

APPROVED MINUTES of the Budget
Workshop of the City Council of the City of Rye held
in City Hall on November 12, 2014 at 7:30 P.M.

PRESENT:

JOSEPH A. SACK Mayor
LAURA BRETT
KIRSTIN BUCCI
JULIE KILLIAN
TERRENCE McCARTNEY
RICHARD MECCA
RICHARD SLACK
Councilmembers

ABSENT: None

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Sack called the meeting to order and invited the Council to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call

Mayor Sack asked the City Clerk to call the roll; a quorum was present to conduct official city business.

3. Discussion of the FY 2015 Budget

- Building and Vehicle Fund Review

There were three major proposed projects discussed under this section:

Hire an architect to design the Police/Court improvement (\$75,000): City Manager Culross said that if the Council wishes to proceed with making improvements to the Police/Court facility the money will be used to contract for an actual design for the building. This would be done by RFQ (Request for Qualifications). Mr. Culross summarized some of the improvements that need to be made to the facility to address deficiencies identified by the Office of Court Administration and by the Police Department. Many of the deficiencies are related to security. He added that he did not think the cost would be less than the \$1.2 million previously discussed and could be more. City Planner Miller said that the cost of a major renovation would be in the \$20 million range.

City Hall Generator: (\$375,000): City Engineer Coyne said that a generator previously purchased for City Hall was determined to be the wrong size for the building and was installed at Public Works. Last year the City received a FEMA grant for \$125,000 (a 75/25 match) for the 2007 storms to install a generator that will cost over \$200,000 to purchase. The project suggested has

FEMA grant funding but requires additional funding from the City in order to install a properly sized generator outside the building. The option proposed calls for more site work to be done so that parking will not be lost and the aesthetics of the building will not be affected.

Rye TV Studio in City Hall (\$850,000): Stephen Fairchild, Chair of the Rye Cable and Communications Committee, explained the request to build studio space on the third floor of City Hall. The idea is to make studio access time available to the public all day, which is currently not available at the studio located at the High School. \$600,000 will come from the funds that Rye TV collects from Verizon and Cablevision and an additional \$250,000 is requested from the City for the project. Designs have been completed. \$500,000 of the project amount would be allocated for equipment and wiring. City Manager Culross said that the area proposed for the studio is essentially unused space. Questions raised by the Council in regard to the proposed project dealt with how long it would take for Rye TV to save the money to pay for the project outright; how they will meet their costs if their Fund Balance is depleted; how can Rye TV be a self-sustaining operation; the ability to maintain two studios; what staffing levels are required to maintain the services that residents want; and what is the School District's opinion about the new studio proposal. It was noted that the fees that are received from Cablevision and Verizon are set every ten years and the City is required to provide certain access under the Cable Franchise Agreements. The City Manager was asked to provide a multi-year forecast for Rye TV.

- Capital Projects Fund Review

City Manager Culross said that the capital projects included in the budget are mainly continuations of ongoing annual programs and programs that have been identified in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The Annual Street Resurfacing Program has been increased to \$1 million, almost \$400,000 of which comes from the CHIPS program. The Pavement Management Program (PMS) indicated that the City needs to spend at least this amount of money for the next ten years. Programs for Annual Pedestrian Safety Improvements and Sewer and Drainage Improvements have been created to recognize that the City needs to spend a certain level of money annually in order to sustain critical infrastructure. Major projects referred to included: the Brevoort Lane Sewer Pump Station Automation System; Hix Park Drainage study; and the Five Point Intersection Improvements which is a spin off from the Safe Streets project.

City Planner Miller and City Engineer Coyne made a presentation regarding the proposed Five Points Intersection project, which they said is a better project than the Safe Streets Project originally proposed and would not be subject to the Department of Transportation design and review process. The project will include turning the Midland Avenue/Grace Church Street/Manursing Avenue intersection into a four-way stop, and removal of the traffic signal. Returning the intersection to a standard four-way stop will calm traffic and create shorter crossing distances for the cross-walks. The proposed project is a comprehensive solution that eliminates unnecessary signals; creates pedestrian safety enhancements in all movements; and, eliminates delay. There was a discussion about the impacts of the proposed change on traffic during rush hour and the effects of taking away the right turn lane on Grace Church Street. Mr. Miller said that traffic counts related to the peak hours will be double checked. There was also a suggestion made about having a community meeting to discuss the proposed changes to the intersection.

- Public Works Department Budget Review

City Manager Culross said that the operational budget for DPW is included in the transportation program; home and community environment program; and the operations portion of the Building and Vehicle Fund. The budget is pretty flat. The staffing levels are maintained with some positions being reallocated. The capital project to make changes at Disbrow is not included in the 2015 budget because it is still in the planning and development phase. Deputy Comptroller Fazzino noted that the \$40,000 increase in the materials and supplies budget is due to an increase in credit card fees which will result from installation of credit card acceptors at the pay stations. There was a discussion about whether it makes sense to go forward with this proposal or change to another parking system.

Mayor Sack asked that the Council be provided information on any line in the budget that goes up or down by more than 10%.

4. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss Councilwoman Brett made a motion, seconded by Councilwoman Killian and unanimously carried, to adjourn into executive session to discuss labor negotiations and not return to the workshop at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn F. Nodarse
City Clerk