

**MINUTES OF THE
MIDDLETOWN TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC MEETING - 2020 BUDGET**

July 23, 2019

The Middletown Town Council met in session to discuss the 2020 Budget in the Public Meeting room at 653 Locust Street, Middletown, Indiana at 7:00 P.M. Council Members Dick Schwalm, Gary Kendall, Dan Fountain and President Jake Smith were present. Also present were Police Chief Amanda Kirby and Town Superintendent Carl Spears.

1. Tim Mundell, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer went over the budget calendar and explained that after this meeting, there will be two regular Council meetings, August 6 and August 29 to make adjustments. After August 21, 2019, when the 2020 budget will be published on the internet, no changes could be made which would exceed the tax rate advertised.

2. Police Chief Amanda Kirby posed a question regarding the LIT money distribution to the Public Safety departments. It was explained that when the LIT money is received it is allocated in equal parts to the Police, Fire and EMS Departments. The Police portion is currently being used to pay part of Police salaries. Chief Kirby explained that she is looking to hire a 5th full time officer. At present, she explained, she is stretched thin working as a full time officer and covering the responsibilities of efficiently and comprehensively managing the department. The Council replied that there wasn't enough funding available and asked that, for the time being, she do the best she can with what the budget will allow. She went on to ask about a 6th vehicle for the department and was told that it is in the 2020 budget. Dick Schwalm asked when the former Police Chief's salary would drop back to regular officer pay of \$17.88/hr and was told it would be the end of 2019. It was ascertained that the difference in his pay would not compensate a new officer. Chief Kirby stated that there was a possibility that the former Chief would retire soon. She went on to say that she would like to have the Council's permission to train as a Grant Writer and seek some assistance for her department in that area. It was mentioned that grant opportunities are more available to certified Police Departments than to Town Marshall Services. Chief Kirby is working toward the PD certification.

3. Town Superintendent Carl Spears stated that sale of outdated equipment has made it necessary for his department to rent as needed. He itemized several pieces of equipment. 1) a tractor; 2) a bush hog; 3) a mini-excavator; and 4) a milling machine. When asked, he responded that the item at the top of his wish list would be the tractor. There was a discussion regarding financing a tractor and having monthly payments come from each of the three utility departments. Finally, Jake Smith asked Mr. Spears to think about his wish list and get back to the Council at its next meeting.


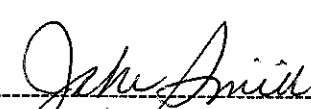
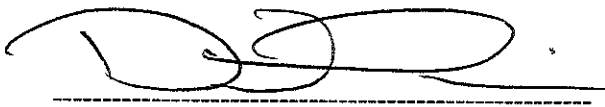

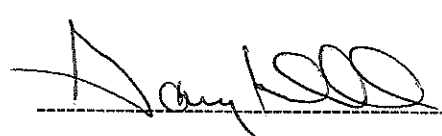
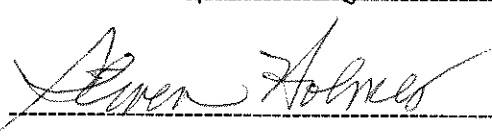
4. Dan Fountain talked about the advantages of having a "grant writer." He appreciates the big grants we get for infrastructure updates, but thinks the Town is missing out on available grants for smaller projects. He cited Vectren and OnStar as companies who give grants to municipalities. He also cited Rusty Connor, Parks Superintendent for the success he has in finding grants for the Township's Parks and the new Trail. Jake Smith pointed out that grant writers don't get paid unless they land the grant so there is great incentive for them to succeed.

5. Dan Fountain talked to Drew Cooper before he left about finding funds for Ron Koons to upgrade the equipment for Public Access TV. He wonders if that has been addressed in the 2020 budget. Tim Mundell found that there is indeed \$6,000.00 allotted for equipment and software in the Cumulative Capital Improvement Fund. Chief Kirby needs funding to upgrade and replace security cameras, so Mr. Koons and Chief Kirby can each use this fund.

6. Dan Fountain brought up the pending question of contracting with IMPA for electric service. After discussions with Drew Cooper, Dan feels that moving into that agreement would not be feasible, given the fragile nature of our budget. He suggested that the Town continue as we have been, using licensed linemen when necessary and renewing our agreement with Fresh Cut to continue trimming foliage in hot spots throughout our electrical grids. Dick Schwalm moved to renew our agreement with Fresh Cut for \$15,000.00 for the remainder of 2019. Gary Kendall seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

7. Regarding the 2020 Animal Control Contract with the Henry County Humane Society, Dan Fountain asked for a revision in the language describing "authorized personnel" who might be delivering an animal to the Humane Society. It was suggested that in the two places in the agreement where it is mentioned, "authorized personnel" needs to be more specific; to wit: page 1, number 2: "The Town shall pay to the Society the sum of \$100 per dog or cat brought into the shelter by the Middletown Police Department or the Middletown Park Superintendent....." And on page 2, d. "Accept all stray animals found in the Town of Middletown brought into the shelter by the Town's Police Department or the Middletown Park Superintendent."

There being nothing further to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned.

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Clerk Treasurer