

**MINUTES - TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET MEETING
TOWN OF BELVIDERE
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
691 Water Street
FEBRUARY 19, 2015**

Mayor Stettler opened the budget meeting of the Belvidere Town Council with the Pledge of Allegiance and read the following notice in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act: In accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting was given by way of notice filed with the Star Gazette and/or the Express-Times, filed in the Municipal Clerk's Office and posted in the Belvidere Town Hall, 691 Water Street, Belvidere NJ.

Roll Call:

Present - Mayor Stettler, Councilman Kennedy, Councilman Makatura, Councilwoman Miers, Councilwoman Napolitani, Councilman Sebold

Absent - Councilman Murphy

Public Comment:

Eileen Scott - budget for reassessment. Need a plan for repairing and paving of streets. Don't sacrifice infrastructure. Budget to scope sewer system. Use volunteers.

Budget Discussion:

Christine Rolef advised that we are compliant with the tax levy cap and the expenditure cap. The budget as proposed, without any cuts, would incur an increase of \$.083 per \$100 of assessed value or 5.08% for \$122,000 of average assessed value. One point on the tax rate is equal to \$12,800.

Councilman Kennedy provided an overview of the work done thus far on the budget. The Councilman reminded everyone that these numbers are strictly preliminary.

Councilwoman Miers stated that the Recreation Committee is requesting \$5,000 which includes the maintenance of the tennis courts. This figure was not included in the preliminary budget.

Councilman Makatura reviewed the court budget. The Councilman would consider reducing the PD S/W budget by \$15,000 and try to keep their O/E at \$50,000.

Councilwoman Napolitani advised that some reductions may be made to the DPW O/E through outsourcing. The current sewer budget does include cameraing.

Councilman Sebold advised that the fire and rescue budget requests remain the same as the previous year.

Councilman Kennedy advised that the proposed budget includes \$45,000 in increases in set costs. The Councilman reviewed the debt structure, advised that there was a miscalculation in the anticipated permit fees for the Warren County Annex renovation which will now be approximately \$30,000, would like Council to consider contracting out leaf pick-up, mowing and street sweeping. He also advised that the debt for the sewer utility has been satisfied but there will be no reduction in sewer rates so as to regenerate the Capital Fund Balance.

Mayor Stettler polled the Council asking what increase would be acceptable to them:

Councilman Kennedy - tax rate flat

Councilwoman Miers - as low as necessary without unnecessary sacrifices

Mayor Stettler - tax rate flat

Councilman Sebold - agreed with Councilwoman Miers

Councilwoman Napolitani - low but realistic with staffing reductions through attrition,

Councilman Makatura - realistic, think outside the box, any staffing reductions through attrition.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Napolitani, seconded by Councilman Sebold and carried to send out an RFP for mowing.

Christine Rolef advised that the budget needs to be introduced by March 17th. A final budget meeting will be scheduled for March 10th at 6:00 PM.

A motion was made by Councilman Kennedy, seconded by Councilman Sebold and carried to adjourn the budget meeting of the Belvidere Town Council at 8:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa A. Yeisley, RMC/CPM
Municipal Clerk/Administrator