

**MINUTES OF THE MILLVILLE
TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP
March 26, 2019 @ 7:00 PM**

In attendance were Mayor Bob Gordon, Deputy Mayor Steve Maneri, Treasurer Peter Michel, Secretary Ronald Belinko, Council Member Sharon Brienza, and Town Manager Debbie Botchie. Town Clerk Matt Amerling was absent.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Gordon called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Mayor Gordon led the pledge of allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

All Council members were present.

4. OLD BUSINESS

- A.** Review and discuss the draft FY20 Budget – Town Manager Debbie Botchie & Finance Director Lisa Wynn

Town Manager Debbie Botchie stated the Town is still “in pretty good shape” for its operating budget for fiscal year 2020 (FY20). Ms. Botchie stated without staff possible increases, the Town is only increasing the expense budget by one-point-eight-eight percent (1.88%) and everything pretty much stayed consistent with all the categories. Ms. Botchie stated she has spoken one-on-one with most of Council and there was a higher expense this year, which is software maintenance because the Town purchased more modules to its finance software which is for building permitting and escrow accounting. Deputy Mayor Steve Maneri stated regarding, computer repair/copier/software, Ms. Botchie has “email exchange certificate-GoDaddy,” and Mr. Maneri inquired about that item. Ms. Botchie stated that item is for Council’s emails and is paid every two (2) years, which is why it’s zero (0) this year. Mayor Bob Gordon asked if the Town received any information for the buyer for the elevators. Ms. Botchie stated yes, the Won-Door is under building maintenance, and Treasurer Peter Michel and Ms. Botchie had a conversation with Town Code & Building Official Eric Evans on this item. Ms. Botchie stated the Town’s warranty is off the door now and it’s three-hundred-thirty-nine dollars (\$339). Mayor Gordon asked if it’s a State function to require us to have it checked every year. Ms. Botchie stated no, it’s not a requirement but is something Mr. Evans and Mr. Michel want to have done to make sure it works, and it’s newly-added this year because it was still under warranty last year. Ms. Botchie stated the total expenses for this budget is seven-hundred-fifteen-thousand-nine-hundred-forty-two dollars (\$715,942). Mr. Maneri stated the Town has Christmas lights this year costing thirty-three-thousand-three-hundred-seventy-eight dollars (\$33,378). Ms. Botchie stated that item is under general and she’s reviewing the operating budget. Ms. Botchie asked Council if they were good on the expenses. The Council stated yes.

Ms. Botchie stated under general revenue – and this “scares her to death” – it shows the

percentage of an increase over last year of twenty-nine-point-ninety-six percent (29.96%), and Council knows Ms. Botchie is conservative but the Town was even conservative on the amount of building permits issued and with what's expected, there will be ninety (90) new builds, which is a conservative number compared to other developments coming in. Ms. Botchie stated as of this budget, the Town has received three-hundred-fifty-nine-thousand-nine-hundred dollars (\$359,900). Ms. Botchie stated what will make a difference this year is the Town's interest income – restricted and unrestricted – and, as Ms. Botchie reported to Council a month ago, the Town will be receiving one-point-five percent (1.5%) interest on the Town's checking accounts with WSFS Bank whereas in the past, they only give the Town earned credits. Ms. Botchie stated she and Town Finance Director Lisa Wynn did the math and calculations based on what the Town has, and it came out extremely high, so Ms. Botchie and Ms. Wynn put down a more conservative figure of sixty-thousand dollars (\$60,000), but it could be a lot more, or it could be offset as the Town spends money on the park. Ms. Botchie stated the Town's tax base has gone up, and the property taxes of four-hundred-ninety-three-thousand-nine-hundred-twenty dollars (\$493,920) is as of March 8, and the Town won't know for sure until it gets the April tax rolls from Sussex County and Ms. Botchie sees that going up. Ms. Botchie further stated for the total revenue, the Town has one-million-one-hundred-sixty-seven-thousand-five-hundred-seventy dollars (\$1,167,570) projected for FY20.

Ms. Botchie stated the next pages are for municipal street aid, which comes from the State, and the legislators say they will probably stay at six-million dollars (\$6,000,000) for the whole state; and Millville gets a portion of it because of the population and not because the Town doesn't own any roads. Ms. Botchie stated last year, the Town received four-thousand-six-hundred-six dollars (\$4,606) last year and it helps offset the Town paying for the street lights on Route 26. Ms. Botchie stated the Sussex County grants are twelve-thousand-five-hundred dollars (\$12,500), and the Town gets this grant due to the fact the Town contracts with the Delaware State Police (DSP) for public safety. Ms. Botchie stated, for economic development, the amount is funded by five percent (5%) of the Town's transfer tax every quarter, and Ms. Botchie thinks the Town has two-hundred-eighty-thousand dollars (\$280,000) in that account, which is the money the Town uses for festivals, events, tote welcome bags, newsletters, pocket calendars, and holiday decorations. Ms. Botchie stated the Town got a price quote for twenty-one (21) new Christmas pole lights, which are from the same company; however, they are different styles to look a little more traditional. Ms. Botchie stated the lights are up to Council whether they want to cut back on the amount or not, but the 21 lights will finish out the Route 26 corridor of Millville. Mayor Gordon stated the Town could also put some on Route 26 and some at the entranceways to Town developments. Mr. Maneri stated thirty-three-thousand dollars (\$33,000) is a lot of money. Ms. Botchie stated the lights themselves are actually twenty-five-thousand-eight-hundred-seventy-eight dollars (\$25,878) but the Town has to include the installation of the mounts and storage, as well as the electrical hook-up on each pole. Mr. Maneri stated he would like to see if the Town could go back to the older decorations because these are very expensive. Ms. Botchie stated she thinks "you get what you pay for" and these are good quality lights, they are LED, and with all the lights we have so far, it only increased the Town's light bill by eight dollars (\$8). Secretary Ron Belinko stated he knows with lighting, if you don't put out the money to pay for the LED and better quality build, it will cost you more every year for having to repair and/or replace the cheaper displays.

Ms. Botchie stated with the restricted budget, under transfer tax, the Town is budgeting five-hundred-seventeen-thousand-seven-hundred-seventy dollars (\$517,770) and it's a conservative estimate and Ms. Botchie thinks the Town will have more sales; but this is based on the ninety (90) homes she previously discussed. Ms. Botchie stated under expense, the Town will have to have some capital building improvements and it's for the deck repair and the handicapped ramp has been fixed twice. Ms. Botchie stated the Town always budgets for a computer in case one dies. Ms. Botchie stated the Town does put the codification of General Code in restricted expenses. Ms. Botchie further stated the police coverage based on twenty-four (24) hours per week and all major holidays is at one-hundred-nine-thousand-four-hundred-seventy-four dollars (\$109,474), and that amount is after the twelve-thousand-five-hundred dollars (\$12,500) from County. Ms. Botchie stated she thinks the Town is doing well with the twenty-four (24) hours, and the Town has forty (40) hours per week during the month of December. Ms. Botchie stated if Council wishes to increase the hours, the Town does have monies in its police fund to increase the weekly amount. Council Member Sharon Brienza asked if the twenty-four (24) hours is kept now, can Council increase it later because she thinks twenty-four (24) hours is a bit small. Ms. Botchie stated yes, Council did do just that this past year from twenty (20) to twenty-four (24). Mr. Maneri stated he thinks the Town should raise the hours during the summer months. Ms. Botchie stated the Town could do thirty-six (36) hours per week, and asked Council if they want to do that during summer, from May to the end of September.

Mayor Gordon stated a request to find out if the lights on Town Hall could be attached to gutter guards and, if so, how much. Ms. Botchie stated she would look into it, but the Town did get a price of nine-hundred dollars (\$900) to do the entire complex with gutter guards. Ms. Botchie stated with Dukes Drive park, the pre-construction bid is Friday, March 29, at 2 p.m., and the Town is budgeting an expense of two-million-four-hundred-thirty-four-thousand-nine-hundred-twenty-seven dollars (\$2,434,927) which was a part of the original budget but the Town won't know the exact amount until it starts receiving bids. Ms. Botchie stated she met with Mayor Gordon and Mr. Maneri, who requested Ms. Botchie put twenty-thousand dollars (\$20,000) in the grass-cutting and maintenance budget. Ms. Botchie stated for the Millville Volunteer Fire Company (MVFC) impact fees, the Town charges five-hundred dollars (\$500) per new construction, and if the Town stays on its same course, it's looking at forty-three-thousand dollars (\$43,000). Ms. Botchie stated the last page has the ambulance fee which the Town collects, but is not mandatory, and it has increased because the Town's tax base has increased, bringing the budget amount to fifty-two-thousand-two-hundred-twenty dollars (\$52,220).

Mr. Belinko stated he commends Ms. Botchie and Town Clerk Matt Amerling for sitting with him to explain this budget, and it makes a difference when you consider reading about other towns using their budget and running out of transfer tax monies. Mr. Belinko stated he thinks the Ms. Botchie, Ms. Wynn and the entire Town staff have done a great job making this operating budget and keeping spending to a minimum.

5. CITIZENS' PRIVILEGE

Mr. Glen Faden, of Beach Plum Drive, stated after hearing the 2020 budget and it seems the Town is in a good financial position, would Council consider forgiving Town property taxes to

all the residents for one (1) year? Mayor Gordon stated the first time somebody comes up and wants trash service, the tax ditches cleaned out, or whatever, the Town will be hitting you up for more money because of the cost, but Council will take it under advisement. Mr. Belinko stated it's something to look at the Comprehensive Plan about because those recommendations will cost the Town in the future. Mr. Faden stated the Giant Food shopping center parking lot has the red clothes donation box, which is full and overflowing, and Mr. Faden understands there's a problem with getting a hold of someone for ownership, but not only should the box be removed, but it also is full and should be emptied. Ms. Botchie stated it is also a safety hazard. Ms. Botchie further stated she heard from Mr. Nothnagel and Mr. Marshall, and she sent their complaints to Town Code & Building Administrator Robin Caporaletti to look into it. Ms. Botchie stated where the stop sign was added (next to Hooked Up restaurant), Mr. Nothnagel wants stripes there and the word "Stop" painted now but Ms. Botchie asked the owner to put the sign there and the owner didn't have to because the roadway was already approved without one and Ms. Botchie asking to have the word "Stop" painted there is "going to push it." Mr. Faden stated having the sign and big wide line painted there already should suffice. Mr. Maneri asked if the Town knows who owns the clothing bins. Ms. Botchie stated there is a phone number on the bins but when you call it, you get nothing. Ms. Botchie stated she kept calling about the bins and heard "it's too much trouble to dismantle it," but the Town doesn't have an ordinance to force them to move the bins. Ms. Botchie stated it is a safety issue due to blocking the view of motorists on Town Center Drive. Mr. Faden stated he thinks the bins should be removed altogether.

Mr. Adam Van Stone, of 30243 Brandywine Drive, asked if there is any way to obtain the budget information and minutes. Ms. Botchie stated once Council approves the budget, it will be available on the Town's website, but if you want to look at the new budget before it's approved, you may come to Town Hall and fill out a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) form to request it.

6. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING –TOWN COUNCIL MEETING, TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2019, AT 7 P.M.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Brienza motioned to adjourn at 7:34 p.m. Mr. Belinko seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Matt Amerling, Town Clerk