

Commissioners of Ridgely

APRIL 23, 2026, BUDGET WORKSHOP

The Commissioners of Ridgely met on the above date at 2:00 pm for a budget workshop. The following were in attendance: President Brad Sears, Commissioner John Hurley, Commissioner Chad Leister, Director of Public Works David Crist, Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Berkey, Financial Assistant Gerald Sutton, James Romph, Scott Baron, Ralph Hurley, II.

Purpose:

To conduct a budget workshop for the fiscal year 2027, focusing on reviewing and planning the general fund revenue, expenses, and other financial considerations for the town.

Key Discussion Points:

1. General Fund Revenue:

- Reviewed anticipated revenue from property taxes, personal property taxes, and other local taxes.
- Discussed the impact of losing Hanover Foods and Medifast on personal property tax revenue.
- Considered conservative estimates for revenue streams such as highway user funds and impact fees.

2. Budgeting Approach:

- Jerry provided an overview of the budgeting process, emphasizing conservative estimates and the allocation of expenses across different funds.
- Discussed the differences in accounting for the general fund versus the water and sewer fund.

3. Departmental Expenses:

- Reviewed expenses for various departments, including commissioners' expenses, police, sanitation, parks, and streets.
- Discussed specific line items such as legal fees, engineering services, and street maintenance.

4. Water and Sewer Revenue and Expenses:

- Evaluated current rates and potential increases to address deficits in the enterprise fund.
- Discussed the impact of environmental factors on chemical usage and lab testing costs.

5. Community Programs and Initiatives:

- Considered funding for the Winter Festival and National Night Out.
- Discussed potential increases in donations to the local fire company.

6. Economic Development Commission (EDC):

- Proposed a new budget line item for the EDC to support grant applications and other initiatives.

Decisions Made:

1. Budget Adjustments:

- Increased the commissioners' expense budget to \$10,000.
- Legal fees budget set at \$9,000.
- Fire company donations increased to \$40,000, with a review in December for potential adjustments.

2. New Budget Line Items:

- Established a \$2,500 budget for the Economic Development Commission.

3. Program Funding:

- Allocated \$500 for National Night Out activities.

Action Items:

- Prepare an ordinance for the budget to be introduced in May.
- Adjust budget line items as discussed, including health insurance estimates and legal fees.
- Follow up on street maintenance projects and finalize quotes with Bramble.
- Continue monitoring chemical usage and adjusting orders as necessary.
- Continue overseeing the allocation of expenses and providing updates on financial projections.

Next Steps:

1. Budget Finalization:

- Introduce the budget ordinance in May with the adjustments discussed.
- Review any changes or updates before the final vote in June.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:11 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie L. Berkey, CMC

Clerk-Treasurer