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OLD FORGE BOROUGH COUNCIL  
OLD FORGE, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE: PUBLIC HEARING

DECEMBER 5, 2023

7:00 P.M.

OLD FORGE MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
314 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
OLD FORGE, PENNSYLVANIA

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

- RUSSELL RINALDI, PRESIDENT
- RICK NOTARI
- LOUIS FEBBO
- MICHELLE AVVISATO
- JAMES HOOVER
- ANDREW BUTLER
- WILLIAM RINALDI, ESQUIRE, SOLICITOR
- MARYLYNN BARTOLETTI, BOROUGH MANAGER
- ROBERT LEGG, MAYOR

Mark Wozniak  
Official Court Reporter

1 MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: Good evening,  
2 ladies and gentlemen. I'd like to call the  
3 meeting to order with the Pledge of  
4 Allegiance.

5 (The Pledge of Allegiance was  
6 recited.)

7 MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: Roll call,  
8 please, Marylynn.

9 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilwoman  
10 Avvisato?

11 MS. AVVISATO: Here.

12 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Butler?

13 MR. BUTLER: Here.

14 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Febbo?

15 MR. FEBBO: Short timer is here.

16 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Hoover?

17 MR. HOOVER: Present.

18 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Lettieri  
19 is absent. Councilman Notari?

20 MR. NOTARI: Present.

21 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Rinaldi?

22 MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: Here. Once  
23 again, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the  
24 Old Forge Borough Council meeting. Tonight  
25 is Tuesday, December 5, 2023. Before we

1 begin our work session we had advertised a  
2 special meeting for our passage of our  
3 tentative budget.

4 So to open up that meeting the chair  
5 is going to entertain a motion to open up  
6 the special meeting for the budget.

7 MR. NOTARI: I'll make that motion.

8 MR. FEBBO: I'll second it.

9 MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: Motion by  
10 Councilman Notari, seconded by Councilman  
11 Febbo. On the question? Public input?  
12 Roll call, please, Marylynn.

13 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilwoman  
14 Avvisato?

15 MS. AVVISATO: Yes.

16 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Febbo?

17 MR. FEBBO: Yes.

18 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Butler?

19 MR. BUTLER: Yes.

20 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Hoover?

21 MR. HOOVER: Yes.

22 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Notari?

23 MR. NOTARI: Yes.

24 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Rinaldi?

25 MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: Yes. The

1 special meeting for the budget is open. I'm  
2 going to turn it over to the borough  
3 manager, Marylynn, and then if any members  
4 of council have questions for her or for  
5 each other, anyone from the public has any  
6 questions we'll give you a few minutes to  
7 address us or Mare.

8 MS. BARTOLETTI: Thank you. So our  
9 2024 budget includes -- I'll just give you  
10 some of the highlights. Of course, it  
11 includes new hires that we hired this year  
12 for the police department and we have shared  
13 services with two officers in the school  
14 every day.

15 It includes approximately \$800,000  
16 in road paving for this coming year.

17 It includes our usual \$75,000  
18 payment to the fire company for their  
19 services that they provide to our citizens.

20 It includes an increase this year of  
21 \$40,000 to hire a driver for the fire  
22 companies.

23 It includes equipment for our police  
24 department, more protective equipment.

25 It includes an additional vehicle

1 for the police department, an additional  
2 vehicle for our DPW department, and a  
3 vehicle for our zoning and code enforcement  
4 officer.

5 To wrap things up, the total budget  
6 for this year will be \$12,882,412.

7 Does anyone have any questions for  
8 me on it?

9 MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: No questions,  
10 but it also has no tax increase. Right?

11 MS. BARTOLETTI: Correct.

12 MS. AVVISATO: Good job, Mare.

13 MR. NOTARI: Nice work, Marylynn.

14 MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: Before we get  
15 into any questions, if any members of the  
16 public have any questions for Marylynn about  
17 the budget or council about the budget?

18 Any members have any questions for  
19 Mare? I'd like to say, as always -- and I  
20 know I speak for everyone at the table.  
21 I've been sitting here with you for a long  
22 time. You worked the budget really well,  
23 really tight. You're very close with  
24 everything. We have a lot of good things  
25 that we're able to purchase year in and year

1 out. A lot of good services, a lot of good  
2 for our parks, the kids, the community. You  
3 do a great job and I just wanted to let you  
4 know that.

5 MS. BARTOLETTI: Thank you.

6 MR. FEBBO: In the budget about that  
7 fire person that we have, Bill, is the  
8 public aware of that? Do you want to tell  
9 everybody what that's all about, the fireman  
10 we hired?

11 MR. STULL: So the surrounding  
12 communities, Moosic Hose Company -- or  
13 Greenwood Hose Company, I should say, in  
14 Moosic, they've been doing this for about  
15 three years now. They put on a permanent  
16 driver Monday through Friday from 8:00 in  
17 the morning until 5:00 at night. So that  
18 individual, when the pager goes off he's  
19 there, he gets the piece out the door pretty  
20 quick.

21 So this year we came to our council  
22 and asked them to do the same thing.  
23 Taylor, they just did the same thing. Two  
24 Luzerne companies, Hughstown and Dupont,  
25 went together and they did the same thing.

1                   So what we're doing starting the 2nd  
2 of January of '24 is we're putting on the  
3 same thing, a daytime driver from 8:00 in  
4 the morning until 5 p.m. It's per diem.  
5 It's \$15 an hour. He's responsible for his  
6 own taxes and everything like that. But  
7 he's there, like I said, Monday through  
8 Friday, and he'll be getting the vehicle out  
9 the door quicker. Right now we're waiting  
10 for volunteers. During the daytime, when  
11 everybody works, it's very hard to get  
12 volunteers out the door. So this way we  
13 know we're getting one piece on the road  
14 pretty quick.

15                   With Greenwood doing the same thing  
16 we know that if we have a situation in Old  
17 Forge you're getting two pieces of apparatus  
18 into town in a matter of a couple minutes  
19 with at least two guys to start something.  
20 Then with our mutual aid companies you'll  
21 have Taylor coming in. They have one guy,  
22 too. So now you're up to three guys. It's  
23 going to work out pretty well.

24                   Hopefully -- I hate to say it, but  
25 this is the writing on the wall.

1 Volunteerism, as everybody knows, is going  
2 down the drain very fast. Back in the '70s,  
3 '80s, 300,000 across the state of  
4 Pennsylvania. Right now it's about 32,000  
5 volunteers across the whole state. More and  
6 more departments, you're going to see over  
7 the years, are going to be going through  
8 this. Eventually I can see the writing on  
9 the wall. Five to ten years you're going to  
10 have some kind of combination fire  
11 department. The municipalities themselves  
12 or countywide. But something's going to  
13 happen.

14 So we just wanted to be pro-active,  
15 let council know that this is what's going  
16 on, so they took a pro-active approach and  
17 let us hire a fireman. That's where we  
18 stand with it.

19 MR. FEBBO: I think it's an  
20 excellent idea, council has agreed. Also  
21 for the community.

22 MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: Bill, thank  
23 you for your information. Any other members  
24 have anything before we adjourn the special  
25 meeting?

1 Any of the public, once again,  
2 before we adjourn the special meeting?

3 At this time the chair is going to  
4 entertain a motion for a resolution of the  
5 Borough of Old Forge, Lackawanna County,  
6 Pennsylvania, proposing a comprehensive  
7 budget for the calendar year 2024 for the  
8 Borough of Old Forge, Lackawanna County,  
9 Pennsylvania.

10 MR. NOTARI: I'll make that motion.

11 MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: By Councilman  
12 Notari.

13 MR. HOOVER: I'll second it.

14 MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: Seconded by  
15 Councilman Hoover. On the question? Public  
16 input? Roll call, please.

17 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilwoman  
18 Avvisato?

19 MS. AVVISATO: Yes.

20 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Febbo?

21 MR. FEBBO: Yes.

22 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Butler?

23 MR. BUTLER: Yes.

24 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Hoover?

25 MR. HOOVER: Yes.

1 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Notari?

2 MR. NOTARI: Yes.

3 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Rinaldi?

4 MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: Yes. At this

5 time the chair is going to entertain a

6 motion to adjourn the special meeting.

7 MS. AVVISATO: I'll make that

8 motion.

9 MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: By

10 Councilwoman Avvisato.

11 MR. FEBBO: I'll second it.

12 MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: Seconded by

13 Councilman Butler. On the question? Public

14 input? Roll call, please.

15 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilwoman

16 Avvisato?

17 MS. AVVISATO: Yes.

18 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Febbo?

19 MR. FEBBO: Yes.

20 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Butler?

21 MR. BUTLER: Yes.

22 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Hoover?

23 MR. HOOVER: Yes.

24 MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Notari?

25 MR. NOTARI: Yes.

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MS. BARTOLETTI: Councilman Rinaldi?  
MR. RUSSELL RINALDI: Yes.  
(Meeting adjourned.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that I attended the foregoing proceeding, took stenographic notes of the same, that the foregoing, consisting of 11 pages, is a true and correct copy, done to the best of my ability, of same and the whole thereof.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Wozniak  
Official Court Reporter