

Minutes of the Budget Hearing of the Municipal Council and Department/Division Heads of the Township of Woodbridge at the Woodbridge Community Center, 600 Main Street, Woodbridge, New Jersey in the County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, held on August 9, 2022 at 4:00 P.M. for the Presentation and Introduction of the FY 2023 Municipal Budget to the Municipal Council immediately followed by Budget Hearings with Department/Division Heads of the Township of Woodbridge. Formal action may be taken.

Council President Bauer: Called the meeting to order.

Council President Bauer: Please rise for a salute to the Flag and remain standing for a moment of silence for all of our military personnel serving here and abroad.

Members of the Council and all those present gave the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silence was observed for the men and women serving overseas.

Notice Requirements of the Open Public Meetings Law have been satisfied concerning this meeting. A Notice was published in The Home News Tribune on July 28, 2022 and The Star Ledger on August 4, 2022. A copy of the Notice was posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board. It should be so noted in the minutes of this meeting.

The Municipal Clerk took the Municipal Council attendance.

The roll call was as follows:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kyle Anderson, Lizbeth DeJesus, Gregg Ficarra, Sharon McAuliffe, Howie Bauer, Cory Spillar, Virbhadra N. Patel

MEMBERS ABSENT: Brian Small, Debbie Meehan

ALSO PRESENT: Caroline Ehrlich, Chief of Staff
John Mitch, Municipal Clerk
Craig Coughlin, Esq., Municipal Counsel
Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator
Casey Wagner, Deputy Business Administrator
Manuel Fernandez, Chief Financial Officer
Marta Darden, Director of Planning and Development
Robert Hubner, Director of Police
George Brew, Director of Public Works
Brian Molnar, Recreation Director
John Hagerty, Communications Director
Richard Duda, Tax Assessor
Richard Lorentzen, Tax Collector
Jennifer Burns, Purchasing Agent
Darren Crocker, Director of Human Resources
Bryan Austin, Director of Information Systems

Monica Eppinger, Library Director
Phil Bujalski, Health Department
Philip Dinicola, Director of Municipal Court
Michelle Morgan, Director of Senior Services

John Mitch, Municipal Clerk: Made a motion to open the public hearing.

John Mitch, Municipal Clerk: Hearing no comment from the public, can I get a motion that the public comment portion be closed.

Council Vice President Gregg Ficarra made a motion to close the public hearing which was seconded by Councilwoman Lizbeth DeJesus and carried unanimously.

The Municipal Clerk called for a First Reading of the following Ordinance as Consent:

**A. ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE SFY 2023 MUNICIPAL BUDGET
APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK.**

Council Vice President Ficarra made a motion, seconded by Councilwoman Lizbeth DeJesus and carried unanimously that this Ordinance be passed on First Reading to be published in the Home News Tribune on Friday, August 12, 2022 with Notice of Public Hearing, Second and Third Reading, to be held on Tuesday, September 6, 2022 at 6:00 P.M.

The Municipal Clerk introduced the following Resolution as Consent:

(1) BE IT RESOLVED that the Municipal Council hereby authorizes the Introduction of Fiscal Year 2023 Budget.

Council Vice President Ficarra moved the adoption of the foregoing Resolutions. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman DeJesus and carried unanimously.

DEPARTMENT OF POLICE
Police Department – 2210

Mr. Mitch: Mr. President we are going to go right in to your budget hearing with your Department heads and your Division heads. This evening we are going to begin with the Police Department continuing with the Impound Yard and then the Office of Emergency Management.

Council President Bauer: Does anyone from Council have any questions for Director Hubner?

Councilman Spillar: I want to thank Director Hubner, Deputy Director Nisky, and Business Administrator Cimilluca for answering a few questions I had earlier on. I am very pleased to see

the increase in salary and wages continuing, the Mayor and Administration and Council's efforts to constantly increase our man power and woman power. Our Police Department is so much more than radio patrol. There are so many different divisions and bureaus within the Police Department. Thank you.

Councilwoman DeJesus: On page on 90 I see that there is thirty thousand dollars for Community Affairs. I just want to say that I'm sure this money is being used for National Night Out, which was a fantastic event this year and from last year it grew dramatically and I am looking forward to seeing what you guys will be doing next year. Also I attended both of the graduations of the Senior and Junior Police Academy and I want to thank the officers that run the academies for their dedication. I have seen your officers at work and I know that I mentioned to you privately how professional and kind they are when they deal with our residents. I am very happy with the way that our Police interact with our residents and the way that they do their jobs and community affairs as well. I'm happy to see their participation at all of our Township events. When I do my backpack drive, Hispanic Heritage Festival, and even when we had a Health Day in Keasbey at the Hillside Garden Apartment, they were there. Their table is one of the most visited and that just shows how they interact with the residents. They feel comfortable enough to come and speak and interact with them. Deputy Director Nisky and Captain Kuzma, thank you for the job that you guys do and the way that you run the department.

Director Hubner: Thank you Councilwoman. Community Relations and Community Affairs, even though we only have two officers actually assigned, Detective Zeno and Detective Anna Radowski, it's a department wide initiative. Every officer throughout the department has a responsibility to work Community Policing and Community Affairs. Thank you.

Councilman Anderson: I just want to echo Councilwoman DeJesus. You know how influential the Junior Police Academy is. My boys went through the program a few years ago and still have their certificates hanging on their wall. The National Night Out last week was a complete success. The Mayor had me over there and interviewed me. The crowd itself and seeing the young kids out there with their family's helps forge that relationship as you mentioned with community relations. Lastly I would like to thank the Police Department for their involvement with the Juneteenth Event, getting out with the community, having a table and police cruiser there and reaching out to the community and beginning to forge that relationship or at least continuing that relationship so thank you very much.

Director Hubner: Thank you.

Impound Yard – 2215

Mr. Mitch: If there are no other questions on the Police budget, we will move on to the Impound Yard. Any questions on the Impound Yard? If there are no questions, the last division under Director Hubner is the Office of Emergency Management.

Office of Emergency Management – 2250

Councilman Spillar: Does C.E.R.T fall under Office of Emergency Management for supplies and such?

Director Hubner: Yes. Just one quick comment going back to the tow yard. As you can see it pretty much stayed the same last year. We did some reorganization down there and we're actually making money between the car auctions, towing and storage. We are making a profit down there.

Councilman Anderson: I just want to make one final comment about the recent hires with the Police Department. There are a lot of familiar faces of young men from our town that came through the Scout program. It's really good to see young men and women from Woodbridge Township getting an opportunity to be a police officer on the force. Thank you for looking at our candidates that are home grown first.

Council President Bauer: Any other comments? Director Hubner I would just like to thank you for your leadership and professionalism within the department. And please thank all of the men and women of the department for their hard work and dedication in protecting the citizens of Woodbridge Township. We thank you for all you do. Thank you.

Director Hubner: Thank you Council President.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Office of the Business Administrator – 1210

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Office of the Mayor – 1010

Mr. Mitch: Followed by the Office of the Mayor.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Law Department – 1510/1511

Mr. Mitch: To the Law Department.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Council President Bauer: I have a question. On page 14 there is a huge increase in printing. I know printer ink is a ridiculous price. Are we printing more or is the price of toner and ink going through the roof?

Mr. Cimilluca: Mr. Hagerty can answer that.

Mr. Hagerty: Printing is outrageous. With supply and demand, our paper costs have gone sky high. We are having difficulty with printers being obtained and the materials they need to print. We are getting materials of a lesser quality. But yes, our demand for printing is going up.

Council President Bauer: Thank you. Any other questions?

Mr. Mitch: We'll go to the Comptrollers Budget.

Division of Assessment – 1330

Mr. Mitch: Thank you. Next up we are going to have the Division of Assessment, Mr. Richard Duda.

Richard Duda: Good afternoon Council.

Council President Bauer: Any questions for Mr. Duda?

Mr. Mitch: Hearing none, thank you Mr. Duda.

Richard Duda: Thank you. Have a good evening.

Division of Tax Collection – 1320

Mr. Mitch: Followed by Mr. Lorentzen Tax Collection who will also take with him Sewer Administration.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments for Mr. Lorentzen?

Sewer Administration – 8510

Mr. Mitch: Anything on Sewer Administration for Mr. Lorentzen?

Councilwoman McAuliffe: The increase in the maintenance contracts.

Mr. Lorentzen: Some of the maintenance contracts used to be with I.S. and they are trying to get them back to the department level, so we allocated more money in our department to bring in some of the maintenance contracts that were previously being charges to I.S. I think we are doing that with a few departments.

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: It's a little bit better controlled.

Council President Bauer: Plus out-sourcing. Keeping it in house.

Councilman Anderson: Mr. Lorentzen obviously we appreciate that the reserve of uncollected taxes has remained stable. There is a different amount between the transferred amounts in the transfer to the Board of Education. Would you be able to elaborate on that for the residents?

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: I don't think that is his Councilman. That's a debt service.

Council President Bauer: Any other questions or comments?

Mr. Mitch: Thank you Mr. Lorentzen.

Purchasing – 1225:

Mr. Mitch: Next we will take Purchasing, Jen Burns. She will actually be covering for a number of items. She will also be covering Utilities & Bulk Purchases but we'll start with Purchasing.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Councilwoman DeJesus: On page 18 there is a request Rent Other Than Office, and this the first request that I have seen in the last couple of years. Can you explain what Rent Other Than Office is?

Jennifer Burns: I don't think that is mine.

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: That is the mailroom. That's a Pitney Bowes machine. It's a lease on a mailing machine. Our old machine went out and we needed something new to push out the tax bills and other items.

Councilwoman DeJesus: Thank you.

Council President Bauer: I have a question. On page 18, Other Outside Services. It's probably a good thing having a decrease of roughly \$100,000. Is that another in-house item that we are keeping from getting out-sourced?

Jennifer Burns: That was for a consultant originally and we are not going to be needing his services. So the decrease is listed there.

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: Now that Ms. Burns has her QPA. She's been a qualified Purchasing Agent now, she passed her test and that's why we reduced that number.

Council President Bauer: Congratulations.

Jennifer Burns: Thank you.

Council President Bauer: Any other questions or comments?

Councilman Anderson: Ms. Burns, there is a significant decrease in mileage and tolls for approximately \$100,000 under purchasing. We went from \$288,000 to \$181,000.

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: That is a control total. If you look below it.

Councilman Anderson: Is that what Council President was referring to?

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: Yes.

Councilman Anderson: Thank you.

Council President Bauer: Kyle, I was referring to the top of the page 18 under Other Outside Services.

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: Yes, Other Outside Services is what Council President was referring to. Councilman Anderson, you're referring to the control total at the bottom of the page. There is not a bar there that disseminates those two lines so it is a bit confusing. It looks like it is part of it but it is not.

Councilman Anderson: Ok. Yeah, I see the minus \$100,000. So, the appropriation for the 2022 was \$288,000?

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: Correct.

Councilman Anderson: And the actual was \$181,000?

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: Correct. Subtract the \$100,000 that Council President Bauer was referring to.

Councilwoman McAuliffe: What do we do with the \$100,000 then?

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: That's a good question Councilwoman. This budget is flat so if you notice, we've reduced a lot of those budget lines and put them elsewhere where needed.

Utilities & Bulk Purchases – 1290:

Mr. Mitch: Again, while Ms. Burns is here Utilities & Bulk Purchases.

Councilwoman McAuliffe: We have street lighting every single year at zero. What is street lighting?

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: Street lighting is for the PSE&G bill that we pay for the lighting throughout. It's not captured there, it's captured in another line. It's electricity. If you look up to the line above it.

Council President Bauer: Any other questions?

Mr. Mitch: Thank you Ms. Burns. Next we'll go onto Human Resources, Mr. Crocker.

Personnel – 1240

Councilman Spillar: Mr. Crocker, I know I saw this somewhere so I am probably just repeating somebody. The salary increase, I believe that is going to be the offset of that payroll issue.

Darren Crocker: Yes.

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: Yes, 27.

Councilwoman DeJesus: Line number 41- 44 Supplies and Awards. There has never been anything requested and this year we are requesting some money for that. Can you give us a small explanation as to why?

Darren Crocker: Sure. That's for our anniversary pins and luncheons that we give for employees for 5, 10, 15, and 20 years. It's usually been under miscellaneous expense and we just carved it out to read under supplies.

Councilwoman DeJesus: Thank you.

Council President Bauer: Any other questions?

Mr. Mitch: Thank you Mr. Crocker. Mr. Cimilluca, if it's ok with you we are going to go right into Information Systems. We'll hold the Comptrollers.

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: Yes.

Mr. Mitch: Mr. Austin.

Comptrollers – 1310:
Information Systems – 8250

Council President Bauer: Do you have any questions for Mr. Austin?

Council President Bauer: I have one on page 183, Other Outside Services. There is an increase of roughly double from last year.

Brian Austin: For 183, that line includes many items throughout the budget year. Some examples are the Annual SDL software licensing fee. We're also looking at an ac unit being engineered in the data center and that's also added in there. Also there are installation of some cameras and also some of the alarm equipment that was purchased was also in that line.

Council President Bauer: Thank you. Any other questions?

Mr. Mitch: Thank you Mr. Austin.

TV 35

Mr. Mitch: TV 35, Mr. Hagerty.

Councilman Spillar: Council President. Not a question, just a statement. I know we say it every year but you and your staff are just phenomenal at TV 35. I don't really watch T.V. I just watch the Woodbridge channels and YouTube. We had the ribbon cutting at Bubbakoo's and the owner asked when he can see it. I said our crew is great and it will probably be on within two hours or you can go to YouTube. Outstanding job to you and your staff.

John Hagerty: Thank you. And it just goes to show that TV 35 is doing much more programming now than ever before. We are getting out on varying social media channels as well as the Comcast channel 35 and we'll be going to a high def signal later this year.

Councilman Anderson: Mr. Hagerty, I just want to thank you very much for the services that you provide. With TV 35 I know Lee Beckerman and his crew are very instrumental in keeping me, Councilman Ficarra, Assembly Speaker Coughlin and the Mayor employed as voluntary broadcasters for our sports. Also with regard to our Black History Month event and all of our cultural events, during COVID TV 35 kept our town informed and we kept our programs going during the COVID period. I think that was very important and much appreciated by the residents. We broadcast as much as we can on our own social media and have a lot of fun broadcasting the games. It goes without saying that we have a phenomenal TV crew and programming schedule that is facilitated by our Administration.

John Hagerty: Thank you. I have a very deep talent pool both on TV 35 and within the Council who likes to get their minutes up on T.V.

Councilman Anderson: On behalf of these announcers, I would like to say thank you.

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: During the Pandemic which we are just coming out of now, there are many towns and town halls that are closed. We have never closed. It's a testament to our employees, we have never closed. We have delivered services whether you had to make an appointment or not. Our township employees came to work every day and delivered those services. The Mayor led that by coming to work every day and so did our township employees and all of our residents benefited from that. So I thank you for noticing that. I appreciate it.

Council President Bauer: Thank you.

Mr. Mitch: Hearing no other questions for Mr. Hagerty we'll go to Mrs. Darden, Planning and Development.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Director's Office – 2010

Council President Bauer: Any questions for Director Darden?

Mr. Mitch: If not we'll continue with her and take both the Planning Board and Zoning Board.

Planning Board – 2020

Zoning Board – 2030

Council President Bauer: Questions or comments?

Council President Bauer: With the Mayor's vision within our township, Director Darden's help with redevelopment and planning within our township, we were able to receive many funds through the State and Federal Government for our local projects and in my own Ward which will be a new Olsen Towers on New Brunswick Avenue. If Director Darden can elaborate on that a little more and how we received these funds and what will be going on in my Ward.

Mrs. Darden: We have grants and different monies that we collect through developments and approvals. Specifically with the grants, we have a Community Development Block grant which we've received every year for about the last 37 years. It started even before I came to work here. Those monies are always used to underwrite new construction and to provide services both in and out of town that benefit all our residents who are in need. Specifically with the Affordable Housing Trust, we are already in a program to assist people in need. And this one is the Housing Rehab Program. It takes very little to qualify, very little information and we will provide up to twenty two thousand dollars for substantial and significant rehab on individual owner's homes. It was originally a part of the Community Development Block Program and in the last six years has been part of our Affordable Housing Trust. As you mentioned, Olsen Towers, we are looking at how we can rehouse and bring the senior building that has existed for many years and it is literally in the style of a cinderblock building not unlike what some local prisons have. We are going to update that and give the seniors brand new units literally at the same sight. And so

that's the project that we're working on.

Council President Bauer: Thank you. With redevelopment over the years and PILOT programs, many of our Fire Districts have received funding for new apparatus safety equipment and taking that money away from the taxpayer to foot that bill. Thanks to the redevelopment and PILOT programs which is in Hopelawn, my Ward, Hopelawn Fire received funding to purchase safety equipment not only to protect themselves but to protect the residents of the 8th Fire District. Mayor and Administration, thank you for all that you did to help our local fire districts. Thank you.

Council President Bauer: Any other questions or comments?

Councilwoman McAuliffe: About Sewaren, the Marina. We know that we have been working on the Marina and it's coming along good. Can you just give us a little bit of information on when we think that project is going to work. We have a lot of questions about beautifying our downtown Sewaren boat area. I know we could build a lot more revenue with the bulk heads and boats.

Mrs. Darden: That project has many phases. First phase we demoed the one property that we just purchased that was previously part of Pirate's Cove Marina and it's now going to be a continuous contiguous part of the expansion of development that we will have there. When I say development it's not going to be heavy in terms of the structure development. It's going to be an array of activities and an expansion of activities at our current marina. Including a living shoreline, and additional marina slips. It's a very exciting development and program that literally the Administration has taken on and is spearheading.

Councilwoman McAuliffe: Thank you very much and it's going to be great. I saw the plans for the living shoreline and I am very excited for when it's done.

Vito Cimilluca, Business Administrator: It will definitely benefit that area with the beautification of that.

Councilman Anderson: Mrs. Darden I would just like to thank you for your efforts in managing a lot of the development that is going on Downtown and throughout Woodbridge to maintain the Downtown theme, it also is going to spark our economy. The businesses down there require foot traffic. Residents are going to be able to patronize the businesses but at the same time throughout other sections of town, our home inspectors are out there making sure that the integrity of our properties are kept up. I had conversations with them today regarding some properties and making sure we are in constant communication with our residents about the expectations and the upkeep of our properties and making sure we are adhering to the code that is required. That's a big job and we appreciate that.

Mrs. Darden: Thank you.

Housing Bureau – 2050
Construction Code – 2075

Mr. Mitch: While Mrs. Darden is here we're also going to take the Housing Bureau which also comes under her as well as the Construction Code.

Council President Bauer: Any questions for Director Darden?

Mr. Mitch: Hearing no questions, Thank you Mrs. Darden.

LIBRARY

Mr. Mitch: We are going to go into the Library. Our Director, Monica Eppinger:

Councilwoman DeJesus: I don't have any questions but I would like to thank Director Eppinger and your staff. A couple of years ago I had the brilliant idea of doing a pop up library in Keasbey on the hottest day of the year. The idea was to bring books to an area in which there really is not much for the kids to do. And that was the beginning of pop up libraries everywhere. Your staff is at every event that we host and always with a smile and interacting with the kids and making things fun. My daughter participated in the Dine and Paint at the library with her friends and she enjoyed it. You and your staff have brought a new life to the library. There is always programming for all ages and exciting things happening at the library. For me it is very important for there to be an outreach to the Latino community. I am happy to say that you and your staff do a phenomenal job at doing community outreach. Thank you for all you and your staff do all year round and thank you for listening to our crazy ideas and making them happen.

Mrs. Eppinger: Thank you so much. It's a pleasure.

Council President Bauer: Any other questions or comments?

Councilwoman McAuliffe: I just wanted to ask about the Sewaren Library. I know that is a little bit different than all of the other libraries. If you could just elaborate a little bit and tell us how the Main Library is working with the Sewaren Library to do technology integration and to get them a little bit more involved in what's going on. They have their own programs but how is the Main Library trying to build the Sewaren's little library out there?

Mrs. Eppinger: We had the opportunity to write a grant for a tablet station and right now they are housed at the Main Library. They were meant for outreach and we are going to share one of those with Sewaren. They are doing a program with it next month in September. Hopefully that will all go well. They don't really need to know much just to dispense tablets and keep them charged and ready to go. And we can put whatever they want on them. We can also put a few of the Main Library systems things on them too because they are our patrons too and we would like to make sure that they are successful and that we can reach them with the resources that the Main Library has.

Councilwoman McAuliffe: Thank you.

Council President Bauer: Any other comments or questions?

Councilwoman DeJesus: I just have one other comment. That is for our residents that need a library card. They don't necessarily have to go to any of our branches. They can come to any of our events where your staff is there and they can get a library card right on site. That's another thing that I think is fabulous because if you can't make it to the library at any given time, they can always access a library card by coming to one of our events and visiting your table. Not only that, they don't have to go to a library branch to get a book, they can do it digitally right?

Mrs. Eppinger: Yes. You can actually apply for a library card online now and they will mail it to your house. But the card you get in that moment will work on our electronic resources. You can even download a book. So it's that fast. Happy to do that. Even if you want to renew your card there is a way you can do that online. We have much improved the speed in getting a card. Thank you.

Council President Bauer: I would like to talk about another vision that my council mate who helps me a lot in my Second Ward, Councilwoman DeJesus. The pop up libraries always come out when we have events but we wanted something there permanently for the kids. We were investigating and through the internet we came across Little Libraries. Little Libraries is take a book, return a book and it's a free exchange library within the community where people can come and get a book, read it, return it and share their books with everybody in the community. We asked to have a few installed. One at School #25 in Fords, Hopelawn Engine Company on Loretta Street in Hopelawn and we just moved the Keasbey one from the firehouse down to Clinton Street Park where more kids can access the Little Free Library. I have local citizens that actually want to be part of this that have a passion for reading and they want to decorate it and be a part of the community. With the help of the Public Library system helping us support it, my council mate, the Council and the Administration, I can't thank you enough for giving these kids the opportunity to be involved. A lot of our communities don't have the home town library to go to like I did when I was growing up. This gives them something to be part of the community and be involved. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Eppinger: We will help in any way we can to support those.

Councilwoman DeJesus: I just have on last comment. I'm not going to take credit for it being my idea. The idea of the Free Little Library came from the DEI meeting at School #25 in which I was a community person involved. And the teachers wanted to make books accessible to the kids in the Keasbey section of our town. So working together with Howie we brought up the idea to the Administration. Cub Scouts actually built nine Little Libraries. They are at School #9 because there is no library branch in Port Reading, Keasbey, Hopelawn, there is one in Avenel at the Ernie Oros Park, and School #25. The kids from Hopelawn and Keasbey don't have a library branch. When they are in school they can visit the Fords Library. But during the summer, the Free Little Library makes books accessible to them. You were always very open to the idea of the library and the Board of Trustees at the library helped. So, I want to thank School #25, the DEI team for having the idea and the Cub Scouts for building and implementing and

Administration for helping us in making that dream come true.

Council President Bauer: Also, a special thanks to the Department of Public Works who assisted us in installing them. The Boy Scouts of America and a lot of times the Eagle Scout Programs will take on these projects and build it and supply the supplies for these Free Little Libraries. A special thanks to those organizations too.

Councilman Anderson: Mrs. Eppinger I just want thank you and your Board for working with me in my day job as County Superintendent and for figuring out a way where we can collaborate more with the schools and partner with the schools on our libraries especially during summer programs. Summer reading is really key for our teachers to be able to count on that program so that our students, especially during the COVID period and I hate to use the words “learning loss” but obviously we had some regression and we rely on our libraries especially during summertime to continue the learning that they had in the fall months.

Mrs. Eppinger: Thank you. Happy to do that too.

Mr. Mitch: Are there any other questions? Thank you Mrs. Eppinger.

MUNICIPAL COURT **Municipal Court 6010**

Mr. Mitch: We’ll go to the Municipal Court, Mr. Phil DiNicola.

Phil DiNicola: Good afternoon.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments for Mr. DiNicola?

Councilwoman McAuliffe: On “Other Office Equipment”, did we get something new or what did we do there?

Mr. DiNicola: Normally what we do is we replace the equipment that needs to be replaced as it wears out. Under the AOC’s rules, we have to keep our equipment up to date, current and maintained under the contracts. We have to be prepared for any eventual breakdowns such as our court recording systems, our video arraignment systems, and the like.

Council President Bauer: Any other questions or comments?

Councilman Anderson: I just want to say thank you for your efforts in keeping our overtime to a reasonable figure and actually under than what we are budgeting. Are we maintaining our ranking as being the busiest court in New Jersey? Thank you.

Mr. DiNicola: We are in the top three.

Mr. Mitch: Thank you Mr. DiNicola.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Mr. Mitch: We'll go to the Department of Health, Deputy Director Phil Bujalski.

Health Administration – 3010

Mr. Mitch: We'll start with the Health Administration Budget. Mr. Bujalski.

Mr. Bujalski: Good afternoon all.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Health – Community Outreach - 3000-3020

Mr. Mitch: We can go into the Community Outreach.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Councilwoman DeJesus: Page 105, Health Community Outreach, from item 3510. Could you just tell us a little bit more about that?

Mr. Bujalski: Sure Councilwoman. We are getting a mobile health unit which has been donated. It's essentially a bus that's equipped to provide a number of health services. We are trying to reach underserved communities and be able to do even more than what we do. It will involve health screenings and vaccinations to reach as many people as we can throughout the Township.

Councilwoman DeJesus: Thank you. I want to thank the Health Department. We do a backpack drive in Keasbey every year. Councilman Bauer, Board of Education, Dan Harris, the Mayor, the Administration, Councilman Ficarra and myself are were trying to see how we can best service our community. Last year Hackensack Meridian brought their mobile clinic to that event and we had health screenings and also through the Health Department, COVID vaccines available to the residents in Keasbey. I feel like that was the beginning of another adventure that we're taking together. But it's a great adventure because we are providing services to the residents that can't come to us and we are bringing it to them. I feel that is how government and community should be. Thank you so much for being there for every backpack drive and addressing the concerns of the community. And not only that, also making it bi-lingual. Spanish is predominantly spoken there and I have seen an increase in your nurses and staff in being able to communicate with that particular community. From the bottom of my heart thank you for that because we are providing services for residents that had not been provided in the past. Also this year our back pack drive is coming up and one of the things we are talking about is providing the COVID vaccine to the children before they go back to school. I look forward to working with

you and I'm very excited about the fact that Woodbridge is going to have its own mobile clinic where we can go to all parts of town and provide services for our residents. I'm really proud of the work we do together to provide that for our residents. Thank you.

Mr. Bujalski: Thank you Councilwoman. We are excited as well.

Council Vice President Ficarra: Just real quick. I know Phil and I serve on a couple of committees together it's that time of year where our local hospital institutions are doing their community health assessment plan and right after that is there community health improvement plan to address the assessment. As you and I both know, and I know Ashley from your department is involved in I believe this coming week with Hackensack Meridian, that was identified as an issue of people that are underserved not receiving the medical care and coming up with this idea of bringing it to the people is just fabulous. So, money well spent and kudos to your department.

Mr. Bujalski: Largely due to the efforts of the Mayor and Caroline Erlich, Chief of Staff. They were a huge part in that and without them this would never be able to happen.

Councilman Anderson: Mr. Bujalski I just want to thank you very much. In my role in the County we don't realize, and I don't think our residents understand what a fortunate position we are in where we have our own health department. Many other townships throughout Middlesex County rely on the county services. We have double coverage with the collaboration and relationship that you have with the county our Woodbridge Township residents are able to able to get the services that not a lot of other townships get. When you have a personalized nursing staff and just going in whether it be the health inspection and so forth, to have our own health department is key especially the last few years with COVID. We appreciate the job that you do on the Council but I wanted to make sure that our resident knew that we have a health department that is second to none.

Mr. Bujalski: Thank you councilman. To that end, it should be noted that since we started the clinics way back at the end of 2020 we've never stopped. We conducted a total of one hundred fifty COVID clinics to date. They continue to be very well attended and we just held three clinics recently to date for the recent new eligible group of the 6 months to under 5 years of age. It really is impressive the state sends out a vaccination municipality report and it tries to identify the percentage of people of certain ages and the percentage of that group that is vaccinated. For the aged group 65 plus, 96% of that population are found to be fully vaccinated. Again, these things don't happen without the Mayor and the Chief of Staff and you guys. I can't think of a better way that the Municipality can protect the public health. There are very few, if any local health departments in the entire state of New Jersey that offer a vaccine clinic like this.

Council President Bauer: Any other questions or comments? I would just like to thank your department for our Health Day Event in Keasbey. It was a success with the help of my council mate, Councilwoman DeJesus, we did get to interact with a lot of the community there.

Councilwoman DeJesus: One thing that they did do, Peter Barcellona was there and I don't think we realize that there are residents in Woodbridge that can't afford fresh produce and you guys provided fresh produce that day. Especially the elderly that are on a fixed income, they

were so happy with the fresh produce being there and you gave it to them for free. Those are the things that a lot of people don't see and don't realize and I'm very fortunate to be sitting here on Council when I see how our employees go far and beyond to meet the needs of all of our residents. That was a very monumental day for me. Thank you is not a big enough word to say how much I appreciate the work that the whole department does.

Mr. Bujalski: Thank you. And to your specific point on the food and food insecurity, Peter Barcellona has been in charge of the We Feed Program and he works tirelessly day in and day out for that. That event that you described just goes to show the diversity and the variety of services we provide in which we continue to improve and grow every year. Once we learn and know what the community needs then we know what we might be missing.

Animal Control – 3020/3020A
Environmental – 3030

Mr. Mitch: We are going to continue with Mr. Bujalski and go into the Animal Control Division. We will continue with his as well in the Environmental Division.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Council Vice President Ficarra: On page 116, line 3600, overtime and I don't normally ask about salary because they are all contractual but in 2022 we requested \$70,000 and we spent \$135,000. And we are requesting \$70,000 again. Is it enough?

Mr. Bujalski: What we do is we keep that flat amount and if we go over that, we take it out of Salaries and Wages.

Nursing – 3040
Drug Addiction Services – 3066

Mr. Mitch: We are going to take the final two, Nursing and Drug Addiction Services.

Council President Bauer: Any questions?

Mr. Mitch: Thank you Mr. Bujalski.

DEPARTMENT OF SENIOR SERVICES

Mr. Mitch: We're going to go into the Department of Senior Services. Mrs. Michelle Morgan.

Office of Aging – 3601

Mr. Mitch: We'll begin with the Office of Aging.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Councilman Anderson: Mrs. Morgan I just want to thank you for the senior booklet. The comprehensive information that our seniors rely on it's very informative. I have referred many seniors that I know and have referred them to that booklet. Also if you could perhaps elaborate a little bit on the Senior Summit that is coming up.

Mrs. Morgan: The Mayor's Senior Summit after a two year pause due to the Pandemic, the Mayor's Senior Summit is a place that caregivers can go to and interact personally with a variety of exhibitors. This year the Department of Senior Services chose to highlight Municipal Senior Services, County and State Services. For example, we had Veteran's Affairs, Surrogates Office, Middlesex County Board of Social Services, Adult Protective Services and any agency that would provide a service or program to the seniors of our community were invited to go there. So that whatever services that are out there and not just at a municipal level but at a county, state and federal level, we want to bring those services in to our town for our seniors and caregivers.

Councilman Anderson: Thank you. This budget that we are introducing a zero percentage increase impacts that group of citizens and residents the most. When they're on a fixed income and still living in their homes this is at a time where it's most impactful. Being able to deliver the same services for our seniors throughout that is very important. Thank you very much for working with our Administration in ensuring that.

Mrs. Morgan: Thank you. The directory along with the Senior Summit is really a way to bring services to give the financial independence that our seniors need to remain living in our community in their own home and the kinds of financial support services so that we continue to keep them here in our community and very safe.

Councilman Anderson: Sure. And I do advertise through my office the income tax preparation assistance that is available to our seniors and lower income so thank you very much for being able to offer that to those citizens.

Mrs. Morgan: Thank you. The directory is available at all of our senior centers, the Division of Aging and of course on our township website. In the last five months we have passed out twenty two hundred of them. At the Senior Summit we had 52 exhibitors and almost 300 older adults come through those doors.

Councilman Patel: I would like to thank you for the Oaktree Senior Center on 27. I have visited there a few times and there are great services being offered. Thank you for that. It looks great.

Mrs. Morgan: Thank you. That's the vision of the Mayor. He really wanted to approach that community and that is the goal. Which is for it to be a location for that senior community to go and visit and enjoy. It's an extension of what our department wished to do and the Mayor's vision.

Council Vice President: Michelle I just wanted to also thank you for the efficiency in which you run your department in the financial way. And yet it's such a big impact. Also I'd like to point out that it seems that when we are dealing with homeless population, even though they may not be seniors, somehow that's winds up in your lap. We do appreciate that because it's not just a matter of displacing or moving the seniors somewhere else, it's trying to get them involved in Social Services and I see that stream of emails and your name is always on there. It's almost like your senior department is a misnomer because it's a little bit bigger than that. I just wanted to take the opportunity to point that out. Thank you.

Mrs. Morgan: Thank you. I do have excellent people that work with me.

Council President Bauer: Any other questions or comments? Thank you to you and your staff for always attending our local events. A lot of times our seniors don't know the services that we provide and that they could actually use. At one event in Keasbey one of the issues was bussing. With the help of my council mate translating, we were able to sign up a senior for bussing. She has no family and no way to get around. But with your services they have the opportunity to be involved in the senior centers, bussing, and everything else you do. I know we just purchased some new buses. Roughly how many trips do we do a day?

Mrs. Morgan: With senior transportation, last August we did acquire two new vehicles. Within the last seven months we did 12,700 trips. Which is a 70% increase from last year around the same time frame. It really speaks volumes about the commitment of the people that I work with. We have other municipalities in Union County that have reached out to us to learn a little bit more about how we perform our senior transportation services in terms of our daily operations, scheduling and fleet maintenance. We feel proud to be a good role model and we are always open to learning. During the Pandemic there was no interruption of service with senior transportation. Our drivers were in every single day delivering meals, providing transportation to our seniors for grocery shopping, doctor appointments, and getting to our senior centers.

Evergreen Senior Citizen Center – 3062

Senior Transportation – 3063

Port Reading Senior Center – 3065

Five Branches Senior Center – 3067

Hickory Senior Center – 3068

Oak Tree Senior Center – 3069

Maple Tree Senior Center – 3070

Mr. Mitch: While we have Mrs. Morgan here, I know we touched on it a little bit but, we also have the budgets for the Senior Transportation Division and six senior centers in case anyone has any questions on them. But I know you have touched on them already.

Councilman Spillar: We are hitting the one year anniversary of the Maple Tree Senior Center. As of today we have two hundred twenty nine residents enrolled. That was one of my biggest goals. I want to thank you and your staff for the great job they do there as well as all of our senior centers.

Also to the Mayor, Caroline, and the Administration for allowing me to do this. I have a lot of memories there playing little league and manhunt there. To see them walking from Maple Tree Manor down to Maple Tree Senior Center is just what I always wanted. Thank you.

Mrs. Morgan: Thank you. Our senior centers and considering our municipality to have six of them is really a tribute to the Mayor's commitment and the support of the Council as well. Because of your support, we have had tremendous enhanced outcomes in efficiency of our department. In the last seven months, we've seen a 150% increase in membership and attendance to our senior centers in comparison to last year in the same timeframe. If I go back to 2019, pre COVID, we've had more than a 50% increase. It's great and I do have wonderful staff and we have great support from the Mayor and Administration that really pays attention to the adult population. Thank you.

Mr. Mitch: Thank you Mrs. Morgan.

John Mitch, Municipal Clerk: Can I get a motion to take a five minute recess?

Council Vice President Gregg Ficarra made a motion to recess for five minutes, which was seconded by Councilwoman Lizbeth DeJesus and carried unanimously.

John Mitch, Municipal Clerk: Can I get a motion to resume?

Council Vice President Gregg Ficarra made a motion to resume the Budget Hearing which was seconded by Councilwoman Lizbeth DeJesus and carried unanimously.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Mitch: We're going to go into the Department of Public Works, Mr. George Brew.

Office of the Director – 1610

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Councilman Spillar: Mr. President, just a statement. It seems like every year we have a budget meeting and every year we've had something. This year, Hurricane Ida and we'll always have the snow storms. Your staff is just unbelievable. During the height of the storm your staff is out there doing work and not waiting for the last rain drop to end or the last snow flake. Especially getting out there the very next day to collect all the debris from the residents housing and basements. Incredible job as always. I just wanted to say thank you.

Councilman Patel: I would also like to thank George Brew. You have been doing a really great job especially when we talk about the Fourth Ward. Isabelle Street, Menlo Park Terrace, we are also building sidewalks at School #19. Thank you for freeing those parking spaces at the

Presbyterian Church. We have some cameras out there. We are also putting extra parking spaces on Marconi Avenue. That is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Councilman Anderson: Mr. Brew I would like to thank you and your team. I know Councilwoman Meehan is not here but during Hurricane Ida, Colonia was hit hard. There were residents that were in despair and our Public Works was there knight in shining armor. There were residents that were under water, their home, their belongings, everything was out on the street. I live off of Jordan Road and the entire Jordan Road had all of their belonging on their front lawn. Our Public Works Department was there for them and really did everything with professionalism, kindness, and sensitivity and that was very important. Not only were we dealing with COVID and a lot of emotional issues, then to have that type of catastrophe, we relied on our Public Works and your men came through and we thank you very much.

Mr. Brew: Council President, it's the support of the Council, Administration and the Mayor working collectively with us in making sure we have all of the equipment. You see when we have these big storms and events we use pretty much use it all. It's not like anything sits idle. Thanks to everyone on the Council that supports us and allows us to purchase the equipment that we need. We are very fortunate. Right now our fleet is in good shape. During these trying time it's very difficult to get parts, materials, and vehicles. Our fleet is sound and everyone does a good job keeping up with the fleet and it's very important in times like this when other towns are struggling because they just don't have the fleet or vehicles and they just can't keep up. Parts are very difficult to get now. So we are very fortunate and thanks to everybody that supports us in Public Works as well as the staffing. The employees that we have are second to none. Again it's the support of the Administration and Council that allows us to hire these people and keep them working and keep them happy. Thank you to all of you.

Council President Bauer: George, I would like to personally thank you. You know, living in New Jersey we have four seasons and every season is a challenge and you guys take that challenge head on with your leadership, department heads and your staff. We thank you for all that you do.

Engineering – 1620

Mr. Mitch: Beginning with the Engineering Division. Do we have any questions under Engineering?

Councilwoman DeJesus: I have a question. It's not in the budget but in response to Hurricane Ida, I worked with Mr. Gelin regarding the stream behind Barron Avenue. Could you tell us a little bit about the stream cleaning aspect and the initiative that your department has taken?

Mr. Gelin: We do have a comprehensive stream cleaning as a preventative measurement. We work close with the DEP to assure that we have permitting in process. Currently the DPW is working with South Branch to clean the stream. We did work on Pumpkin Patch. Next we are moving to (inaudible) Point. We do have permitting for that and part of the preventative maintenance is to make sure the stream is clear in the event of a storm.

Business Administrator Cimilluca: Councilwoman, we currently have six projects in the planning

stages with our outside engineering firms for those stream cleaning processes. We're in the middle of putting together those plans along with applications for permits from the DEP. Michael and Director Brew and his staff have done an exceptional job in keeping up with it and keeping it moving forward. We appreciate it.

Councilwoman DeJesus: Just to give our residents peace of mind, especially those that live in the areas that have been affected in the past, to know that there is an initiative and there are proactive measures to make sure there is not a threat posed to their homes. Thank you.

Councilwoman McAuliffe: Mr. Gelin, can you please tell us about the Route 9 and Main Street project?

Mr. Gelin: Yes. This is one of the largest projects that the township is embarking on. We just had an internal meeting to advertise this project. This project entails widening Main Street and Route 9 to make sure traffic is flowing clear especially during peak hours. It's about a 12 million dollar project that thanks to the Speaker and the Mayor, the DOT awarded us. The project will begin sometime in October 2022.

Road Repairs and Maintenance – 1631

Mr. Mitch: Going to Road Repairs and Maintenance.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments? I just have a comment. Coming on to the Council, one of the first few questions I got from the public were about when their roads are going to be paved. We have a comprehensive road paving every year. I just want to thank the Administration and the Department of Public Works and everyone involved that comes out to check the streets and talk to the residents and explain what we are doing. We just purchased two more properties on New Brunswick Avenue in Fords making it our third parking district. With the help of the DPW in clearing the lots and paving it's saving our tax payers a lot of money because these guys are highly qualified to do the job and I thank everyone that takes the time and really listens to our residents to help improve the community. Appreciate all you do.

Councilwoman McAuliffe: I feel the same way and think they have done a great job cleaning all of the roads up. And I appreciate the work that they do at Trinity Lane. That's helped the traffic slow down so there is not so much speeding with the modifications put in place there. Thank you very much for that also.

Snow Removal / Calamities – 1632

Mr. Mitch: Going to Snow Removal and Calamities.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments? I have one comment under Snow and Calamities on pages 53-54 there is a decrease of one hundred thousand dollars, which is always a good thing. I think it's under replaced parts. Is that because we have a newer fleet and less maintenance?

George Brew: Some of the funding from that is going to be charged off to a different account for vehicle replacement parts. We did get a lot of inventory last year in anticipating short falls. So we are going to stick with that number for right now and just see how we do. We may have to make adjustments throughout the year.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Street Cleaning – 1633

Mr. Mitch: Moving to Street Cleaning.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments

Equipment Repair – 1640

Mr. Mitch: Unless I'm going too quickly, moving on to Equipment Repair.

Councilman Spillar: I had to swap out vehicles and I was in Equipment Repair earlier on in the year and I was just so taken back at the whole process. I don't really think the residents know how much money is being saved by the crew and staff at Equipment Repair. Director Brew, I know you can't put a dollar on it per say, but how much do you think we are saving by us doing all our own vehicle and repair maintenance?

George Brew: It's a little difficult to pin point the number but when you look at our overall operation in the money we save versus our outside source, labor rates are pretty high right now and continue to go up. Another big savings for us is the fact that we either buy our parts through the state contract cooperative pricing agreements. We have a lot of resources that enable us to get very large discounts on our parts. Some discounts are between 40% and 60%. That's a big savings for us because if we were outsourcing for that we would be paying full list price for those parts. The other thing is that we can prioritize these vehicles as we need them fixed. If it's a sanitation truck, we can repair it in our shop. We dictate when it's going to get repaired and we are not in a rotating schedule where it could be two to three weeks.

Business Administrator Cimilluca: We currently have sixty seven inter-local agreements with neighboring towns. Right now we have several towns that have reached out to us and asked us to help them with vehicles that are broken down that either they can't get parts for or they are on the list to have them repaired. We are literally helping other townships because we are that much better prepared.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments

Sanitation – 1660

Mr. Mitch: Moving to Sanitation.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments? I have a question regarding page 63 under Other Outside Services. There is a decrease of thirty thousand dollars.

George Brew: We had a software upgrade and that was just a one-time service fee.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments

Public Building & Grounds – 1670

Mr. Mitch: Going to Buildings and Grounds.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments

Parks Maintenance – 3310

Mr. Mitch: Parks Maintenance.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments

Councilwoman McAuliffe: I just want to thank you guys for taking care of all of the parks. I know a lot of people with little kids and they appreciate how the parks are kept clean. Can you tell us more about the bike share program?

George Brew: We have bikes in Sewaren, Fords, Iselin, Avenel, Colonia, Hopelawn and Woodbridge Proper. We are close to 7000 users on the Bike Share program. It is free but requires a credit card in case there is any damage and to ensure that the bike is returned. Tracking bikes down to where they are supposed to be is a large maintenance task for the Parks Department. But 7000 uses versus a few problems we might have is definitely worth it. Thank Bobby Higgins for that.

Councilwoman DeJesus: My Hispanic Heritage Festival will be on Main Street this year. It's not in a park per se. I know that they have reached out to Bobby Higgins regarding the flags. Every year for the Hispanic Festival we showcase the Latin America flags. This year we are coming up with some sort of idea on how to showcase them so I want to thank you ahead of time because I know that this is a new venture on Main Street. Other than that, I don't think people realize that for the concerts how many departments work together and work hard so the residents can enjoy the street fairs and concerts. Always will to help beginning to end.

George Brew: That is a collective effort Councilwoman between all of the divisions. Everybody has a hand in all of the events that go on and everyone works well together.

Council President Ficarra: Our outdoor fitness equipment program seems to be growing every year. It is very popular and we appreciate that. We have come a long way from that road trip that you and I took up to Bayonne so many years ago since we were investigating that. I think that's a

fabulous program. The fact that our team installs and maintains it is incredible. Thank you for that.

School Custodians – 1675

Mr. Mitch: School Custodians.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Council Vice President: In general our facilities at our schools are so tremendous that from my days as an athletic director the Woodbridge Schools are always a go to place for various tournaments not just for our kids. And our staffing and custodians are always out there putting our best foot forward. Thank you. Job well done.

Sewer Maintenance – 8530

Wastewater/Sewer Treatment – 8540

Sewer CP Site – 8550

Mr. Mitch: Going into the Sewer Budget, we'll take Sewer Maintenance, Wastewater and Sewer Treatment and the Sewer CP Site.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Councilman Anderson: I just want to say thank you very much. I see first-hand every morning living a few houses away from Pump Station how early our crews are out there and how quiet they are. They are not only servicing us seamlessly but also without major disruption to our morning hours.

George Brew: The students from the high schools were Council people for a day and I answered questions and one of the things I brought up to them is that when you turn the faucet on and you brush your teeth in the morning, your first visit is our waste water employees. They do a great job and are the first people they get visited.

Councilwoman McAuliffe: Page 192, 53-60. It seems like every year we budget the same amount and every year we use more. Why don't we ask for more in the requested amount as we go on?

George Brew: Councilwoman, some of these bills for that account were posted after we had set this budget. We didn't anticipate for it to be quite as high as it was. We were trying to hold fast with that fifty six thousand. I think we're going to have to make adjustments with this as we go through the year and reflect that and the end of this budget.

Mr. Mitch: Any other questions. I think we'll hold the MUA and RVSA until we get to the Comptroller. Thank you Mr. Brew.

MCUA
RVSA
DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION/RECREATION UTILITY

Mr. Mitch: We are going to go into Recreation.

Recreation – 3320

Mr. Mitch: Mr. Molnar, we'll begin with Recreation.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments? Good evening guys.

Councilwoman DeJesus: On page 124, Other Outside Services.

Mr. Molnar: That is for our contributions to WTYRC and Sewaren Library that's at a traditional REC line.

Councilman Anderson: On that topic, I would like to thank our Recreation Department. Being a leader of a 501-C3 volunteer organization, not only does that save money help our organizations but in comparison to other townships, it's a significant savings. I know that our Recreation Department is beginning to take on more of a role with our recreation as we start to deplete in volunteerism. There is still a significant savings when volunteers are running many of our youth programs. That said, I do want to acknowledge the baseball and basketball programs that the Recreation Department has taken on. The level of participation and registrations have only increased. We are getting full usage out of all of the courts that we see at Acacia and all of our other courts and the upkeep of those basketball courts around Woodbridge Township has been something that all of our residents can count on as a source of recreation. So I just want to say thank you. We have the addition of the Jazz Thursdays for fall. Knowing that we have a zero percent increase in our budget and being able to add to our concert schedule for the fall. Not everybody is into jazz but now it's going to bring out a whole new audience of people. The lineup that we have is going to be great for the jazz community.

Mr. Molnar: Thank you Councilman Anderson. As you mentioned, the Recreation Department consolidating the sports to be more recreation based than in the past where you had travel that kind of took over the concept of little league and the basketball leagues and everything. And you're right, by the Recreation Department taking it over we have made it more affordable for families. It could have cost a family \$120 for a child to play baseball and now they can play for \$50. So it's more affordable and it also gives the opportunity for more children to get involved. I think when you have a pure recreation program, we are able to put in clinics to teach fundamentals of the games for a child that has never dribbled a ball or kicked a soccer ball or put a baseball glove on. This is who we want to service. There could be kids out there that fall in love with this game but never tried it because they're intimidated. The Mayor had a great vision of this and Bobby Timinski from the Rec Department did a fabulous job putting these programs

together. We went from 767 kids in total playing baseball and softball and after we took it over we had 800 baseball players and over 350 softball players. This year we started an indoor volleyball league for the first time. We have volleyball in the high schools and middle schools but we never had that feeder program to get children interested in the sport and then bring them through. We do an indoor soccer league with this year having over 350 children. It's about giving our residents more opportunities to do things and the sports program is a great example. Also you mention the Jazz concerts and Woodbridge is basically known as the concert capital of the state of New Jersey. Now we are bringing a different genre of music into the fall and we are excited about it.

Councilman Anderson: Thank you. I would also like to thank you for your support for the last two years with the Juneteenth event. I know I can count on you to set up a call with the DPW and Police. The recreation department has been the foundation of setting up that entire event and working with me and my organization to make sure that we have a good event. We look forward to that next year as well.

Mr. Molnar: Thank you for your kind words.

Councilman Patel: Mr. Molnar I would like to thank you for those two great events we do especially those in Iselin and the area residents and the festivals draw a nice crowd. Thank you.

Mr. Molnar: You're very welcome. We've been working on that this week. We are ready to go.

Celebration of Public Events – 3330

Mr. Mitch: We'll go into celebration of public events.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Woodbridge Community Center – 8220

Mr. Mitch: The Community Center.

Council President Ficarra: Page 210, line 4306 the roller rink. There is a request for forty five thousand dollars for equipment repair. I asked about that and got my answer. The redoing of the roller rink floor. It never ceases to amaze me how that roller rink can be transformed from a roller rink to a very elegant facility where we host our Hall of Fame banquets. The versatility of that room and the floor has a lot to do with it and of course the space, lights and sound. And likewise with the Pavilion in the back. It is money well spent and thank you for the explanation.

Council President Bauer: I have a question about page 206, line 4550 Increase in maintenance contracts. What maintenance are we talking about?

Mr. Molnar: That is for a new pool dehumidification system and that is the contract.

Council President Bauer: Thank you.

Barron Arts – 1410

Mr. Mitch: We'll go in to the Barron Arts Center.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Springwood & Highland Grove – 8240

Mr. Mitch: Mr. Springwood & Highland Grove Pools.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments? On page 220, 5295, miscellaneous expense. It went from four thousand to twenty thousand. Can you explain the miscellaneous expense please?

Mr. Molnar: At WCC we had to do some new door replacements. If we could just go back to the pool. I would just like to thank the Mayor and Council for purchasing Springwood. For years the Recreation Department ran two pools, Bowtie and Highland Grove. We closed Bowtie several years ago and Springwood really took off for us and has been received very well by the public. Our member numbers have only been going up.

Recreation Centers – 8250

Mr. Mitch: Recreation Centers.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

The Club at Woodbridge – 8200

Mr. Mitch: The Club at Woodbridge.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments? Page 235, line 3515. Can you explain that increase please?

Mr. Molnar: That is for childcare. We had an increase in our pre-school and our camp was maxed out.

Council President Bauer: So coming out of COVID, people are putting their kids back into our programs?

Mr. Molnar: Absolutely. All of our camps that we ran this year were at maximum.

Evergreen Youth Center – 3064
Highland Grove Teen Center – 4000
Acacia Teen Center – 5000

Mr. Mitch: We will take the Youth Centers now. Evergreen, Highland Grove and Acacia.

Councilwoman DeJesus: I just have a comment. For many years we only had the Evergreen Youth Center. And the question was what teens and youth are we really servicing when most of our kids can't get to it. I want to thank the Mayor and the Administration for having the vision to increase the youth centers. Because now we have Highland Grove in Fords and Acacia on Port Reading Avenue which has been a huge asset. They are safe places for our kids to go especially for our middle school students. Also the increase of programming that you continue to improve on in these youth centers. By having designated nights for each youth center I think it's great. You are providing safe places for our children to interact with one another and the parents don't have to worry so much. I think these are assets for our residents of the community. Thank you to all of your staff for the effort and time that they put in. Especially coming up with new ideas to keep everyone interested. Also, Eileen Caggiano is great. She is at the Farmers Market every Saturday and great with getting vendors and ensuring they are taken care of if there are any issues. With the Hispanic Heritage Festival, thank you for helping me with the vision that I had and implementing it. I think it's going to be a great event. We do have a live band coming. We wouldn't be able to make our ideas a reality without you guys helping us with it. It's really appreciated.

Mr. Molnar: Thank you councilwoman DeJesus and thank you for your kind words for Eileen Caggiano. She is our event coordinator and at all of our events. As you said, the Farmers Market, Eileen is there making sure everything runs smooth. It does run from June into October and it is a monumental task trying to get all these vendors to come back. She does a good job for us and our other programming working side by side with you. We look forward to Hispanic Cultural Day. Whatever you need from us, our department will be there. Just to touch on the Youth Centers, Shirley Genty and Brienne Ludlow, who run our youth services side by side, having these centers set up now the way we do, we are able to build up on programs such as Heroes and Cool Kids and bringing back the Youth Leadership Council. And you're right, middle school is a hard age. Children are looking for that independence. When they get home from school and they are old enough to be alone and not have that guidance until mom and dad get home. We are able to get them in there and involved in activities and trying to teach them life lessons like writing a resume or job training while they are at the youth center. They are at that age where employment is coming up and maybe one day they will be a camp counselor for us.

86 GREEN STREET – 3321
127 AVENEL STREET – 3322

Mr. Mitch: We'll take the last two items, 86 Green Street and 127 Avenel Street.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments?

Mr. Mitch: Thank you Mr. Molnar.

Council President Bauer: Thank you.

Mr. Mitch: Mr. Cimilluca, do you want to go back to page one and start from there?

Mr. Cimilluca: Yes, absolutely.

Mr. Mitch: We'll now go to the Administration and Finance beginning with the Office of Administrator.

OTHER UTILITIES

Parking – 1910

Marina – 8700

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

Municipal Council – 1020

Mr. Mitch: Municipal Council.

Council President Bauer: Any questions?

MUNICIPAL CLERK

Municipal Clerk – 1030

Mr. Mitch: On Municipal Clerk's Budget.

Council President Bauer: Any questions or comments? I would just like to thank Mr. Mitch for all of your support during these budget sessions. Thank you for your guidance all throughout the year. You are always there for us and thank you for all you do.

Business Administrator Cimilluca: Mr. Cimilluca: Council President, I would just like to make a few comments. Your comments today towards the directors and the division heads of Woodbridge Township is nothing but amazing. I truly appreciate it. I listened to everything that you said to them as they laid out their projects and plans before you for this coming year and this coming budget. That is a direct reflection of not only the Council members that sit here and give us that opportunity financially and the support to do those projects, but also the Mayor, Mayor McCormac and his vision. We truly appreciate that. I heard those messages over and over again about the projects laid out before you and the Mayor's vision so I want to thank you for that. There are also a few folks that are sitting right here that are some unsung heroes. Putting together a budget for one of the largest communities in New Jersey is a monumental task. We have support from the State, County and our residents. Our CFO, Manny Fernandez and his Deputy CFO, Mike Klepckick, Financial Department, Katie Mullen, Deputy Business

Administrator, Casey Wagner, Communications Director, John Hagerty and of course our Chief of Staff, Caroline Ehrlich. These folks do an outstanding job day after day and I work with them. The effort that they put in and dedication that they give is second to none and I want to thank them for their efforts. This is the number one staff in this state, possible the country. I am amazed at what they do every day and I want to thank them for that because they make my job a whole lot easier. Again I want to thank Mayor McCormac. Thank you folks, I appreciate everyone here.

Councilman Ficarra: I wanted to make a comment but you as the closer, I think you should do that. I tried to curb a lot of my questions but I wanted to point out that through Manny, Michael, Casey and Katie and the efforts that you've put together and I know it's outside of, and I am kind of framing this around the people that are underserved that we were trying to address. Through the use of our CDBG funds which are not really part of the budget, we're serving homeless prevention, expanding relationships with other social services. We invested big money in housing for cases of domestic violence and for homeless prevention. Councilwoman DeJesus talked about the mobile health units where we are taking medical screenings to the people where it is needed. The Woodbridge Community Center and The Club has expanding memberships, kid's camps, fitness, outdoor equipment, REC programs, all of which are generating funds. Director Darden mentioned using our trust fund to help qualified folks with rehabbing their homes. The support from our Police Department in the funding for continued expansion of the way that our officers interact with people that have mental health issues. All of these services and opportunities have either been continued or expanded and it's been mentioned by Councilman Anderson a number of times and not pointed out enough. All of this and everything that everyone was presented with today has been presented for this year with no increase. No increase. That is somewhat historic for any town. Congratulations and bravo to everybody. Thank you.

Council President Bauer: Thank you. Any other comments? I have one last comment before we adjourn tonight. A special thanks to our CFO, Manny Fernandez and his staff, Business Administrator, Vito Cimilluca and his staff, Mayor McCormac, Chief of Staff, Caroline Ehrlich, the rest of our Administration, Department heads and all those involved in supplying us with a sound budget for our next fiscal year. A zero tax increase budget was introduced tonight. The first one in over twenty years. This is probably due to our economic development, PILOT programs, and all of your hard work. Thank you for all you do.

Mr. Mitch: Can I get a motion to adjourn?

On a motion made by Council Vice President Ficarra, seconded by Councilwoman DeJesus and carried unanimously, Mr. Mitch adjourned the hearing at 5:56 P.M.