

Council of the Municipality of Murrysville held a Regular Voting Meeting and Public Hearings on Wednesday, November 2, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building. Present at the meeting were Council members Dayne Dice, Jamie Lee Korn, Jason Lemak, Jamie Lingg, Mac McKenna, Tony Spadaro, Carl Stepanovich, and Mayor Synan. Also, present were Chief Administrator, Michael Nestico, Community Development Director, James Morrison, Director of Finance, Jacie Milchak, Director of Parks and Recreation, Carly Greene, and Solicitor George Kotjarapoglus.

**PRESENTATION
OF THE EXPORT 100 TRAIL RACE BY MR. DARREN MILLER**

Mr. Darren Miller stated that he is excited to be here this evening because this is something he has been thinking about for quite some time. As a long-distance runner for many years, marathons, and 100-mile races, he wants to bring this back to the town where he grew up. His family has lived in this town since 1987, he went to Franklin Regional till 2001, Penn State 2005, and recently moved back from the west coast. The Westmoreland Heritage Trail was always a place where he trained, along with Duff Park, Pleasant Valley Park, West Penn Trail, all the way to Blairsville and back. This is what he is proposing and is looking for guidance. Mr. Miller has done the Three-Rivers Marathon Swim to benefit Childrens Hospital of Pittsburgh since 2009. They raised a quarter of a million dollars. This race will be 100% money earned going back towards various organizations represented at the race. Mr. Miller presented trail maps showing the proposed course of the trail race starting in downtown Export and continuing east on the Westmoreland Heritage Trail to the Delmont Trailhead and then the 8+ miles all the way out to Saltsburg. Next would be the West Penn Trail north towards Kiskiminetas, come back and go towards the Conemaugh Dam then follow that on the West Penn Trail all the way on Newport Road north of Blairsville, turn around and come all the way back into Export. The participants would head towards Trafford then go up into Duff Park for 5 or 6 miles and take the corridor to Pleasant Valley Park and then come back and finish in Export. The race would be roughly 100 miles and take around 20-30 hours to complete. There would be eight stations to get water, fill up their packs with food, drinks, and keep going. Mr. Miller feels that race would be a great way to promote the community.

Mr. Stepanovich asked about lighting. Mr. Miller stated that everyone would wear a headlamp at dark.

Dr. Lee Korn was concerned about the Pleasant Valley Road crossing. Mr. Miller stated that they would try to find the best way to cross there and to cross Route 66.

Mr. McKenna asked if there were going to be certain divisions for those that can't do 100 miles. Mr. Miller stated that they can possibly do a 50k option, a 10k or maybe a 5k. There could also be a funrun or something of that sort to get the kids involved.

Mrs. Lingg asked how many participants this kind of race would attract. Mr. Miller stated that these races attract thousands of people. For the first year of this race, he would image around 50-100 participants and could maybe cap it at a certain number.

Mr. Stepanovich asked what the typical fee would be for a runner. Mr. Miller answered that most of these races are \$200-\$300. They could be sponsored or not. They can wear whatever they want – even an advertisement or sponsor. There could be stipulations that they have to wear reflective gear. He believes

next year in the fall would be the perfect time for the race. Mr. Stepanovich asked if the trail would be closed just for the runners when the race is being run. Mr. Miller answered no – he would not want to close the trail or parks.

Mr. Spadaro asked if there would be prize money. Mr. Miller answered no, that maybe a trophy or an engraved belt buckle, but all the money will go back.

Mr. Nestico stated that we will have to look to safety and follow up with emergency services and see what their thoughts are and coordinate with the other municipalities involved.

**PUBLIC HEARING
FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE 2022 OPERATING BUDGET**

A Public Hearing was held at 7:17 p.m. for amendments to the 2022 Operating Budget. Ms. Milchak stated that the amendments proposed equate to \$110,000. This was primarily due to inflation factors that hit the Municipality in 2022. The largest increases were utility and gas usage. There were also increases in aggregates such as salt and stone. Overall, there was a 43% increase across the board. Amendments were needed throughout different departments. Fortunately, the forward thinking of Council and staff of taxes for the current year, helped offset a lot of the inflation issues. We also were able to bring in a little more revenues on prior earned income taxes and building and inspection and permit fees. The increased expenses were then able to be balanced.

The Capital Reserve Budget was also encompassing certain amendments. The Meadowbrook Road slide repair was postponed to handle the slide on Saddleback, there were increases to the MS4 basin retrofits, and the overlay project experienced spikes in the price of asphalt. Two license plate readers needed to be amended. Those were budgeted from revenues received from Westmoreland County grants and proceeds from a sale of a vehicle. A code enforcement vehicle also needed to be replaced.

Dr. Lee Korn said that it looks like we are seeing more of an increase from the EIT than what was projected. Ms. Milchak answered yes that it was budgeted conservatively.

Mrs. Lingg asked that since the Meadowbrook slide was postponed, how are you projecting, if inflation keeps increasing, that we going to hold up in the future? Ms. Milchak stated that as earned income goes up, the cost of living goes up and it naturally reflects on the earned income taxes that are received. As wages go up, wages typically fall in line with cost of living; that does help increase the revenue side and help off set some of those increased expenses. Adjustments were made off the inflation taking place this year and reflected that moving forward.

Mr. Dice asked for any additional comments or questions from Council. Hearing none, the Public Hearing was closed at 7:30 p.m.

**PUBLIC HEARING
FOR THE 2023 OPERATING BUDGET**

A Public Hearing was held at 7:30 p.m. for the 2023 Operating Budget. Ms. Milchak gave an overview slide presentation of the 2023 Operating Budget. The proposed 2023 Budget is a balanced budget and there are no proposed tax increases. The total proposed operating budget for 2023 is approximately \$15,408,743 excluding inter fund transfers. The General Fund is expecting \$9,973,845 worth of expenses. Capital Projects are equating to \$3,832,500. Debt service payment for 2023 remains at \$417,000. The 2023 value of a mill is estimated to be \$337,000 which is less than a one percent (1%) increase. Dedicated millage was allocated the same as 2022 to: 5 - General Fund Operations, 3.2 - Capital Reserve, 1.3 - Debt Services, 1.35 - Emergency Equipment, 1 - Murrysville Library, 0.2 - Medic One, and 0.1 - Hydrant for quarterly maintenance costs.

The EIT will remain the primary funding source for the General Fund. Real estate transfer taxes will provide cash for capital projects. Real estate taxes will provide the main funding for constant costs such as Debt, Hydrant, and Medic One. Real estate is also funding emergency equipment purchases and the Library.

General Fund: Total revenues and total expenditures are proposed to increase 4.52% over 2022. The 2023 budget includes earned income taxes of .70% which are estimated to generate \$6,284,195. Overall salaries and wages were budgeted to increase by 8.7% COLA for Admin, 2.75% Public Works-in negotiations now, and for Police 2.75% senior officers, 1% longevity, and 5% for officers rising in the ranks. Overall utilities are budgeted to increase 7.5% from 2022 end of year projections. Overall utilities experienced a 46% increase in costs from 2021. Natural gas prices saw a rise from \$3.59 per MCF in 2021 to \$9.18 per MCF in 2022. Electricity saw a surge in costs. Vehicle gasoline prices increased approximately 33%. The 2023 MMO was based on the 2021 valuation. The police pension costs increase was \$52,341. The non-uniform plan costs increased \$123,137.

Capital Reserve Fund: Capital projects for 2023 total \$3,832,500 and include all projects outlined in the 2023 CIP plus: Traffic processor that is expected to need replaced, Route 22 line painting, and Police Department server upgrade needed to support replacement cameras in the vehicles. \$800,000 will come from the State through Liquid Fuels allocations for the road projects.

Special Purpose Millage Fund: The SPF was established to account for payments made to the Community Library, the three fire departments, and Medic One. Dedicated real estate millage is the main revenue source.

Hydrant Fund: Records revenue generated from houses located within 600 feet of a hydrant and pays for the quarterly hydrant maintenance fees. There are 657 hydrants now and we pay for 650 of them. The rest belong to homeowners' associations.

State Fund: Tracks the annual allocation from the State for Liquid Fuels and the dedicated millage for road improvements.

Concert in the Park: Tracks revenues and expenses related to the concert usually held in August at MCP.

Debt Service: Dedicated mills is set at 1.30 mills to meet future bond payments. Annual payment is \$417,113.

Mr. Dice asked for comments or questions from Council. Hearing none, Mr. Dice closed the Public Hearing at 7:48 p.m.

**REGULAR VOTING MEETING
AGENDA**

ROLL CALL/VOTING ORDER: Carl Stepanovich, Jamie Lee Korn, Jamie Lingg, Dayne Dice, Mac McKenna, Jason Lemak, Tony Spadaro, and Mayor Synan.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mr. Dice led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

UNISTED AMENDMENTS: None

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS:

4.A. Approval of October 19, 2022, Council Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Stepanovich made a motion to approve the October 19th Minutes. Mrs. Lingg seconded. All those present voted aye. Motion approved.

MAYOR’S COMMENTS: Mayor Synan presented slides for the following events.

Curbside Leaf Collection Program: Republic Services, the Municipality of Murrysville’s trash/recycling hauler, will conduct municipal-wide sweeps to collect leaf and yard waste. To schedule a pick-up on one of the collection dates, please fill out the Curbside Leaf Collection Program Form. There is a 20-bag limit each collection date. The deadline to sign up for each date is the Thursday before the pick-up date. The next pickup date is Saturday, November 12.

The Murrysville Recreation Department and Murrysville Community Library present Darren Miller, a Franklin Regional graduate who became the first athlete to complete the “Oceans Seven” marathon swimming across five continents to benefit the Children’s Hospital Foundation. The program is Tuesday, November 15th at 6:30 p.m. in Murrysville Council Chambers. Donations will be collected for the local non-profit S.L.A.M. to assist with repairing the handicapped access for fishing along Sloan Creek. Register at www.murrysvilleparecreation.com or call 724-327-2100 x131.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR’S COMMENTS: None

COMMUNITY INPUT: None

LIAISON COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Mr. Lemak: The Library met last week. They are doing well and almost back to pre-COVID times. The Library received a lot of positive feedback from the Teen Advisory Board that was created, trying to get teens more involved in library programs. Programs are all listed on the website

Mr. Stepanovich: The Planning Commission meets next Tuesday.

Mr. Spadaro: Medic One had a meeting this past week. They had 1,325 trips, 181 for Washington Township, and 242 wheelchair transports. They sent fourteen people to help with the floods in Florida and are waiting for the results from that trip. They are also waiting to see how much FEMA is going to send them for helping. Medic One has two new trucks in use right now. Subscriptions are around 31% of our total population. They are having problems with people not pulling over for an ambulance and are instead speeding up to keep up with them.

Dr. Lee Korn: The Pension Committee meeting is next Thursday, November 10th, at 9:00 a.m.

Mrs. Lingg: The School Board meets November 14th for a joint Board and Committee-of-the-Whole meeting. November 16th is Finance and Curriculum is November 7th.

Mr. McKenna: The Parks and Recreation Committee meets next Tuesday. Thank you to the Parks and Recreation staff, Carly Greene and her team, for the huge success of the Trick or Treat on the Trail this past Saturday. There were 550 kids registered along with 40+ vendors along the trail.

The last flags of the year will be put up along Route 22 this week for Election Day and stay up till Saturday, for Veteran's Day. Anyone that would like to volunteer, please contact Bob McKenna.

Mr. Dice: FTMSA had their meeting last month. They continue with repairs to the system, they continue to camera lines, and repair any defects they find. The COA in regard to smoke and dye testing has to be done by August 2023 and they are way ahead of schedule. Their next meeting will be November 10th at 6:00 p.m. at the plant.

WORKSHOP ITEMS

ADMINISTRATION:

12.A. Discussion concerning amendments to the 2022 Operating Budget

This was just discussed in the Public Hearing and there were no additional comments or questions from Council regarding the amendments to the 2022 Operating Budget.

12.B. Discussion concerning the 2023 Operating Budget

There were no additional questions or concerns from Council regarding the 2023 Operating Budget.

12.C. Amphitheater Discussion

Mr. Nestico stated that at the last meeting, Council had suggested doing a survey of the community to gauge interest in continuing the amphitheater project. Staff went back to the drawing board to starting piecing that together and found it difficult to put a survey together that would be fair to the community itself. We have a project that is already underway and has a partial amount of funding going towards it, both from grant funding, as well as donations. Staff came up with a few thoughts taking into consideration some of the overall concerns that were expressed by some residents. It seems they were mostly concerned about the cost increase. The project started out in the range of \$800,000 and now is a \$1.8 million price

tag. When the project was initially conceived, it did not include parking, food truck staging area, restrooms, etc. The price tag has gone up along with inflation, supply chain issues, cost increase, and other factors. Talking with staff and how to proceed, one thought was to consider having the Recreation Board examine, review, analyze, and see what they recommend and bring it back to Council. They are familiar with the project and details of the project. The alternative would be to potentially table the project overall. That would not be his recommendation. Mr. Nestico stated that his recommendation would be to ask the Recreation Board to conduct a review of the project and then give a recommendation to Council on their thoughts.

Mr. Stepanovich stated that he would not table the project. We are progressing. Often times in a situation like this where there is an objection to something that is on-going, there is perhaps a petition of maybe 40-60 or 100 signatures; we haven't had that. The resistance is on cost, but there are grants, donations, etc.

Mr. McKenna stated that he agrees with Mr. Stepanovich. The feedback he receives from the community is the excitement, the wants and the needs for it which far outweighs anything on the negative side of it. We have done a great job with bringing a lot of the work in-house to help control some of the costs. Public Works has worked so hard on the project. When the project was first planned and looked at it was non-inclusive of the handicapped accessible restrooms, the parking lots, etc. Once it was looked at with gas, water, electric being put there, those costs were added along with inflation and supply chain things.

Mr. Spadaro stated that the issues brought up were already discussed and Council already approved them. The opposition we are getting now is based on three emails out of 22,000 people. It's not the majority of the people opposing. The majority wants the amphitheater. Mr. Spadaro feels we should go ahead with the project.

Mrs. Lingg stated that families are seeing huge increases because of inflation in their housing and consumer costs. When we increase taxes through the EIT and then we take the money and we build during inflation and the recession that going to be following, we should not be in a period of building. We should be in a period of maintenance. We need to reign in our expenses, and it doesn't matter how much work has already gone into that. It's not a no forever – it's just a no for now. Wait for an economic recovery to come where costs of goods go back down. Mrs. Lingg stated that she doesn't feel we should go forward with it. We should look into what we have already and maintain it.

Mr. McKenna said that it was an unfair characterization that the EIT was increased to spend it on this project. One had nothing to do with the other. Mrs. Lingg answered that if you are going to increase taxes, it really doesn't matter where it gets distributed. The budget had to be revamped and money should be going more for necessity than amenities. Mr. Nestico noted that we do have a pending grant associated with it and if we put the project off or delay it, we lose that grant of almost \$700,000 towards the project. Ms. Milchak also noted that a lot of the costs are in-kind services - our equipment, our employees. Mr. Stepanovich stated that there will still be funds coming in for naming rights of the amphitheater. Mr. McKenna added that donations are still being solicited from businesses for that project.

Dr. Lee Kornis stated that we are all very concerned about our local economy. At the last meeting we talked about this and maybe surveying the community to get a sense of people's opinion now since things have changed since 2017-2018. Building costs are up 36%. The amphitheater would be a tremendous asset to this community and could bring phenomenal opportunities. Dr. Lee Kornis indicated that she does like the recommendation that we ask the Recreation Board to look at project and it will also show the community, to whom we are responsible, that yes, we are continuing to be fiscally conscious. There is no rush to vote

yes or no because we have already voted on this project. It doesn't hurt to wait another meeting because we aren't holding up any construction. It would be helpful to hear what the Recreation Board of professionals has to say.

Mr. Dice asked if we do not move forward right now, would construction or anything be held up? Mr. Nestico stated that over the last few weeks, Public Works has finalized the sewer work and water lines there and will be wrapping up work for the winter. They will begin work again in February or March.

It was decided that the Recreation Board would be presented with the information so that they can discuss it at their next meeting and get back to Council with their recommendation sometime in December or sooner unless they need more time.

ENGINEERING: None

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: None

PUBLIC WORKS AND PARKS: None

COUNCIL ACTION ITEMS

ADMINISTRATION:

13.A. Consider approval of Resolution No. 763-22, grant application for Kovalczik Park.

Mr. Stepanovich made a motion to authorize staff to file a Department of Conservation and Natural Resources application with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to complete park rehabilitation and development at the site of the Kovalczik Park in the amount of \$147,578.08 and commit a matching share of funds in the amount of \$73,789.04. Dr. Lee Korn seconded the motion.

Mr. Nestico stated that this is a grant application that we'd like to submit to DCNR. The total estimated cost is around \$150,000. The 50% matching share would be almost \$75,000 and would be comprised mostly of in-kind services of roughly \$67,000. The small amount of physical funds going towards the project are available in the Capital Reserve Fund as part of the park rehab. This would rehab the basketball and tennis court area, replace the fence, and overlay the court to install pickleball courts.

All those in favor voted aye. Motion approved.

13.B. Consider approval of Resolution No. 764-22, the proposed amendments to the 2022 Operating Budget.

Dr. Lee Korn made a motion to approve Resolution No. 764-22, the proposed amendments to the 2022 Operating Budget. Mrs. Lingg seconded. All those present voted aye. Motion approved.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: None

ENGINEERING: None

PUBLIC WORKS AND PARKS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Dr. Lee Kornis stated that there had been a shift in our Pension Board from Frank Burnette to Andco. At that time, we talked about asking staff to look around at other communities to see if they are pleased or displeased with whom they are working. Andco isn't raising their fee on us now, but they may in the next few years. Ms. Milchak said that she and Mr. Nestico had talked about this recently and have a list of places they want to reach out to and get more information.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- Personnel
- Property Lease Agreement

Mr. Dice noted that the executive session is to discuss a personnel issue and a property lease agreement. No action is anticipated.

Mr. McKenna made a motion to adjourn to an executive session. Mr. Spadaro seconded. All those present voted aye. Motion approved. The meeting adjourned to an executive session at 8:32 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS: None

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

The Regular Voting Meeting and Public Hearings were broadcast on local government Channel 19. A true copy of the Council meeting DVD is available for the public to purchase from the Municipality of Murrysville and is in the Murrysville Public Library for review.