would still be lower than Suez, Mahwah, Butler and Waldwick. There might be a need for about a 10% increase in the electric rates. A discussion ensued.

Councilman Capilli stated that he does not want to slam residents with such a high increase in utilities, he would like to know what the actual increase would need to be to fix the wells. Paul Longo stated it is about \$2.3 million for a temporary fix and \$5 million for a permanent fix. The acting CFO stated that this increase would be part of the operations and expenses line items in the budget, not for the fixing of the wells.

Council President Metzdorf stated that the Borough bought electric out to 2029, but PSEG increased their rates for transmission. Councilman Capilli stated that the increase should have been planned on a gradual level over time. Mayor Misciagna stated that he needs to see a comparison of the Park Ridge proposed rates as they compare to other independent providers.

Councilwoman Epstein asked how we prevent the transmission fees imposed by PSEG from going up? Mayor Misciagna stated that is only possible if the Borough generates their own power.

Councilman Capilli suggested that on the actual bill there should be a comparison how much the bill would be from one of the other companies since they have higher rates.

- II. Road Paving:** Borough Administrator Falkenstern stated that the governing body will have to decide how much they want to spend on the road repaving program this year. She will have the Borough Engineer and Pete Wayne make a list of roads and the cost per road, this way a priority list can be made of which roads to pave. The Police Department would like to hire another officer this year and their o/e budget is up due to mandates such as body cams and retention requirements. The DPW budget is up, but that is because the garbage contract went up \$200,000 a month. The garbage contract comes out of the DPW budget line item.
- III. Property Purchase:** The Council discussed purchasing a property for passive recreation, the assessed value is \$450,000. The Borough Attorney proposed the council adopts a resolution that would authorize him to make an offer based on the assessed value of the land. All agreed.

Open Work Session adjourned at 7:38pm

Councilman Capilli made a motion to adjourn open session into closed session and seconded by Councilman Fenwick confirm. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Magdalena Giandomenico
Borough Clerk

