

**MINUTES
BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Budget Discussion
November 1, 2023
6 P.M.**

Council met as a Committee of the Whole at Borough Hall. Council members present were: Ms. Jordan, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Trotter, Mr. Blatt, Mr. McCandless, Mr. Trabel and Mayor Johnson. Mr. Rufe was absent. Also, in attendance were Amy Burkhart (Borough Manager), Cordula Voges (Finance Director) and guests.

Council President Blatt opened the meeting stating that the Committee of the Whole meeting is a public meeting and work session to discuss the Budget 2024 – Health & Sanitation, Sewer, Fire and Library – and that no formal action will be taken.

Council President Blatt asked everyone to rise for the PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

OLD BUSINESS

2024 Budget Follow-Up (GF, LF, Capital)

Council President Blatt asked for questions and comments.

Council President Blatt mentioned that the community has shown great interest in the installation of a Pickleball Court as included in the Capital Projects Budget.

Ms. Voges asked Council to make a recommendation regarding the alignment of administrative wage rates to the collectively bargained pay increases of Police and Public Works (i.e. 4.5%). The detailed calculation and impact on total expenditures (\$10,054) was provided in last week's Council packets.

Ms. Voges reported that Chief Bachert agreed with Council members' recommendation to consider alternative uses of Local Share grant funds for 2025.

DISCUSSION ITEMS (NEW BUSINESS)

Ms. Voges presented the highlights of the proposed Health & Sanitation, Sewer, Fire and Library Funds Budgets 2024 supported by visual power point slides highlighting newly added and quantitative changes of some revenue/expenditure line items

- Health & Sanitation Fund

Council President Blatt stated that no utility fee increases are contemplated for 2024. Based on the incremental increase of the annual hauler fee, future utility fees should be adjusted accordingly.

- Sewer Fund

Ms. Voges stated that the analysis of the data from the completed sanitary sewer inspection is still ongoing, and its impact is considered with the engineering fees. The City of Bethlehem's bulk sewer charges held steady since 2020 but will increase by 11% in 2024.

The calibration and startup installation of a new meter and telemetry on Broadway in conjunction with the City of Bethlehem's sewer project is finally scheduled for 2024 following the City of Bethlehem's timeline.

President Blatt stated that no utility fee increases are contemplated for 2024.

- Fire Fund

Ms. Voges stated that the Fire Tax continues to be accumulated to fund the future replacement of a ladder truck in 2029 which will cost approximately \$1.2 million.

- Library Fund

The Library Tax and the Bethlehem Area Public Library service charges remain the same as the previous year. However, the Bethlehem Area Public Library is considering an increase of its service charges. The final decision is outstanding.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:40 pm Council President Blatt concluded the committee meeting of the whole. He stated that next week’s budget meeting may not be needed but will be determined at the next Council Meeting.

Council President Blatt reminded of the next regular Council Meeting to be held on November 6th.

**BOROUGH OF FOUNTAIN HILL
LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

By:

Norman E Blatt - President of Council

SUBMITTED:

BY: _____
Cordula Voges, Finance Director

ATTEST:

By: _____
Amy Burkhart, Borough Manager

Next Ordinance – 880
Next Resolution – 2023-25

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Annamarie Jordan	x		x			
Jamie Johnson						x
Wilbert Rufe						x
Doug Trotter			x			
Philip Trabel						x
Stew McCandless		x	x			
Norman E. Blatt Jr.			x			
Mayor Johnson						