

BUDGET WORK SESSION

November 12, 2024

A special meeting of the St. Clair Borough Council was held to prepare the 2025 Budget on Tuesday, November 12, 2024, in Council Chambers, St. Clair Borough Municipal Building, 16 S. Third Street, St. Clair. The meeting began at 6:00 p.m.

In attendance were council persons: Joann Brennan, Bill Dempsey, Cheryl Dempsey, Norm Diehl, Judy Stednitz-Julian, Tony Klazas, Council President Thomas Dempsey and Mayor Richard Tomko.

Also, present included Borough Secretary Roland Price, Treasurer Carol Sutzko, Barbara Artz, Police Chief William Dempsey, Sergeant Brad Blanner, Fire Chief Frank Uhrin, Electric Light Superintendent Bob Petrozino, Tom Kelly and Tiffany Coleman.

The Police, Fire and Electric Light Departments were reviewed in preparation of the 2025 budget. Each line item was reviewed. A copy of the budget, as estimated for each department, is made part of the minutes by reference. Major or large items will be mentioned in the minutes.

Police Chief Dempsey and Sergeant Blanner were present to discuss the 2025 budget. The Chief reviewed local pay rates for part-time patrolmen and asked council to consider increasing the wage to \$27.00 to be competitive with other local communities. He also recommended an incentive to part-time patrolmen by increasing their hourly rate by \$1.00 after 750 hours worked and another increase of \$1.00 after 1200 hours worked.

Minor equipment was increased to \$4500 to purchase a drone at \$1,700 and to purchase two bikes for patrol. The drone would help in search and rescue, missing person cases, etc. Sergeant Blanner is already certified in drone activity. The major equipment line item would increase to \$34,500 to purchase cameras, a warranty, cloud system and a plate reader for two vehicles that currently don't have any capability.

Fire Chief Frank Uhrin appeared before Council to complete the Fire Department budget. The fire alarm system (line item 15) was increased to \$3,000 in order to install the two pedestal fire alarms for Woodland Terrace. Hydrant and Water Services was increased to \$21,300 with the intention of repairing and/or replacing two hydrants every year in the Borough, since they are aging and it is difficult to find parts to repair them. Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs is at \$15,000 due to the newer equipment being more expensive to maintain. Fire Company Contributions would increase an extra \$500 per year per fire station from the Borough for a total of \$1750 per station per year, in addition to the stipend towards their electric bills.

Electric Light Superintendent Bob Petrozino reviewed the Electric Light Receipts. AMP- Ohio informed the Borough of an increase in capacity Charges over the next several years. Discussion concerning Nextera's proposal for the rate increase of 0.07, to make up for the imminent capacity cost, was reviewed. The recommendation will be adopted at the December Council Meeting.

Capital Construction will increase to \$106,000. This amount will account for an impending upgrade to the existing switchyard

Petrozino also presented the Doppler Alert System for \$17,000 per year. At this time, the system would allow all urgent calls concerning power interruption to funnel to one location 24/7 and then make the necessary contacts. It would also allow residents to monitor the outage without tying up the police station or the Communication Center. Additional modules could be added to the system, and replace Code Red. A total of \$20,751 was submitted for the Daupler Alert System and Code Red in the Emergency Management Services line item.

The Administration line items were reviewed. The Contributions line item was increased to \$600 to cover the \$500 donation made to the fire police.

The Tax Collection line items were reviewed with line 7, Tax Collector Commissions comprised of \$3300 for the tax collector and \$1700 for the local income tax.

The Borough Buildings and Recreation line items were reviewed with the expectation that Street Superintendent would also review at the November 13, 2024 hearing. Stednitz-Julian added that the swimming pool would need a vacuum for the pool next swim season. Minor Equipment for the playground would need to be replaced and the grant for the Northward Playground will be unfolding in the year 2025, hence the Capital Construction of \$50,000.

The Administration and Miscellaneous line items were reviewed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Roland Price
Borough Secretary

BUDGET WORK SESSION

November 13, 2024

A special meeting of the St. Clair Borough Council was held to prepare the 2025 Budget on Wednesday, November 13, 2024, in Council Chambers, St. Clair Borough Municipal Building, 16 S. Third Street, St. Clair. The meeting began at 6:00 p.m.

In attendance were council persons: Brennan, Cheryl Dempsey, Norm Diehl, Tony Klazas, Judy Stednitz-Julian, Bill Dempsey, Council President Thomas Dempsey and Mayor Richard Tomko.

Also, present included Borough Secretary Roland Price, Treasurer Carol Sutzko, Barbara Artz, Engineer Brian Baldwin, Street Superintendent Kevin Dempsey and Tom Kelly.

Engineer Brian Baldwin reviewed the grants, zoning and project status for 2025. The new flood plain guidelines, the flood plain audit and concern for the Thwing Street Bridge were discussed. The Little League project was completed, and Northward Playground project will begin in Summer 2025. Crack Sealing will continue in year 2025 and John Siney Park can be pushed back, possibly to 2026. A decision concerning the grant awarded of \$400,000 for the Firehouse Addition must be made within the next few weeks. The Fire Committee consisting of Klazas, Stednitz-Julian and Diehl, Fire Chief Uhrin and Engineer Baldwin will meet to discuss. The Engineering Report was made part of the minutes by reference.

Street Superintendent Kevin Dempsey reviewed the Street Department budget. Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs of \$26,000 was added to rebuild the current truck. Under major items, a lift is needed in the garage at \$10,000 in order to maintain the borough vehicles.

In the Recreation Department, the pool needs a new vacuum at a price range \$3800-\$6000. Maintenance for the newly donated \$50,000 filtration system placed major equipment at \$8500. A new tube, part of a playground play structure, is needed for the Third Street Playground; Minor Equipment for \$3000.

Education Service Agency, the crossing guard salary was increased to \$13.00 ph. Discussion concerning the amount of crossing guards was tabled.

An executive session was called to discuss personnel salaries.

The remainder of the line items of the budget were reviewed. A copy of the budget, as estimated for each department, is made part of the minutes by made part of the minutes by reference.

After the other departments were reviewed, the budget was recalculated resulting in a difference of approximately \$327,906.

It was decided to pay the \$106,000 Electric Light Expenses - Capital Construction line item to be paid out of Capital Reserves.

The Police – Major Equipment was moved to be paid in 2024 and the electric bikes were removed from the 2025 budget. A lien for \$15,000 against the Estate of Nick Panko was added to the budget.

An executive session was called at 8:35 p.m. to discuss litigation and personnel matters. The executive session ended at 8:44 p.m.

After deleting items, adjusting and reducing line items, it was decided to raise the electric light rate by 0.007 per KWH.

The budget balanced.

The meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Roland Price
Borough Secretary

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

November 14, 2024

A special meeting of the St. Clair Borough Council was held on Thursday, November 14, 2024, in Council Chambers, St. Clair Borough Municipal Building, 16 S. Third Street, St. Clair. The meeting began at 6:30 p.m.

In attendance were council persons: Joann Brennan, Cheryl Dempsey, Norm Diehl, Tony Klazas, Judy Stednitz-Julian, B. Dempsey, Council President Thomas Dempsey and Mayor Tomko.

Also, present included Borough Secretary Roland Price, Treasurer Carol Sutzko, and Barbara Artz.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilwoman Brennan read the council prayer.

Councilman Cheryl Dempsey announced the purpose of the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- tentatively adopt the 2025 Budget
- authorize the advertisement of the 2025 tax ordinance
- increase other revenue generating items

Public Comment – None

Treasurer Remarks

Treasurer Carol Sutzko reviewed the 2025-budget with the changes that were made to balance the budget. She encouraged the following changes to be made.

The \$106,000 for the maintenance of the current switchyard was moved to be transferred to the capital reserves, secondly, increase the energy sales to \$4,400,000 as an estimate, as this is not out of line. The mills will increase by 3 for a total of 11 mills, generating approximately \$108,000, as the borough has not received the tax certification from the county. The approximate revenue is based off last year's assessed valuation.

NextEra's proposals were discussed.

Discussion of whether to increase the electric light rate by 0.007 or 0.01cents/KWH ensued. The difference of 0.003 would provide approximately \$60,000 in revenue.

On a motion made by C. Dempsey, seconded by Stednitz-Julian to tentatively adopt the 2025 budget. Roll call was taken. Roll Call – Diehl – YES, C. Dempsey – YES, Brennan – YES, Klazas – YES, Stednitz-Julian – YES, B. Dempsey – YES, T. Dempsey – YES, approved.

On a motion made by B. Dempsey, seconded by Diehl to authorize the advertisement of the Real Estate Ordinance increasing the real estate tax by 3 mills for a total of 11 mills. Roll call was taken. Roll Call – Diehl – YES, C. Dempsey – YES, Brennan – YES, Klazas – YES, Stednitz-Julian – YES, B. Dempsey – YES, T. Dempsey – YES, approved.

On a motion by Klazas, seconded by Diehl to authorize the advertisement of amending the Electric Light Ordinance # 441, increasing the electric light rate by 0.01 per KWH. Roll call was taken. Roll Call – Diehl – YES, C. Dempsey – YES, Brennan – YES, Klazas – YES, Stednitz-Julian – YES, B. Dempsey – YES, T. Dempsey – YES. Approved.

On a motion by B. Dempsey, seconded by Stednitz-Julian to adjourn the meeting at 6:47 p.m., approved.

The meeting adjourned.

Roland Price
Borough Secretary