

**CUMRU TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING NOVEMBER 20, 2025**

The Regular Meeting of the Cumru Township Board of Commissioners was called to order at 6:49 p.m. by President Lisha L. Rowe. Other Commissioners in attendance were Vice-President Greg Miller, David J. Batdorf, Andy Donnell, and William B. Miller. Also attending were Chief of Police Madison Winchester, Fire Chief James Beane, Superintendent of Public Works Robert McNichols, Jr., Asst. Superintendent of Public Works Michael Yost, Jr., Business/Personnel Administrator Kristin Yoder, Manager/Secretary Jeanne E. Johnston, and Special Projects/Asst. Secretary Patricia A. Wylezik-Pfeiffer.

NOTICE:

Public comment will be accepted in person. Please include your first name, last name and address for all comments. Any comments without a name or address will not be considered. To accommodate as many people as possible, we request that each person's comments be limited to 3 minutes (resolution no. 301). The meeting comment period is limited to a total of 60 minutes. This time period may be extended at the discretion of the Commissioners. While public comments will be given due consideration, immediate responses will be made at the discretion of the Commissioners.

Pledge to the Flag.

PUBLIC

Attendance: Ruth O'Leary, Tonya Campbell, Perry Haas, and Mark Ferrero.

CORRESPONDENCE

A.) Meeting advertised on 11/18/25

2026 BUDGET

A.) General Fund – Police

Chief Winchester explained several line items that showed differences between the amount budgeted for 2025 and the end of year total for 2025.

- 4100-183 PD overtime wages actually received an intergovernmental reimbursement of approximately \$27,000 for special detail work. This reimbursement money is deposited into the current year's revenue.
- 4100-238 PD Uniforms was over budget due to an oversight in the current contract which allows for \$750/ officer/ year.
- 4100-244 PD-Therapy Dog and Supplies increased due to approving the 2nd therapy dog.
- 4190-520 PD- Animal Control Services increased because the current service will not be available in 2026. Chief Winchester was able to negotiate a rate of \$1.50/capita which was significantly lower than other options.

- 4100-827 PD- Body Cams was paid through the DA's office for 2025 but will cost \$37,918.00/ year for the remaining contract years 2026 -2029.
- Mr. Greg Miller asked about the amount listed for 4100-231 PD- Gas/Oil/ Antifreeze. The response was this amount is a best guess estimate that could be reduced slightly. However, the amount expensed is dependent on call volume and scope.
- Mr. Donnell asked about the amount of overtime and if we were under budgeting. The response was that the overtime is expected to go down with hiring the 2 new officers.

There was a discussion about the number of employees in the Police Department, wages, and healthcare costs.

Chief Winchester explained that a new patrol vehicle was included in the 2026 capital budget to be able to replace 1 vehicle/year to maintain the fleet.

Mr. Greg Miller asked if this would be another hybrid vehicle. Chief Winchester said that he was not sure because the current hybrid vehicle has been out of service more than it has been in service. The "check engine" light is on again.

Ms. Johnston reminded the Board that the Township had applied for an LSA grant for another therapy dog vehicle. The grant awards won't be announced until March 2026.

B.) General Fund – Buildings and Grounds (B&G)

Ms. Johnston explained several line items.

- 4090-300 B&G-Contracted Services are for the many maintenance contracts associated with the township buildings.
- 4090-320 B&G-Communications shows the cost of the replacement phone switches being spread out over all the departments.
- 4090-360 B&G- Utilities is a best guess estimate for 2026 because the campus has only been on public water and natural gas for 3 quarters of 2025.
- Ms. Johnston reported that since some of the fitness room equipment will be relocated to the new fire station, some equipment will need to be replaced or rented. This can be supplemented with donations.

Ms. Johnston also reminded the Board that new roofs will need to be considered for the Rec Center and the Public Works building in the near future.

C.) General Fund – Highway (HWY)

Ms. Johnston explained several line items listed for the Highway Department.

- 4300-142 HWY- Streetlight wages is used for maintenance of streetlights. She explained that that there are many complicated agreements with Met-Ed and PPL detailing ownership of parts and maintenance agreements for streetlights in Cumru Township.
- 4300-183 HWY- Overtime Wages is weather dependent and difficult to predict from year to year, largely due to winter weather.
- Mr. Donnell asked about 4300-156 HWY- Dept. Health/Hospital Insurance. Ms. Johnston explained that the Teamster coverage offers several categories depending on marital status and number of dependents.

There was a discussion about wages. Wages for the superintendent and assistant superintendent are spread out over several departments in percentages. Depending on the jobs, highway employees are pulled to help the sewer department and vice versa. The mechanics also help where needed.

Mr. Greg Miller asked for a rough average for wages and benefits. The answer was approximately \$68,000 for wages and approximately \$2200/month for benefits.

- 4360-200 HWY-Storm Sewers showed an increased expense in the 4th Quarter due to an emergency project.
- 4360- 206 HWY- Storm Sewer Public Education is part of the mandated requirements for MS4 that is incorporated into the refuse/recycling calendar.
- 4330-204 HWY-Traffic Marking and 4330-206 HWY- Long Line Painting were cut from the 2025 budget. Ms. Johnston explained that these safety measures are usually deferred for only one year because the markings fade too much if they go too long between applications.
- Mr. Ferrero asked about 4830-002-010-3 HWY-MMO NU. Ms. Johnston explained that the non-uniformed pension minimum municipal obligation (MMO) payments are made once a year and the amount is calculated from information provided by the actuary. The increased amounts are due to the conversion of the non uniformed plan from the defined contribution plan to a defined benefit plan, as under the collective bargaining agreement. This was the same issue as discussed for the sewer fund on 11/13/2025. The partial state reimbursement is based on a formula.

Ms. Johnston stated that the Capital Fund items can be revisited on Monday, 11/24/2025. She explained that the Township had applied for grants for equipment.

D.) General Fund – Administration

Ms. Johnston went over several line items.

- The insurance year runs from April 13th of the current year to April 13th of the next year. Budgeting takes place six months prior to renewal, making it difficult to estimate costs for affected line items.
- 4140-311 Admin-Consultant/Comprehensive plan was budgeted for \$0 because no future contract had been presented for consideration. Mr. Greg Miller stated that \$150,000 should be placed on the spreadsheet. The Board did not object.
- 4140-314 Admin- Legal Services/Planning – Mr. Greg Miller stated that this line item should be increased by \$30,000. The Board did not object. When Ms. Johnston requested information, Mr. Donnell stated there were projects going on in the background.
- Ms. Johnston explained that the \$50,000 Wyomissing Creek Watershed Coalition allocation was deferred for 2025 due to joint project delays beyond the control of the WCWC. Since projects were delayed, there was no need to increase the joint account this year with individual municipal contributions. Although this amount was not expensed for 2025, it was again budgeted for 2026 in the expectation that a project will begin in 2026.

Mr. William Miller asked which line item included the 50% match for the \$4.2 million grant application. Mr. Greg Miller responded that there was no match because the match was based on land value.

E.) General Fund – Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Rec Board is currently suspended due to the fire station project in the main recreation area. The proposed budget is minimal due to the holding pattern.

Ms. Johnston explained that she received a letter from resident, previously on the Park and Rec Board, who is an engineer. He volunteered to work on an open space plan. An updated open space/recreation plan would be needed for any future grant applications.

Ms. Johnston recommended resurrecting the Park and Rec Board after the fire station project is done in the spring. There can be different approaches to recreation in the Township. Passive recreation would focus on the trails and organizations such as Schuylkill River Greenways. Active recreation would focus on play structures, sport courts, etc.

Mr. Greg Miller stated that \$7,500 should be added into 4520-300 P&R- Contracted Services for recreation planning. No further information was provided. The Board did not object.

There was additional discussion about the 2026 budget. The end of year (EOY) balance should be above \$3 million to comply with the commitment in the bond ordinance. Based on the request to use the current millage for the proposed budget, the projected EOY 2026 would only be \$2,449,482.34. This total does not include the increases added tonight. Ms. Johnston stated that the changes would be incorporated into the proposed budget.

Ms. Johnston explained that 1 mill for tax purposes is approximately \$885,500 based on 98% collection.

Mr. Greg Miller stated that, in order to meet the \$1.1 million deficit, staff would have to be reduced by 8 employees, four from public works and four police officers. The only alternative is to increase taxes. He stated that a combo of tax increase and staff reduction would be needed to balance the budget.

Mr. William Miller said that he does not want to lose staff. He stated that the zero growth is due to limiting commercial growth in the Township.

Mr. Batdorf asked Ms. Johnston if the Township has a fund balance or not. After a heated discussion between Board members, Ms. Johnston reported that the 2025 carryover was \$3.2 million and the projected 2026 carryover would be \$2.36 million at this time.

Ms. Johnston explained that the 2016 Board had directed the staff to look at any expenses that could be cut or transferred. Unfortunately, the costs have increased and revenue has decreased. Revenue decrease has largely been due to numerous reductions in assessed value, including for the most highly assessed commercial properties and that process continues. The staff would look at trimming expenses, but obviously taxes will need to be raised. The ambulance tax could be pulled back to make more room for the general fund increase.

Ms. Johnston recommended presenting options and having the Board decide on 11/24/2025.

REMINDERS


A.) Board of Commissioners meetings for November and December 2025

- 1) 11/24/2025 at 6:30 p.m. – Special Budget meeting
 - a) advertised on 11/20/2025
- 2) 12/16/2025 at 7:00 p.m. – Regular meeting

B.) Planning Commission 12/01/2025 at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT
ON MOTION OF MR. DONNELL, SECOND OF MR. BATDORF, A UNANIMOUS
VOTE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:54 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeanne E. Johnston
Manager/Secretary