

The stated Special Budget Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington was held on Thursday, November 7, 2024 via webinar and in-person at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA, with President Hecker presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Commissioners ROTHMAN, DiPLACIDO, LANEY MARTIN, WINEGRAD, ZAPPONE, YOUNG-GERTZ, SPIEGELMAN, SCHREIBER, BOWMAN, VAHEY, HECKER
Excused: Commissioners BRODSKY, BROWNE, HENRY, BOLE

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:

Adele Kubel, resident, expressed concern that her questions about the budget were not answered. Also, she was concerned about decrepit conditions creeping in where she lives. Why is tax and Covid money being used to further the plans of speculators and billionaires who are creating economic inequality, and the area has multitude of unaffordable apartments with renters living with mold, rats, and drugs. Why is Covid money not being utilized to build the Roslyn Library improvement; why is the Crestmont Community Center charging rental fees; also, Old York Road and other areas need bollards to protect pedestrians waiting for the bus.

Joe Rooney, resident, said he did not see state and federal funds reflected in the police budget, or is it zero, on an annual basis? Also, he asked about the total for the contracted police services, and regarding manpower for animal control, is that a fulltime position or part-time position among several officers?

Lora Lehmann, resident, expressed concern about the timing of documents being distributed. Also, she was concerned about the Township paying the costs for school inspections and permits, which should not be in the budget, as well as the cost for the Jenkintown Connections project.

President Hecker called on Manager Manfredi.

Manager Manfredi said the preliminary budget was duly advertised as proposed and is before the Board this evening to be adopted as the Annual Budget. There have been no changes to any line items or dollars since proposed budget adoption; however, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) has certain provisions, and the Township has set aside more than \$2 million dollars for cultural and recreation projects.

Ms. Ashley McIlvaine, Assistant Manager, gave a presentation on the American Rescue Plan Act - Obligation of ARPA funds by 12/31/24.

“The U.S. Department of Treasury has clarified that a recipient may enter into an interagency agreement, including a memorandum of understanding, between departments and agencies within a recipient’s government’s and treat those funds as obligated for purposes of SLFRF (State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds) if the interagency agreement meets certain conditions.”

The Township will take the revenue replacement standard allowance of \$10 million as prescribed by the Treasury.

As of 10/31/24, available funding is \$12,316,687.73, and the budget proposes the following specific projects and allocation amounts:

Revenue Replacement Standard Allowance - \$10,000,000.00

Inclusive Playground and Park - \$209,791.00

Playing Field Enhancements - \$1,363,500.00

Pavilions and Seating Areas - \$440,000.00

Walking Trails - \$253,396.73

Witt O’Brien’s - \$50,000.00

From the Standard Allowance of \$10,000,000 - \$9,400,000.00 will be reserved for Cultural-Recreation Parks Infrastructure Investment and \$600,000.00 reserved for General Government Economic Development.

For the Inclusive Park – the Township applied for RACP grant in the amount of \$550,000 and was awarded \$350,000, so \$209,791.00 will be appropriated from available ARPA funds. Also, Whole Trees, who is the fabricator of the treehouse requested changes to the height and materials for snow load and requested an additional \$9,791 that will be appropriated from available ARPA funds.

Playing Field Enhancements – allocation of \$1,363,500.00 – approximate cost of \$50,500 per field renovation for about 27 fields and cost includes amenities.

Pavilions and Seating Areas – allocation of \$440,000.00 – estimated cost of \$55,000 per pavilion of approximately 8 pavilions.

Trail Enhancements – allocation of \$253,396.73, which could be used for both new and existing trails as well as ADA enhancements estimating \$70 per linear foot.

Witt O'Brien – allocation \$50,000 for ARPA support and compliance services to the Township.

These funds need to be obligated by 12/31/24 and require further action other than just adopting the budget, so the actions as listed will be brought before the Board of Commissioners at its meeting in November.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Bowman said he is glad to hear about all the recommendations as presented and they look great, and hopefully there will be more.

Manager Manfredi said with the passage of the budget, we will immediately begin moving forward with the projects as identified in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.

Commissioner Winegrad clarified that the ARPA funds need to be obligated by the end of the year including getting the memorandums and contracts in line now, so when does the money need to be spent?

President Hecker replied we need to obligate the funding by the end of this year and then the Township has two years to spend it.

Item BOC-01-110724:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to enact Ordinance No. 2220, fixing the tax rate levies and adopting the Annual Budget of the Township of Abington for Fiscal Year 2025, and appropriations.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 11-0.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Vile, Minutes Secretary