

**TOWNSHIP OF PEMBERTON  
SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING  
FEBRUARY 25, 2014  
6:00 P.M.**

**FLAG SALUTE**

Council President Cartier led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance, announced that notice of the meeting was given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, and followed by roll call.

Council President Cartier announced that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss the 2014 Municipal Budget as presented by the Mayor.

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT**

Jason Allen  
Kenneth Cartier  
Sherry Scull  
Diane Stinney  
Norma Trueblood

**ABSENT**

Also present: Mayor David Patriarca, Business Administrator Dennis Gonzalez, and Township Clerk Amy P. Cosnoski.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council President Cartier called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Mayor Patriarca noted the budget he presented was as lean as he could give Council with services being still provided to the residents.

Councilman Allen asked Administration what they meant in the budget message that “the work force is more productive than ever”. Business Administrator, Dennis Gonzalez, explained that a number of things are being done by the employees to improve services and several offices are working with fewer employees however the services to the residents are still being provided, specifically noting the projects being performed by the Public Works Department. Mr. Gonzalez further explained the Police Department is providing court security through staffing rather than overtime. Councilman Allen questioned the \$45,000 budgeted in the Police Department for three new officers. Mr. Gonzalez noted that obviously the three officers will cost more than \$45,000 for the year, however there are other officers that are funded but for various reasons have not been working. Councilwoman Scull asked how many officers we will have and Mr. Gonzalez advised there will be 53 officers. Councilwoman Stinney asked if there would be any retiring officers; noting she knows of one and Mr. Gonzalez advised he was not aware of any others at this time.

Councilwoman Scull asked if there would be any new capital improvement projects. Mayor Patriarca noted they are working on the road projects and the Country Lakes Dams, however that would ultimately effect next year’s budget. Councilwoman Scull asked about the security cameras. Mayor Patriarca advised they are working on it however they are having an issue with the provider that offered the lowest quote. The Mayor advised the work would start in the Public Works Department, there has been minimal problems but the supervisor’s have

requested it. Councilwoman Scull asked if there was any other work planned, such as on the second floor of the Senior Center and the Mayor advised there was not.

Councilman Allen questioned the type of vehicle they were looking at for the Code Enforcement department. Mayor Patriarca advised they were looking for an SUV, probably slightly used and it may end up being police vehicle turnover.

Councilwoman Stinney asked about the Police Officers that are funded by the UEZ to patrol the downtown area and noted the public has approached her with problems in that area. Mayor Patriarca advised that the police budget is not funded by the UEZ, however he will look into the issues. Councilwoman Stinney commented on the residents being educated on the process of the budget, noting she had a resident comment that Council goes into Closed Session to discuss the budget. Council President Cartier explained that Council has never gone into Closed Session to discuss the budget.

Councilwoman Scull questioned why Administration was proposing using part-time people for Code Enforcement. Mr. Gonzalez advised it would maximize employee work time and it is the most cost effective for the town. Councilwoman Scull questioned if this was the way to get the most productive employees, she did not think so. Councilwoman Scull questioned the salary of the Police Chief noting he was making only \$7 more than the lieutenants. Mr. Gonzalez noted that Council approved a salary ordinance at their last meeting that increased the Chief's pay.

Councilwoman Trueblood noted she has the same questions regarding the part-time employees in Code Enforcement and asked about their work schedule. Mr. Gonzalez advised they will work five days a week as scheduled by the Director of Community Development. Councilwoman Stinney asked Mr. Gonzalez to elaborate on what Code Enforcement will be doing. Mr. Gonzalez noted they will be enforcing the property maintenance code. Councilman Allen noted the large increase in the Code Enforcement training budget and Mr. Gonzalez advised this would be to ensure the new and current officers have the proper training.

Councilwoman Scull asked about the budget for Emergency Services. Mayor Patriarca noted they added \$10,000.00 to the budget for the additional EMS expenses.

Council President Cartier advised they were provided by the Clerk, information regarding paperless agendas, further explaining the State may soon require full agendas be available to the public prior to the meeting. Council President Cartier noted that it would be a yearly savings of approximately \$900 to \$1000 and he would be looking to add \$3000 to the Council's computer hardware line. Council President Carter noted that it also goes along with the sustainability and green team initiatives introduced recently. Councilman Allen advised that he likes the sustainability aspect of it, however, he personally would prefer to have a hard copy and would like to see that as an option for each Council member.

Motion by Scull and Trueblood to add \$3,000 to Council Line 590. Scull, yes; Trueblood, yes; Stinney, no; Allen, no; Cartier, yes. Motion does not pass as four votes are required to add funds to the budget.

## GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Council President Cartier opened the meeting up to general public comments. Those commenting were:

**John Buckelew, Browns Mills – 1.** Commented on the paperless agenda packages, noting it did not seem like a very costly or complex thing to do and does not see why they would deny it, it sounded like an excellent idea and expressed he hoped to see everyone a lot more in the future.

**Claire Wadsworth, Browns Mills – 1.** Advised she reviewed the budget, comparing it to the past two year's budget, explaining she found there is always a minimum of \$750,000 left at the end of the year from expenditures not used and she considers this to be padding of the budget.

**Sean Flow, Browns Mills – 1.** Commented on the recreation projects and sees that as the future of Browns Mills and getting tourism back with our natural resources, questioning how much of our financial resources is being used towards that. Mayor Patriarca advised there is approximately \$300,000 in the budget for recreation and the Township is pursuing money for parks through the Township and currently working on the park at the Nesbit Center and this summer the Township is looking at doing the Mirror Lake Park. Mayor Patriarca commented that he believes our Recreation programs are second to none and that department does a phenomenal job. 2. Commented on the paperless agenda packages and it being something to consider, it is a great technology and can work. 3. Publicly thanked Mr. Gonzalez for holding his budget meeting on Sunday at the BMIA Building.

Seeing no other residents wishing to speak Council President Cartier closed the meeting to general public comments.

Council President Cartier asked Council how they would like to proceed.

Councilwoman Scull asked about the Recreation Fee Schedule they received and some of the programs have very high operating expenses. Mayor Patriarca explained it was the initial equipment expense. Councilwoman Stinney commented that our Recreation Department is the best. Councilwoman Scull noted she has had residents comment that they do not want to pay for the seniors and kids to have fun, however, our town is out in the woods and it does say something about the town on what we do for our seniors and children and we do so much more than we have done in the past. Councilwoman Scull noted she was pleased to see the Senior Committee fully funded. Councilwoman Trueblood commented that there is always so much going on in the town for the residents.

Councilwoman Stinney commented that she always appreciates the input from the public. Additionally she expressed that our Emergency Management Department is second to none and she would like to see that budget increase.

Councilwoman Scull confirmed with Mayor Patriarca that the budget did not include any layoffs.

Councilwoman Stinney asked about the tax increase and Mr. Gonzalez advised the

tax rate would go up 1.84 cents which is a little less than last year.

Mayor Patriarca requested to make a correction in the budget, changing the revenue being used from the UEZ fund from \$100,000 to \$40,000 and increasing the use from the Surplus from \$1,000,000 to \$1,060,000.

Motion by Allen and Stinney to introduce the 2014 Municipal Budget as Resolution No. 72-2014 with a public hearing on April 2, 2014. Allen, yes; Stinney, yes; Trueblood, yes; Scull, yes; Cartier, yes. Motion carried.

Councilwoman Scull thanked the public for coming out and it was nice to see more than usual.

Councilwoman Trueblood thanked everyone for coming out and commented on attending the Deborah Heart Challenge, noting she was very impressed by all the students there and how well they did and it was a great event, going on 16 years.

Councilman Allen thanked everyone for coming out and noted maybe the paperless agenda package proposal can be revisited again in the future with additional options.

Council President Cartier thanked everyone for coming out and advised that the budget meeting scheduled for February 26, 2014 has been cancelled.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Amy P. Cosnoski*

Amy P. Cosnoski, RMC, Township Clerk