

**TOWNSHIP OF MAHWAH
BUDGET WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2023**

The Meeting was called to order at 8:00 AM by Council President May who read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement as prescribed by law. In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this Meeting has been provided by sending notice to The Record and The Ridgewood News and posting notice on the bulletin board of the Honorable Richard J. Martel Municipal Center located at 475 Corporate Drive, Mahwah, New Jersey. Electronic notice of the Meeting has also been provided by posting the agenda on the Township Website.

Formal action may be taken. The minutes of this Meeting shall be available in the Office of the Township Clerk.

This Meeting is being videotaped.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR VETERANS AND THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY

Moment of Silence was observed for those who served and those who are serving in the Military both here and abroad.

Present: Councilmembers Ariemma, Bolan, Ferguson present at 8:10 AM, Paz, Wong, and May
Absent: Councilmember Donigian

Also present were Mayor James Wysocki, Acting Chief Financial Officer Corinne Hockman and Deputy Clerk Carolyn George.

PUBLIC PORTION

On a motion by Paz, seconded by Bolan, the Meeting was opened to the public at 8:05 AM. All in favor. Motion carried.

On a motion by Paz, seconded by Bolan, the Meeting was closed to the public at 8:06 AM. All in favor. Motion carried.

2023 PROPOSED MUNICIPAL BUDGET

B1. Mahwah Emergency Medical Services (MEMS)

Ms. Carissa Stricker, Mr. Walt Seaman and Ms. June Stahl were in attendance as well as many MEMS volunteers.

Ms. Stricker provided a general overview of the services MEMS provides the Township. There was a 38% increase in calls in 2022 equaling 2,111 responses in all. Included within those calls were Mutual Aid calls from neighboring municipalities as well as Ramapo College responses.

Ms. Stricker reviewed the MEMS budget and explained the suggested increases. A Stipend Program was suggested for the MEMS volunteers to provide encouragement for existing members to volunteer for round the clock coverage and recruit additional members as well.

Ms. Stricker explained MEMS's radios are in disrepair as the parts are out of stock and out of warranty. Mayor Wysocki will review the status of the radios and provide feedback at a later date.

Ms. Stricker explained the Uniform Allowance has been budgeted at \$70,000 for several years. The current allowance does not sufficiently provide the members with an adequate quantity of uniforms. The statute for Uniform Allowance was revised and the new maximum amount allowed is \$120,000.

Ms. Stricker distributed an example of a MEMS Stipend Program Point System. She explained how the members could earn points and the importance of providing opportunities for all members to earn points.

May explained the Ordinance Committee will need to draft an Ordinance regarding a Stipend Program for MEMS before the Stipends can be distributed. Ferguson will include this in future Ordinance Committee meetings to begin the process.

Ferguson suggested MEMS Uniform Allowance be increased by \$25,000 for a total of \$95,000. He also suggested MEMS Radios should be placed within the Capital Budget. Ms. Hockman asked how many radios with an approximate dollar amount would be necessary for the radios to be placed in the Capital Budget. Mr. Seaman stated the 22 radios for officers may be \$72,000 but may need an additional \$12,000.

On a motion by Ferguson, seconded by Paz, a Straw Poll was taken to increase the Uniform Allowance \$25,000. Roll Call Vote: Ariemma, yes; Bolan, yes; Donigian, absent; Ferguson, yes; Paz, yes; Wong, yes; May, yes.

B2. Fire Department

Chief Christopher Stricker, First Assistant Chief Thomas Loreto and Second Assistant Chief Christopher Rupert were in attendance.

Chief Stricker stated the Fire Department responded to 859 calls in 2022. This is an increase of 152 calls from the 707 response calls in 2021. He said the Stipend Program has been successful and has seen more volunteers actively participating in Fire calls.

Paz asked how many of the 859 calls in 2022 were Mutual Aid response calls. Chief Stricker stated there were 25 Mutual Aid response calls in 2022.

Paz asked for clarification regarding "Aid to Fire Companies" within Other Expenses. Chief Stricker explained it is for State Association Dues.

Ariemma would like more information regarding the Ladder Truck. Ferguson explained this item will be discussed further during the review of the Capital Budget.

Wong asked if the Fire Department has equipment necessary for the possible increase in electric vehicle fires. Chief Stricker stated the Fire Department has been increasing every year and will be obtaining additional equipment this year.

May would like the Fire Department to provide a historical Capital Budget so the Township can forecast and financially plan for large purchases in the future. Ms. Hockman explained the Township can also maintain funds for future purchases for the Fire Department.

Mayor Wysocki would like at least the general maintenance of Fire Department vehicles to be performed by one Township DPW authorized as an Emergency Vehicle Inspector (EVI).

On a motion by Wong, seconded by Paz, the Meeting was adjourned at 11:14 AM. All in favor.
Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Carolyn George, RMC
Municipal Deputy Clerk