

ROLL CALL

A regular monthly meeting of North Braddock was held in the Council Chamber, Municipal Building, 600 Anderson Street, North Braddock, PA on December 21, 2021 at 7:00 PM with the following members present: Abeyta, Breaston, Cobbs, Franklin, Parker, Ruiz, Sepesy, Vargo, and Vahosky. Mayor Albert Senic was also present.

Minutes

Breaston-Sepesy--That the minutes from the November 16, 2021 Borough Council regular meeting are approved as printed.
motion carried

Communications

Allegheny Co. Boro Assoc. ACBA notice of the FEBRUARY 5, 2022 annual banquet at the Rivers Casino

Tri-COG Land Bank TCLB requests for an annual contribution equal to 5% of 2020 delinquent tax collection

EZCB Enterprise Zone monthly report and dues request

Glenn Engineering & Assoc. Monthly report

Suspend Rules of Council

Sepesy-Franklin--That the regular rules of Council be suspended to let those in the audience who wish to address Council do so.
MOTION CARRIED

Citizens Addressing Council

D. Evans

Stated he received a citation for removing a political sign and explained he will plead not guilty at the hearing. Also complained about the tires stored on Franklin and stated he reported the situation to PADEP

Return to Regular Order of Business

Sepesy-Franklin--That the Council return to the regular order of business.
MOTION CARRIED

Council Comments

Councilor Sepesy

Reported the fire dept. responded to 52 calls for the month and 190 ytd

Mayor Senic

Reported the Police Department responded to 427 calls for the month and over 5800 calls ytd

Pres. Vahosky

Thanked outgoing council members Cobbs and Abeyta for their contributions while on Council.
Thanked outgoing Mayor Senic for his work as Mayor and for his contributions to the Police Dept.

NEW BUSINESS

Approve grant reimbursement for Hawkins & Brinton recreation sites

Breaston-Sepesy--That the invoices from Sports and Recreation Assoc. for \$73,221.70 for improvements to the Hawkins Avenue recreation site and \$20,852.00 for improvements at the Brinton Avenue recreation site approved by Borough Council in October are approved for available grant reimbursement
MOTION CARRIED

Approve & authorize for grant reimbursement

Sepesy-Cobbs--That the low bid of \$156,825.00 from Independent Enterprise for sidewalks installation at the Hawkins recreation site approved by Borough Council in May and the final invoice (\$150,341.00) are approved and authorized for available grant reimbursement.
MOTION CARRIED

Read 2022 budget summary

Breaston-Sepesy--That the 2022 Budget summary in the amount of \$3,344,600 be read.
MOTION CARRIED

2022 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

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The 2022 spending plan for the North Braddock Borough totals \$3,344,600. The budget continues the current service level, provides additional funding to continue the upgrade of police dept. wages initiated last year by Borough Council, provides additional funding to upgrade code enforcement activities and includes the ALCOSAN mandated 7% increase in sewer fees. The added cost to upgrade police wages and increase code enforcement efforts is offset by projected revenue increases.

REVENUES

Revenue collections in 2021 have recovered from the impact COVID had on collections in 2020. Real estate tax collections are exceeding last year's collections by approximately 8% due to increased payment of delinquent real estate taxes. Total real estate tax collections comprised of current, prior, and delinquent taxes is budgeted at \$710,000 in 2022.

The 2021 Real Estate Tax rate remains at 11 mills and has not increased for the past fourteen (14) years. The Borough has steadily improved the delivery of service at this tax rate and interestingly, a recent case study performed as part of the BEN Comprehensive Plan analysis indicated the Borough spends up to 49% less per resident to provide a higher level of core municipal services compared to neighboring municipalities.

Earned Income Tax (EIT) and Local Service Tax (LST), the major contributors to ACT 511 tax COLLECTIONS, ARE BUDGETED AT \$387,000 in 2022. EIT and LST are employment related taxes and collection rates are slightly above the 2021 collection rate.

ALCOSAN sewer revenue is a major revenue item in the Borough budget. However, the use of these funds is restricted based on an agreement between the Borough and ALCOSAN. The agreement requires the Borough collect ALCOSAN sewer user fees and transmit the fees to ALCOSAN based on quarterly billing. ALCOSAN revenue cannot be used for other municipal activities. ALCOSAN sewer rates increase in 2022 as follows: customer service charges increase \$1.34 to \$20.45 per bill and the 2022 ALCOSAN treatment charge increases \$.63 cents to \$9.73 for each 1,000 gallons of water used. The average customer, who uses 12,000 gallons of water per quarter will pay \$8.90 per quarter, increasing the average quarterly sewer bill from \$128.31 to \$137.21. ALCOSAN revenues are budgeted at \$946,000 in 2022.

Borough sewer rates are unchanged. Borough sewer rates were decreased in 2013 and again in 2014. Borough sewer revenues fund general fund sewer related activities and sewer capital projects.

Residential refuse fees remain \$150.00 per year in 2022.

Other 2021 General Fund revenues are adjusted based on actual collections patterns in 2021. Liquid Fuels State funding declines in 2022 to \$160,000 according to a Penn Dot notification. The decrease is due to the drop in State gas tax collections caused by COVID restrictions and to some extent the emergence of electric and hybrid vehicles. These funds are restricted by statute for use on public works activities. Liquid fuel revenues are allocated for streetlight and salt supply expenditures.

RAD tax revenue, which is a product of the additional 1% sales tax collected in Allegheny County, fluctuates based on economic conditions and consumer spending patterns. RAD tax collections in 2021 are exceeding last year's collections and are budgeted at \$260,000 in 2022.

The State grant received for pension plan funding is projected to be \$40,000 in 2022.

EXPENDITURES

2022 expenditures maintain current service levels, continue police wage increases designed to enhance police officer recruitment, provide a \$20,000 local match for the TCVC06 code enforcement grant to increase code enforcement activities and includes the 7% ALCOSAN sewer rate increase.

The 2022 police budget includes a \$.50 per hour wage increase for police department personnel. The patrol officer hourly rate will be \$17.69 in 2022 and the sergeant hourly rate will be \$18.53. Council authorized the increases last year to make police wages competitive with surrounding municipalities.

Street Department proposed expenditures are \$452,000 in 2022. The collective bargaining agreement expires this year, and a projected wage increase is included.

Sewer department expenditures in 2020 reflect the 7% ALCOSAN sewer rate increase. ALCOSAN bills the Borough quarterly for residential sewer service. The Borough is required by contract to collect the sewer fees and transmits the quarterly payment to ALCOSAN.

Employee benefit expenditures decrease in 2022 based on 2021 expenditure patterns.

\$51,000 is budgeted as a transfer to the capital fund for Borough expenditures related to ongoing sewer upgrades due the Sewer Consent Order and other capital expenditures.

RECAP OF 2021 Capital and O & M Activities to Date

The street department though under staffed for the first half of the year due to two retirements was able to: clean 52 basins and 12 sewer lines, rebuild 7 catch basins, replaced sections of deteriorated sewer lines in General Braddock Park, provided site preparation work at the Hawkins Avenue recreation site, clear abandoned lots and cut down trees, boarded 30 abandoned properties, collected and disposed over 400 tires dumped in the Borough, cleaned and removed debris on numerous illegal dump sites and lots, applied over 750 tons of salt during the winter season, completed preparations of the Bell Avenue salt site for construction next year, installed over 100 street and traffic signs, responded to over 250 one call dig requests, cleared and improved portions of Seneca and Railroad Streets, and patched potholes throughout the Borough.

The office of code enforcement issued 200 property maintenance violation notices, issued 15 building permits, issued and inspected 374 rental licensed properties, issued and inspected 37 occupancy permitted properties, and issued 6 dumpster permits through October 2021. The code office is projected to generate more than \$24,000.00 in related fees by the end of 2021 offsetting approximately 50% of the cost of the code enforcement department.

The Police department reports they have responded to approximately 6,000 service calls through October of this year, towed over 120 abandoned vehicles, upgraded computers in vehicles, implemented advanced statistic tracking with Allegheny County, purchased additional body cameras, and emphasized efforts to improve community relations by participating in public functions and community events and sponsoring programs such as "Christmas with Santa" and "Coffee with Cops".

Doug Marguriet
Manager

Approve foregoing budget	Breaston-Sepesy--That the foregoing 2022 Budget is approved as read. MOTION CARRIED
Read ordinance setting 2022 Real Estate Tax rate	Franklin-Cobbs--That the ORDINANCE setting the 2022 REAL ESTATE TAX rate at 11 mills be read. MOTION CARRIED
Adopt foregoing ordinance setting 2022 real estate tax rate	Cobbs-Vargo--That the foregoing ordinance is approved as read. MOTION CARRIED
Authorization to sell surplus vehicles	Breaston-Parker--Authorization to sell the following surplus vehicles: 2010 Chevy Impala, 2005 Ford F-150 Dump Truck & 2012 Dodge Charger. MOTION CARRIED
Read ALCOSAN sewer rate increases	Franklin-Parker--That the ORDINANCE adopting the ALCOSAN sewer rate increases for the billing cycles for years 2022-2026 be read. MOTION CARRIED
Adopt foregoing Ordinance	Breaston-Sepesy--That the foregoing ORDINANCE is approved as read. MOTION CARRIED
Approve purchase of vehicle for \$3,000.00	Breaston-Sepesy--That the emergency purchase of a used police vehicle from Braddock Hills for \$3,000.00 be ratified and approved. MOTION CARRIED
Approve Mgr retirement application eff. Jan. 21, 2022	Franklin-Cobbs--That the retirement application for the Borough Manager effective January 21, 2022 is approved. MOTION CARRIED
Ratify Payrolls	Sepesy-Cobbs--That the payrolls dated Nov. 3rd & Nov. 17, 2021 are ratified and approved. MOTION CARRIED
Bills Payable	Check #9225 thru #9273
Ratify Bills	Sepesy-Cobbs--That the bills approved by the respective chairperson be approved for payment. MOTION CARRIED
Executive Session	Sepesy-Breaston--That Borough Council meet in executive session to discuss contract negotiations. MOTION CARRIED
Return to Regular Order business	Franklin-Vargo--That the Council return to the regular order of business. MOTION CARRIED
ADJOURN	Cobbs-Franklin--That the Council meeting be adjourned to the call of the chair. MOTION CARRIED