

---

**TOWNSHIP OF WEST MILFORD, COUNTY OF PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY**

Minutes of: Governing Body Budget Hearing  
Date of Meeting: February 7, 2024  
Time of Meeting: 6:30 pm  
Minute Page No: Page 1 of 4

---

The Budget Meeting of the Governing Body was called to order by Mayor Michele Dale.

**Adequate Notice Statement**

Mayor Dale read the following statement:

Pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-8) adequate notice of this Budget Hearing was advertised in the Herald News and The Record in its issues of January 9, 2024 and posted on the bulletin board in the main corridor of the Town Hall and on file in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Please also make note of all fire and emergency exits - located to the left, right, front and rear of this room - for use in case of an emergency. Thank you.

Agenda No. I

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Dale led all in attendance in a salute to the flag.

Agenda No. II

**Roll Call**

Present: Councilmembers Ada Erik, Michael Chazukow, Marilyn Lichtenberg,  
Kevin Goodsir, Matthew Conlon, David Marsden

Absent: Township Attorney Ed Pasternak

Also Present: Mayor Michele Dale, Township Administrator William Senande,

Agenda No. III

**Purpose**

2024 Municipal Budget

Agenda No. IV

**Review of 2024 Municipal Budget**

Review of Certain Budget Activities – the following Departments/Division Heads were in attendance:

Department of Finance (Treasurer, Tax Collector, Tax Assessor)  
Division of Engineering  
Department of Public Works

CFO Ellen Mageean went over the budget overview and justification for the Department of Finance Treasurer Account, which includes Payroll, Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable. The 2023 O.E. Budget was \$22,075.00 and the 2023 Expended Budget was \$15,364.03. The \$2024 Request is \$22,000.00, a change of -0.34%.

Councilman Chazukow questioned the difference in the amount. Ms. Mageean indicated that not all the money was spent for the fees for service and it is hard to predict. The budget is really so slim that if something goes over it is problematic. There was a slight increase in the amount for the accounting software. The department did not spend all of the stationary money from last year. There is some schooling budgeted for employees. CFO Mageean participates in webinars to keep her license current.

Tax Collector Rita DeNivo was present to answer Council questions for the Department of Finance Tax Collector Account. The same question was posed by Councilman Chazukow regarding the change in the budget (of 1.86%). Ms. DeNivo indicated that the increase was due to the increase in personnel. There is need for a new assistant and there is an increase so that they can be trained to replace those eligible for retirement. There is an overlap so that they can be properly trained. They are supposed to have two years of training.

Tax Assessor Brian Townsend indicated that the Tax Assessor has required mailings each year. Printing has gotten more expensive and maintenance fees for Micro Systems and Spatial Data Logic, SDL have gone up. A new Assistant Tax Assessor Clerk was hired and though it was under budget last year there is an anticipation of classes needed. Councilman Chazukow noted the additional money needed for the maintenance accounts. Councilwoman Lichtenberg indicated all departments appeared to have that increase. CFO Mageean indicated that purchase orders need to be in place before subsequent steps are taken. The postcards are always an expense. The new employee tried to put in for the purchase order at the end of last year but there was no money in the budget. The money was added for 2024. The increase in the budget for \$2000.00 will be applied for next year and then we will be on the right cycle going forward.

Chuck Carbone from the Department of Engineering gave the 2024 Budget Overview and Justification for Engineering and the Engineering Capital Budget Request. Mr. Carbone indicated that the budget was going to stay about the same but Engineering Consultant services are difficult to anticipate. We do not

---

**TOWNSHIP OF WEST MILFORD, COUNTY OF PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY**

Minutes of:  
Date of Meeting:  
Time of Meeting:  
Minute Page No:

Governing Body Budget Hearing  
February 7, 2024  
6:30 pm  
Page 2 of 4

---

know if and when we are going to need them. The ballpark of \$70,000.00 seems to work fairly well. In reference to the Capital Budget and the road resurfacing project, the budget was lumped together at the Administrator's request to cover both main roads and local roads. The department is asking \$2,500,000 in total. Mr. Carbone went over some of the line items listed. It has become clear that main and local road resurfacing requires more maintenance. For the past several years about 5 miles of main road have been resurfaced and 5 miles of local roads. The Public Works Association of America recommends between 7.5 miles and 12 miles per year. The Township is falling behind. \$50,000.00 is budgeted again this year for crack sealing. There was some discussion about the procedure for prioritizing crack sealing, which gets reviewed once winter is over to see how they are holding up. \$50,000.00 is requested for guide rail repairs. Additional repairs are made through insurance due to car accidents.

There will be milling and paving of Maple Road. The DOT awarded the grant for this project and a contract must be awarded by November of 2024. Administrator Senande indicated that it was not started this year, though it was awarded last year, because it was not put into last year's Capital Budget. Councilman Marsden questioned if we were in line with the amount of roads the State recommends being done and the answer was that we are in line with the recommended range.

The milling, widening and resurfacing of Westbrook Road between Ridge Road and the Westbrook Teen Center was the next line item. The NJDOT has awarded a grant for this project and a contract for that must be awarded by June of 2025. It would be nice to get it funded this year so we do not experience a time crunch next year.

Bradrick Lane has been impacted by a stream running at the rear of 11 residential homes along the west side. It is not yet budgeted because we do not know what will be involved yet. More study is needed and there is some money from last year budgeted to do more of the study. Administrator Senande indicated that the study that was done was a small portion of what was provided, so we have addition funds to use to figure out what can be done upstream where it was determined that issues needed to be further addressed.

The Milling and paving of Clinton Road Section 6, 1.3 miles between Stephens Road and the Wildcat Preserve would need to be awarded by October of 2025. We have Clinton Road Section 5 from last year.

Mr. Carbone indicated that the milling and resurfacing of Longhouse Drive is being placed on the back burner because we did not receive anything from the state yet.

Councilman Chazukow asked if we were falling behind with the road work and if this budget would increase the amount of work that we would be doing. Mayor Dale's understanding is that we have increased the work and also the grant funding. Mr. Carbone indicated that a lot has to do with the cost of asphalt. Last year we did well because asphalt escalation came down, but costs had been going up tenfold. Councilman Chazukow clarified that although funding has increased due to costs, the amount of work being done is the same. Councilman Marsden had questions about how you determine by what means and when to resurface and also the priority. Mr. Carbone indicated that the Engineering Department determines that in house. The main roads run about a 20 year cycle and the local roads run about a 30 year cycle. When Roads go out for bid contractors are currently bidding along the lines of \$98 to \$100/ton for asphalt. Mayor Dale indicated that there is a Road Sheet that shows the priority of the roads. They also go out and measure the thickness of the asphalt. Mayor Dale asked Mr. Carbone if he would provide the Road Rating List for the Councilmembers to review.

Department of Public Works employees Jason Casbarro, Judy Kuhr, Greg Visser and Kirk Bakker presented the Budget Overview and Justification and 2024 Capital Budget Request. Mr. Casbarro began with the Capital Budget and the first item was for a street sweeper. The new mandate requires roads to be swept 3 times a year. The 2007 sweeper is antiquated and beyond its life span. The new sweeper will take a year to acquire. We must keep up with the new storm water regulations. Currently there are three sweepers, but one needs to be replaced. Last year the roads got swept two times but now the requirement is three times. There was some discussion about how the sweeper breaks down and needs repairs. Repairs are expensive, time consuming and you have to wait for replacement parts.

The next item is the Replacement of Existing Fuel Tanks located at the DPW main garage for diesel and for gasoline. The tanks are rotting from the inside and we pay \$9000 each year for polishing to remove the rust from the interior of the tank. The Administrator said people may have noticed the repair being done at Town Hall last week for the tanks located there. Mr. Casbarro indicated that the project at the DPW would be on a bigger scale because the tanks there are larger. It is important to replace them to avoid a leak.

The DPW wishes to purchase a \$25,000 camera to locate underground drainage pipe issues. The camera is placed into a pipe and issues can be located saving time and costly repairs like the collapse in the road in High Crest. This will avoid having to rent cameras as we have done in the past. A lot of the pipes are corrugated and this will avoid machinery getting stuck.

---

**TOWNSHIP OF WEST MILFORD, COUNTY OF PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY**

Minutes of:  
Date of Meeting:  
Time of Meeting:  
Minute Page No:

Governing Body Budget Hearing  
February 7, 2024  
6:30 pm  
Page 3 of 4

---

We have overburden piles in every district that need to get cleaned up and therefore there is the request for a screener to separate debris for proper disposal. Administrator Senande indicated that this will build on a process that was previously implemented and make that process for removal of debris more efficient.

There is a request for Police Department boiler pumps and DPW garage boiler. This will save repair costs and be more energy efficient lowering utility costs.

The Department of Public works is also requesting the replacement of two Mason dump trucks. They would like to replace two a year as the trucks are getting very old. They used to replace two a year around 2013. Mayor Dale indicated that back when that happened the trucks were twenty years old or older and at least we are trying to replace them every 10 years or so at this point. Greg Visser indicated that there isn't even a step down when you open the truck door because it fell off. Mayor Dale said that in 2013 there were sometimes holes down through the floor boards and snow would come up through when they plowed. Kirk Bakker confirmed that saying he remembered.

There was some discussion regarding staffing. There was a request for one laborer to be promoted to equipment operator and for another to be promoted to sewer repair and two laborers to be promoted to truck driver. There is also a request for two new laborers due to retirements. Mr. Casbarro clarified that though four people retired, and four were hired, two have already left the positions so two are still needed. There is also need for another mechanic, with Greg Visser moving up to Assistant Director. Mayor Dale questioned the amount of maintenance necessary for the equipment because the idea behind the leasing program was to alleviate that. Mr. Visser indicated that there was no maintenance contract. The DPW still handles the routine maintenance on vehicles, brakes, tires, belts, batteries, oil changes etc. Administrator Senande indicated that in hiring an additional mechanic they will be removing the cost of a part time clerk that was in the budget as some of those duties will overlap. Mr. Visser indicated that the workload has also increased because now the department is maintaining the ambulances. Adding one more recycling aide, three days a week will allow Dave Stires more time to do what he needs to do. He currently goes up to Recycling one day a week.

Next Streets and Roads were addressed. There will be an increase in leasing of vehicles. We will need to get rid of the overburden piles. Mr. Casbarro indicated that the cost for schooling has gone up, he is required to do schooling. Those employees that complete their CPWM courses would receive salary increases and he is unsure if or how many employees will be going for certification. Greg Visser will also need to continue with his education. There are so many ash trees that need to be removed. Mr. Visser indicated that currently the Township has a bucket truck, that allows for better removal of trees than what we had in the past, but is not equipped for extremely large trees like the larger oaks. The removal for those is contracted out. Mayor Dale would like to see the current records and have them kept regarding the number of trees that are taken down. It is a common complaint from residents.

Regarding public properties, Mr. Casbarro indicated that they are hoping to treat Lake Melody up by the Recreation Center. There are a lot more people using the lake since it was cleaned up. The Town Hall and Police Department went up substantially \$10,000.00. The flat roof was done and the second portion of the shingled roof still needs to be done. The Police Department has requested that the kitchenette be redone and that is an additional \$10,000.00. There is a special sink in the cell that needs to be replaced. That holding cell has not been used for a long time and needs to get up and running. There is one line item for painting of the old library building should we be moving over there. Chemicals and cleaning supplies was removed from the category with water coolers in order to make a separate line item. The fuel monitoring systems in the category of Improvement to Buildings and Grounds have been having smaller issues but eventually will get worse and we will not be able to get fuel, Mr. Casbarro indicated. They are \$20,000.00 apiece and the hope is to do one a year. \$30,000.00 is the cost to demo the pavilion located at the Recreation Center entrance. Snow removal expenses will basically stay the same.

Greg Visser explained the line items regarding fleet maintenance. Administrator Senande indicated that he was shocked by the increases in the auto parts costs. Prices for auto parts are adjusted monthly. Mr. Visser indicated that he can't get a quote for an auto part that is good for more than a month and big equipment items can take months to get. The cost of budget items keeps going up. Councilman Marsden indicated that while he was aware of the shortage of computer parts it is surprising that other items are so hard to acquire. Mr. Visser indicated that rubber for tires and belts is an issue and steel fluctuates every month. Certain items like anti-freeze can be bought and stored in bulk but last only about 3 months. He is a proponent of maintenance and that saves money. Reusing the truck bodies may cost something up front but will save \$20,000.00 down the road.

Mayor Dale indicated that we have caught up with a lot of things but we still have a way to go. She thanked everyone for being there.

---

**TOWNSHIP OF WEST MILFORD, COUNTY OF PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY**

Minutes of: Governing Body Budget Hearing  
Date of Meeting: February 7, 2024  
Time of Meeting: 6:30 pm  
Minute Page No: Page 4 of 4

---

Agenda No. V

**Public Comments**

Mayor Dale opened the meeting to the public.

There being no one wishing to be heard, Councilwoman Erik moved to close the public portion of the meeting. Seconded by Councilman Chazukow.

---

Moved: Erik Seconded: Chazukow  
Voted Aye: Unanimous voice vote  
Voted Nay: None  
Motion carried.

---

Agenda No. VI

**Council Comments**

None

Agenda No. VII

**Adjournment**

---

Moved: Chazukow Seconded: Erik  
Voted Aye: Unanimous voice vote  
Voted Nay: None  
Motion carried.

---

The meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Approved: February 14, 2024

Respectfully submitted:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deidre Ellis, Keyboarding Clerk II

\_\_\_\_\_  
MICHELE DALE, MAYOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
WILLIAM SENANDE, TOWNSHIP CLERK