

CITY OF SEA ISLE CITY, NEW JERSEY
COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES
2015 BUDGET – REVENUES & APPROPRIATIONS
MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2015 – 11:00 A.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

ATTENDANCE: Mr. Edwardi, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Kehner, Ms. Tighe (arrived at 11:05 a.m.) and Mr. Divney. Also attending was Administrator Mr. Savastano and CFO Mrs. Doll.

Council President Divney called the workshop to order and asked everyone to rise for a flag salute. She announced that the meeting had been advertised in accordance with public law 1975, chapter 231.

The meeting was then turned over to CFO Mrs. Doll who began by stating that the 2015 budget is the City's plan that is in flux as Union Contracts are not settled. She went on to say that in 2015, one penny will equal \$488,000.00 and the average assessment is \$750,000. She further explained that the Water & Sewer allocation in 2014 was 17% but in 2015 it is 16%.

REVENUES: Current Fund Budget

Each page of the budget document was then reviewed with Council having the opportunity to ask questions:

Mr. Divney questioned the decrease in the Court revenues and Ms. Doll said it is the function of the Court; i.e. number of violations, fines etc. Mr. Savastano said he would get more information.

Mr. Edwardi asked if the cell tower line item included the new installation at Dealy Field and Mrs. Doll said it includes the revenue for the one carrier, but others may also want to use it and that would increase revenues.

Ms. Tighe questioned why no grant funds for "Cops in Shops" and Mrs. Doll explained, the grants for police are always changing, i.e. this budget has "click it or ticket" grant funds instead.

Mr. Divney suggested there may be ways to replace surplus with revenues or any major categories in revenues that should be looked at.

APPROPRIATIONS: Current Fund Budget

Mr. Gibson questioned why the salary and wages for Council does not equal the amount paid and Mrs. Doll explained that the difference is the water and sewer allocation and it is in the utility budget.

Mr. Divney asked what is included in the joint insurance fund (JIF) and Mrs. Doll said it was the general liability and workers compensation coverage's. He also asked for a breakdown of the health insurance costs.

Mr. Divney questioned the reduction in financial administration and the increase in Police salary and wages. Mrs. Doll said the financial administration reduction is due to a retirement that will be filled with a part time employee. The increase in police is due to the stipend for the ambulance corps. Mr. Divney suggested that while he supports the stipend, should the City consider charging for that service.

Mr. Edwardi expressed concern that the fire budget did not reflect a stipend, something he has been requesting for 2 years; something similar to Stone Harbor who pays \$400 a month to each volunteer who meets certain criteria. Much discussion followed as the fire department does receive \$6500 annually, but it is divided among the members once per year. He also expressed concern that equipment that

breaks down should be repaired immediately as it is a public safety issue. In conclusion, Mr. Edwardi said he wanted a separate line item for the fire stipend or he will not vote for the budget.

Ms. Tighe next questioned the increase in the lifeguard salary and wages by \$66,000 and Mr. Savastano said a survey shows that Sea Isle was much lower in the pay scale than other municipalities.

Mr. Divney asked if the single-stream recycling has proven to be a savings and Mrs. Doll said it has not. Mr. Divney suggested other towns are reporting a savings and questioned what the City is doing differently to not realize the same he also asked if the public works hires reported in the Mayor's State of the city address is included in the budget and Mr. Savastano said it was.

Ms. Tighe asked why the master plan re-examination line item had no funding since it is currently underway. Mr. Savastano said for 2015 it will be paid through Administration and Engineering OE and if the cost becomes too much, the City can adopt an Ordinance to pay it off over 3 years. Mr. Divney added that by the time the budget is adopted, there may be an amount identified, but Mr. Gibson said he did not want to add anything to the budget. Mr. Divney next asked about the amount in the Library S&W and Mrs. Doll said it pays for a part time employee for Saturdays. Mr. Divney asked that it be addressed as the City pays much to the County Library and should not have to pay for an employee. Next discussed was the increase in the Court S&W as the Administrator retired and Mrs. Doll explained that there was a retirement payout of unused vacation and sick days and that the budget will be reduced in 2016. Discussion followed regarding accumulated time and Mr. Gibson suggested a reduction in allowing a carry-over of 3 years vacation time.

WATER & SEWER BUDGET:

Mr. Divney questioned the reduction in the overall budget, specifically the amount of rents collected and suggested a reduction in the billing. Mrs. Doll suggested it would be premature to do that as budgets fluctuate and you don't want "yo-yo billing". Mr. Divney asked for a five year projection for water and sewer and Ms. Tighe agreed to look at that before any decision is made. Mr. Gibson said he believed the last increase was higher than it had to be and he is in support of decreasing the rates. Mrs. Doll added that the rates have much to do with the MUA as well.

Mrs. Doll then distributed the 5-year budget projection for discussion. Ms. Tighe noticed a projected 2 cent increase in 2016 and offered that a small increase in 2015 and a small increase in 2016. Mrs. Doll addressed 2016 in that there are still unsettled contracts and projected increase may be lower. Mr. Gibson said he will always take a zero and continue to lower any proposed increase in the future.

CITIZEN COMMENT:

Steve Hansbury-5712 Central Ave: Asked why bathing beaches (tags) revenues are reduced in 2015 and Ms. Tighe suggested weather is always an issue and the beach fill project may be a factor.

Dave Helfrich-21 36th St: Asked what is budgeted for fireworks and Mr. Divney said it was recommended last year to increase the amount to get better fireworks and the amount is \$48,500 for the barge and the fireworks. Mr. Helfrich said he felt it was too much.

Mr. Divney then asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion moved by Mr. Edwardi and seconded by Ms. Tighe. All ayes followed and the meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.