

CITY OF PORT REPUBLIC
6:00 P.M. JANUARY 23, 2024
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING & BUDGET WORKSHOP

Adequate notice of this meeting was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act. On the motion of Council President Giberson, seconded by Councilmember Allgeyer and carried to close the workshop portion of the meeting.

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Steven Allgeyer, Roger Giberson, Eugene Hawn, Donna Riegel, Michael Turner

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: Doris Bugdon, Jeffrey Ropiecki

MAYOR: Monica Giberson

MUNICIPAL CLERK: Kimberly A. Campellone, RMC

ATTORNEY: William Kaufmann, Esq.

MUNICIPAL AUDITOR: Nancy Sbrolla, CPA, RMA

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: Jenna Kelly, CMFO

Council President Giberson called the meeting to order and lead the flag salute. This is to advise the general public and to instruct that it be recorded in the minutes, in compliance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, entitled the "Open Public Meetings Act". The Municipal Clerk of the City of Port Republic posted at City Hall, 143 Main Street, Port Republic and mailed and/or faxed to the Atlantic City Press and the Current Newspaper, a meeting notice setting for the time, date, and location of this meeting.

MOTION TO APPROVE JANUARY 2024 BILL LIST

On the motion of Councilmember Allgeyer, seconded of Councilmember Riegel and carried.

YES: Allgeyer, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Bugdon, Ropiecki

ABSTAIN:

MOTION TO PAY ALL SIGNED BILLS

On the motion of Councilmember Allgeyer, seconded of Councilmember Riegel and carried.

YES: Allgeyer, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Bugdon, Ropiecki

ABSTAIN:

CORRESPONDENCE:

FY24 Local Recreation Improvement Grant - Applications are due no later that 5 pm on February 27, 2024

A Resolution will be listed on the February 13th City Council Meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Bid Document for Basketball, Tennis and Pickleball Courts

Councilmember Turner explained that he reviewed the bid documents, and everything looks good. We are ready to go out to bid. A resolution will be listed on the February 13th City Council Meeting authorizing advertisement.

RESOLUTION:

38-2024 Resolution Supporting Participation by the City of Port Republic in the New Jersey Mayor's Wellness Campaign

On the motion of Councilmember Allgeyer, seconded of Councilmember Riegel and carried.

YES: Allgeyer, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Bugdon, Ropiecki

ABSTAIN:

OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION

On the motion of Councilmember Turner, seconded by Councilmember Allgeyer and carried.

Mr. Laughlin thanked Mayor and Council for the time and effort they put into the City.

CLOSED TO THE FLOOR FOR TOPICS FOR PUBLIC PORTION:

Hearing nothing from the public, Councilmember Allgeyer moved, seconded of Councilmember Turner, and carried to close the public portion.

BUDGET WORKSHOP:

Auditor Sbrolla explained the following:

- The budget, at its starting point, is at a 7.7 cent tax increase.
- We did not make everything back that we had budgeted for in 2023. Last year we budgeted \$324,000.00. We ended 2023 with a surplus balance of \$474,000.00. The budget presented tonight is using \$300,000.00 of that surplus. Our final balance would be left about \$175,000.00.
- Once the contract with Scarborough Marine Group, LLC is completed, that will be able to be put into the budget and will bring the tax increase down to 5 cents.
- \$11,800.00 is a penny.

Chief Financial Officer Kelly went over the budget with Mayor and Council, the following are changes from last year's budget:

- Municipal Clerk – increases were added to account for the Clerk's retirement, the promotion of the Deputy Clerk and the hiring of a new Deputy Clerk
- Financial Administration – increased to cover the expense of Edmunds hosting (\$4,500) and the courier for the bank
- Audit Service – increase of \$1,000
- Tax Collector – increase for Edmund's yearly billing
- Legal - decrease of \$5,000
- Engineering – decrease of \$5,000

- Liability Insurance – increased a few thousand
- Group Insurance – increased for a single person hired, will increase if the hire needs family coverage
- Police Salary & Wage – decrease from \$15,000 to \$5,000
- Police O & E – decrease from \$15,000 to \$10,000
- Public Works Salary – increase of \$5,000 to Ayers, increase of 13 cents hourly for Mason.
- Grant Writer – increased to \$12,000
- Garbage & Trash Removal – increased by \$5,000
- Monitoring of Wells – keep at \$6,000
- Buildings & Grounds – increased by \$10,000 for the siding of City Hall
- Animal Control – contract decreased to \$1,600 for the year
- Parks & Playgrounds Salary & Wage – increased to account for the increase of minimum wage
- Celebration of Public Events – increased for fireworks
- Street Lighting – increased by \$5,000
- DCRP – budgeted \$1,000, was not budgeted for last year
- Repairs & Maintenance – will be used to pay for the Holly Creek drainage issue project

We ended the budget workshop with a zero-cent tax increase.

Council President Giberson shared that the Administrative/Personnel Committee held a meeting with some of the School Board members to discuss the school's budget. The School Board informed the Committee that the board is unable to go out for referendum for a period of 2 years. The only way they can raise funds is if they put decreases in the budget. Right now, the school is spending about \$16,800 per student. The high school is \$19,400 per student. Every special education student is about \$50,000 per student. The State has continued to slash funding for the school, and they do not know what they will get this year.

The school can continue using other budget surplus this year and raising the taxes the 2% cap (which will be about \$40,000). Next year they will be out of their fund balance. Auditor Sbrolla stated that she is the auditor of the school as well. She shared that last year their fund balance was \$399,000 and \$236,000 was used for the 2023-2024 budget. That would leave \$151,000 for them to use next year. Council President Giberson stated that the school is looking to find out if the City can gift them money. Auditor Sbrolla said that they could, but they would have to raise that amount in the taxes to do so.

The school has looked into many different options, like becoming a sending district. But they think this would be a short-term fix and they would be in trouble a few years' time again. Plus, then we lose our school.

In the future, if we have one time revenue coming in, we can give that to the school.

Mayor and Council thanked Municipal Auditor Sbrolla and Chief Financial Officer Kelly for all their hard work.

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Councilmember Allgeyer, seconded of Councilmember Riegel and carried to adjourn at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly A. Campellone, RMC
Municipal Clerk