

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF HARRISON
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING
OCTOBER 23, 2007**

PRESENT: **Anthony G. Forlini, Supervisor**
 Jan P. Jorgensen, CMC, Clerk
 Darrin S. York, Treasurer
 Michael H. Rice, Trustee
 James A. Ulinski, Trustee

EXCUSED: **Sharon Eineman, Trustee**

ABSENT: **Robert I. Garvin, Trustee**

ALSO PRESENT: **Glenn Spencer, Finance Director**
 Carl Seitz, Fire Chief

The Supervisor opened the workshop meeting at 6:35 p.m.

The Supervisor opened the workshop at 6:35 p.m., and stated that the purpose of tonight's workshop meeting is to continue to discuss the 2008 budget. It was discussed that since this is a workshop, it will not be taped or aired.

The Supervisor stated that the only department that has not been discussed is the Treasurer's Department and asked if any Board Member had any questions relating to the Treasurer's Office. No questions were asked regarding the Treasurer's Office.

The Board discussed funding for police protection in Year 2008 and the costs presented by Sheriff Hackel at Monday's, October 22, 2007 RBM for his 2008 contracted services. The Finance Director stated that in looking at the funding for next year, covering the cost for police protection will be short by \$37,474.00 and that the Board should consider covering that deficit with the remaining Y2007 income of \$49,398 projected at the end of this year in the police fund. The costs discussed are to maintain a contract for ten deputies. Some Board Members responded to comments Sheriff Hackel made during his presentation Monday night and challenged whether there is the need for additional officers. Mr. Rice stated that the crime factor is not in bad shape, and that there will always be a need for additional deputies because of "self inflicted wounds". Mr. Ulinski offered a suggestion to close the township offices on Wednesdays and use the operational costs for that day to fund for additional sheriff protection, or employee lay offs can occur as it is tough times. Board Members concurred that using the excess Y2007 police fund revenues to offset the Y2008 contract costs is an acceptable solution.

The Supervisor stated the Finance Director has offered two options to balancing the proposed 2008 budget and asked him to speak to the options to balance the \$108,465 General Fund deficit as presented. Mr. Ulinski spoke to the necessity of funding for drain maintenance and stated that \$10,000.00 was not enough and suggested zeroing out funding for temporary salaries (\$19,000.00) and adding it to line item for drain clean out. The Clerk offered her

concern with zeroing out temporary salaries in the Clerk's Office, because there is no permanent staffing and next year is a very busy year for the Clerk's office with three scheduled elections and a possible May election. She stated that the funding for temporary salaries is necessary to provide services other than election related services. Mr. Ulinski stated that he disagreed with funding temporary salaries in the Clerk's Office because the Elections Department is very well funded for the upcoming elections. The Clerk absolutely agreed that the Elections Department is sufficiently funded, and stated that it is the Clerk's Office that she is speaking to and if the Board does not recognize the need to provide the resources for the Clerk's Office to service the community, then she will be forced to shut down the Clerk's Office one to two days a week during election time to focus on the election. Mr. Rice stated that it is necessary to look at the cost of an employee and whether we like it or not, an increase cost to an employee benefit is a part of an employee raise. He stated that he and Mr. Ulinski have looked at operating under a four day work week in the past. He stated that we need to control our staff, either by removing work time or the worker, but we cannot afford to starve one department for another. He also stated that we do not need the best paid firefighters, and we need to be in charge of our costs. The Fire Chief reminded the Board that Firefighters are governed under Public Act 312 and it is binding, and as managers we are in charge only to a limit. Some Board Members discussed health care costs to the Township but were reminded that this conversation is outside of the purpose of tonight's meeting. The Clerk suggested the proposed Option One as the possible remedy to the general fund budget deficit with the following change: to reduce the Clerk's temporary salaries from \$15,000.00 to \$7,000.00 instead of \$5,000.00. Option One reduces the following line items; Clerk's Office Temporary Salaries from \$15,000.00 to \$5,000.00, Treasurer's Office Temporary from \$4,000.00 to \$2,000.00, Grounds and Hall – Bldg Maintenance – Beaufait from \$20,000.00 to \$15,000.00, Maintenance by W/S from \$25,000.00 to \$20,000.00, and from Administration line items, Engineering Costs from \$25,000.00 to \$20,000.00, Township Dues from \$12,000.00 to \$7,000.00, zero funding for Savin and Beechwood Drains from \$500.00, reduce storm drains from \$30,000.00 to \$10,000.00 and reduce building addition/improvements from \$50,000.00 to \$25,000.00. Then from Option Two, reducing the Clerk's equipment expense from \$1,000.00 to zero, and reduce the Administration Equipment Expense line item from \$5,000.00 to \$3,525.00, there by balancing the 108,475.00 deficit. Mr. Rice stated that we are not in bad shape. The Treasurer stated with regard to temporary salaries what was discussed in Closed Session will eliminate the need for funding any temporary salaries. The Clerk responded that she has to move forward knowing that she can staff the Clerk's Office, and this talk has been going on for the last three years with no change in staffing. It was agreed that the Temporary Salary line item in the Clerk's Office should not be zero. Mr. Ulinski stated that he believes that there should be more than \$25,000.00 in the drain fund, and that there should be no funding for temporary salaries in the Clerk's Office and in the Treasurer's Office and directed it to be taken to zero and that the Clerk will not change his mind. The Clerk again asked that the Board allow funding to remain for temporary salaries in the Clerk's budget. Mr. Forlini asked if it is appropriate to move into a closed session at this point. Board Members responded no. Mr. Ulinski offered a motion to take the Temporary Salaries in the Clerk's Office (\$15,000.00) and Treasurer's Office (\$4,000.00) to zero. Board Members discussed whether it is appropriate to make a motion at the budget workshop. Mr. Ulinski stated that he has made a motion and the Mr. York has offered support. The Supervisor recognized the motion made.

Motion by Mr. Ulinski, and seconded by Mr. York to zero the Temporary Salaries in the Clerk's Office and Treasurer's Office.

A resident offered his comments. Board members responded to the cost of publications in the Clerk's budget and suggested that agendas no longer be noticed in the paper, and possibly consider not noticing the minutes in the paper but instead posting Minutes in 4 places within the Township as well as posting on the Website. Board Members stated that the Clerk will no longer run agendas or minutes in the paper, and now post minutes in five places within the Township with one location as the website, thus saving the Township \$22,000.00 in the Clerk's budget and placing that money into the drain fund and leaving temporary salaries budget in option one. Mr. Forlini asked if there was an amendment to the motion. The Treasurer stated that he doesn't know anyone that reads that paper anyway (regarding minutes and agendas), and that at the end of the day temporary salaries will be zero, regardless if you leave it in now. The Clerk again requested that the Board leave the Temporary Salaries as funded in the Clerk's Office. The Supervisor suggested that \$20,000.00 of the \$22,000.00 from the Clerk's budget from publications be placed in the Drain fund and move \$2,000.00 into temporary salaries for the Clerk's office, and asked if that would work now. He stated that the Board will have to approve all changes anyways. The Treasurer stated before he votes to approve for the Clerk to have funding for temporary salaries, he needs to know what will get done in the Clerk's Office that is not getting done now. The Clerk responded that she has answered the Treasurer's question in the past he just doesn't want to hear her answer. Mr. Ulinski stated that the motion stands and for the Clerk to see how publication cost in her department can be cut and bring that back that information to a board meeting. The Supervisor again offered the suggestion to cut publication expenses and move the money to temporary salaries and the drain fund. Mr. Ulinski stated that he is also concerned with building improvement funding and not interested in a "wish list". A resident offered his comment. The Treasurer stated that he wanted to point out, that he negotiated for the first time in keeping the interest for the tax collection which is \$60,000.00 and everyone needs to know that next year we may not be able to negotiate for that, and it will be a year to year negotiation. Motion repeated.

Motion by Mr. Ulinski, and seconded by Mr. York to zero out the Temporary Salaries in the Clerk's Office and Treasurer's Office.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ulinski, York, Rice
Nays: Jorgensen, Forlini
Excused: Eineman, Garvin
MOTION CARRIED.

Board members requested that the Clerk make an estimate on any 2008 election costs reimbursement for Y2008 to add to Y2008's revenue income, and then the Treasurer asked the Clerk to explain the computer programming expense line item in the Elections Department, which she responded.

No additional changes were offered to the budget.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. York, and seconded by Mr. Rice to adjourn. Meeting was announced adjourned at 7:45 p.m. MOTION CARRIED.

Prepared & Submitted by,

Approved by,

**Jan P. Jorgensen, CMC, Clerk
Charter Township of Harrison**

**Anthony G. Forlini, Supervisor
Charter Township of Harrison**