

Minutes of the Spring Garden Township Board of Commissioners Workshop
5:00 p.m. – November 12, 2025

Persons Present:

Daniel Rooney, President Commissioner (Remote)
David Detwiler, Vice President Commissioner
Anne Gray, Commissioner

Thomas Gwilt, Commissioner
Andrew Herrold, Commissioner

I. Commence Workshop

A. Public Comment - None

B. 2026 Budget Considerations

General Fund – information provided by Krista Gardner unless otherwise indicated.

- No general tax increase and a proposed 0.5 mil increase for fire tax.
- Projected 2026 revenues were reviewed and discussed. Projected 2026 revenues were compared to prior year revenues.
- There has been an increase in interest revenue. Efforts to maximize interest revenue will continue in 2026.
- The Payment in lieu of Tax (PILOT) program discussed. These are payments that are made in lieu of taxes by tax-exempt properties like churches, York College (\$50,000), and other non-profits. Non-profit entities do not pay municipal real estate taxes. PILOT payments are not required, and they have not increased in years.
- Projected 2026 expenses were reviewed and discussed.
- Expenses are \$1.1 million dollars higher, a majority of that is due to additional police pension funding related to merging plans.
- There was discussion regarding contracted professional service and minimizing costs.
- Large, one-off expenses were discussed.
- Commissioner Herrold inquired about what was driving the increase in grounds maintenance and it was clarified that there is consideration for the costs of Mill Creek Phase 1 & 2 projects. Some of these expenses are projected to be offset by possible grant awards and developer recreation fees. The grant awards are included in the budget.
- Staff position changes were reviewed.
- Commissioner Gray inquired about the recreation & ground maintenance, workman's compensation, and internet costs.

Sewer Fund – information provided by Krista Gardner unless otherwise indicated

- 5% increase in sewer rates – effective the April 1, 2026 – June 30, 2026, billing period.
- Large projects were discussed.

Liquid Fuels Fund – information provided by Krista Gardner unless otherwise indicated

- A decrease in projected expenses from the budget presented last month.
- \$414,000 in revenue, \$750,000 in expenses.
- There was additional discussion about the fire tax and Commissioner Herrold asked about the reasoning for increasing the fire tax and not the general tax. Krista clarified that the current tax covers approximately 3 percent of the fire expenses, but the increase as proposed would cover 23 percent.

General Discussion – information provided by Krista Gardner unless otherwise indicated

- Roberta Boffo of 1080 Grandview inquired about the grant writers and how they are benefiting the Township.
- Commissioner Herrold inquired about the ability to do better with some of the General Fund items, and Krista stated that the budget is based on realistic averages and not based on worst case scenarios.

- There was additional general discussion about volunteer fire fighting and the cost associated with it.
- There was discussion regarding the previous general tax increases that occurred on a step basis in 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2024. Prior to 2018 there had not been a general tax increase in 10 years.
- Robert Stuart of 1161 Hollywood Terrace inquired about the correlation between the loan debt and tax increase. Krista explained that currently the only debt is the administration building with twelve years left on the repayment, then there would be the potential addition of debt for the fire station.
- Commissioner Herrold expressed his preference to pull funds from reserves rather than increasing the fire tax and Commissioner Gray suggested rolling out the increase in smaller amounts like what was done previously with the general tax.
- Roberta Boffo of 1080 Grandview Road inquired if grant funds could be used towards operational costs, and it was clarified that it was unlikely grant funds would be applied to operating costs.

2026 Budget and Tax Levy

- Process for advertisement and public access presented.
- The fire tax and proposed increase discussed. Currently an estimated 3% of operating fire expenses are covered by the fire tax. An increase in the fire tax rate from 0.086 mils to 0.586 mils is projected to cover approximately 23% of operating fire expenses in 2026.
- Large, one-off expenses were discussed.

C. Other Business

D. Public Comment

Roberta Boffo of 1080 Grandview asked about grant writer reports.

II. Conclude Workshop

Respectfully submitted,

Luther C Wike Jr.
Township Secretary
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