

BUDGET WORK SESSION**November 17, 2025**

A special meeting of the St. Clair Borough Council was held to prepare the 2026 Budget on Monday, November 17, 2025, 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, Cheryl Dempsey, Norm Diehl, Judy Stednitz-Julian, Tony Klazas, Council President Thomas Dempsey and Mayor Richard Tomko. Absent were Council Members Norm Diehl and Patrick McCord.

Also, present included Borough Manager Roland Price, Treasurer Carol Sutzko, Barbara Artz, Council Elect Mike Petrozino, Borough Engineer Brian Baldwin, Acting Police Chief Brad Blanner, Electric Light Superintendent Bob Petrozino, and Code Enforcement Officer Michelle Brestowski.

Borough Manager Price began the hearing with two budgetary items. The office needs a new copy machine. The Sewer Department may contribute half for the purchase. This purchase would come from the 2025 budget. Second, he let council know that council and the mayor are eligible for a pay raise. The mayor's stipend maximum amount is \$4,190.00 per year and council is \$3,145.00 per year. A new ordinance would need to be adopted for the wage increases to come into effect.

Engineer Brian Baldwin reviewed the grants, zoning and project statuses for 2026. The Police and Electric Light Departments were reviewed in preparation of the 2026 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.

Engineer Brian Baldwin reviewed the planning and zoning departments. The Zoning Schedules were completed in 2024 and Zoning Ordinance samples for data centers were discussed. The maintenance that was done by the Street Department on the Thwing Street Bridge assisted in the positive reporting and upkeep of the Thwing Street Bridge. The signalized intersection will also be done in house. An additional \$7,000 from the borough will support the Fire House Addition, totaling \$251,000.00. Crack sealing was not done in 2025, resulting in \$24,500 being added to the 2026 budget. Capital Construction for the Northward basketball Court and the Youth basketball court totaled \$31,325.00

Acting Police Chief Blanner was present to discuss the 2026 budget. The Chief requested consideration for a new phone system through Watch Keep for the Police Department. In cooperation with the IT Dept., a \$3,942.00 was added for technology upgrade (\$1974) and the monthly charges (\$1,968). He would like to introduce body cameras every two years (\$2,049.60). Microsoft surface tablets in each car cost \$1,850.00. An addition of six bullet proof vests at \$2,000 a piece

for part-time policemen. Chief Blanner also decided to keep a list in each personnel file of equipment issued to each officer containing the Borough owned property. A uniform expense of \$8,750.00. He suggested the two 2020 Tahoe's (approximately worth \$15,000.00 each) be sold and the Borough purchase a Dodge Durango (approximately \$45,000 plus \$15,000 upfit). There would be savings of insurance and maintenance. The salaries allocated for part-time police officers was \$65,000.00. An hourly rate for part-time officers was set at \$32.00 per hour.

Electric Light Superintendent Bob Petrozino reviewed the Electric Light Expenses. He notified council that the 2009 GMC truck was taken out of commission due to failing inspection. He is waiting for an estimate for repairs. \$8,000 was earmarked for Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs. Capital construction was listed at \$19,000 for voltage regulators, which took close to a year to be ordered and received. He mentioned that the 23-year-old Second Street banners were shot and could be replaced. Treasurer Carol Sutzko said that could come out of Capital Reserves in the amount of \$8,000.00. Petrozino also presented research he did on the town clock to get it refurbished and up and running again. Council questioned if there may be grants for historical restoration for the clock. Again, Sutzko mentioned that \$8,000 could come out of Capital Reserves for the clock.

Code Enforcement Officer Michelle Brestowski presented council with an update of her credentials. Also discussed was a list of items to consider for 2026 that would improve the efficiency of code enforcement for the borough. Items such as an updated version of the Uniform Construction Code, adopting a Quality-of-Life Ordinance, requiring occupancy permits and increasing the rental registration fees were also discussed.

The Planning and Zoning line items were reviewed, including code enforcement and zoning officer salaries (increasing Code Enforcement to \$40.00 per hour), engineering fees and legal fees for conservatorship properties.

The Tax Collection line items were reviewed. Tax Collector William Umbenhaur submitted a letter requesting an increase due to the increasing cost of supplies. Council suggested an increase to \$3,400.00.

Employer Benefits was updated. Health Insurance Expenses increased to \$1,006,945.00 due to the increased cost.

Recreation line items were reviewed. The salaries of the lifeguards remained the same as 2025. \$38,000 was listed for Swimming Pool Operation which includes the purchase of a vacuum for the pool. \$3,000 was listed for Minor Equipment for a new tube in the toddler playground. \$3,000 was listed for Civic/Military Contributions towards the 250th Anniversary of America in 2026.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Roland Price
Borough Manager

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

Also, present included Borough Manager Roland Price, Treasurer Carol Sutzko, Council Elect Mike Petrozino, Barbara Artz, Street Superintendent Kevin Dempsey, Fire Chief Frank Uhrin and Tom Kelly.

The Street Department and the Fire Department were reviewed in preparation of the 2026 budget. Each section of the budget was reviewed by Treasurer Carol Sutzko and was updated accordingly. Each line item was reviewed. A copy of the budget, as estimated for each department, is made part of the minutes by reference. Major items will be mentioned in the minutes.

Street Superintendent Kevin Dempsey reviewed the Street Department budget. \$2,000 was ear marked for the renovation of the Welcome to St. Clair sign on Russell Street in the Spring 2026. The Street Superintendent added that a riding lawnmower was donated to the Borough by Mr. Ed Quirin. The resale of the garbage truck is estimated to add \$12,000-\$15,000 to the receipts.

Streets and Bridges line items were updated. The replacement of the speed sign on Hancock Street was \$7,000.00. Borough Manager Price added that a claim was submitted to our insurance to recover part of the cost to replace the speed sign. A new pressure washer used to clean salt from the vehicles in the amount of \$5,000.00 to potentially lengthen the life of our borough vehicles by removing salt from them and \$8,000.00 for a dump truck box was added to Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs. In the Recreation Department, \$2,200 was added for line painting at the Third Street Complex. Capital Construction includes the Northward Basketball Grant and the Third Street Youth Basketball Grant.

An executive session was called to discuss personnel salaries.

In 2026, the Borough Manager will receive a raise of 6% and the Treasurer will receive 5%. Street Superintendent, Electric Light Superintendent, Administrative Assistant and Clerk 1 received a 3% raise. The Janitor, Fire Chief and two Assistant Fire Chiefs also received a 3% raise. The salaries were updated accordingly.

Under the Education Service Agency, the crossing guard salary was increased to \$14.00 per hour.

Fire Chief Frank Uhrin reviewed the line items for the Fire Department. The following line items were updated: Minor Equipment - \$2,500.00 for new uniforms, Fire Alarm System - \$3,000.00 for two new boxes in the new development, and Hydrant & Water Services - \$21,800.00. The chief would like to get on a cycle of replacing/maintaining hydrants each year. Also, 67 hydrants in the borough need to be repainted; they discussed Adopt-a Hydrant Program. (\$500 for paint) A lengthy discussion ensued about potentially starting a fund for fire apparatus, including a new truck, which could be upwards of \$2,000,000.00. In order to properly fund this account, hiring a grant writer would be necessary, therefore adding \$3,000.00 to Administration line 6. Council discussed giving the fire chief one of the police Tahoe's rather than selling both.

The Administration Association Dues & Expenses was increased by another \$3,500.00 in order to have a Personnel Policy written. The General Fund Rental Income – Boro Property was increased to \$21,000 to reflect an increase in the monthly rent for the Sewer Authority.

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 reference.

Treasurer Carol Sutzko made final adjustments and balanced the budget.

Since the reassessment data was not received from the Schuylkill County Assessment Bureau by the Borough officials at this point, it was decided to cancel the Special Meeting for Wednesday, November 19, 2025

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

**Roland Price
Borough Manager**