

2026 Budget Workshop #5
November 13, 2025
General Summary, Notes & Action Items

(Budget Workshops can be viewed on the Borough's YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@craftonboroughcouncil6954>)

Summary

The meeting focused on reviewing and finalizing the budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Manager Price led the discussion, presenting updates on fund balances, bond project tracking, capital expense plans, and draft fund budgets. The meeting primarily focused on making decisions about discretionary spending allocations.

Manager Price began by highlighting significant changes to fund balances, noting that funds had been moved from checking accounts to reserves, particularly for the road fund and sewer fund. This strategic move was expected to generate approximately \$20,000 in the next year. The overall total amount had decreased due to infrastructure work payments to contractors, though grant funding of nearly \$1 million was being processed and expected to arrive soon.

The bond project tracking sheet was updated to include previous decisions and potential public works requests. Manager Price mentioned that after committing and completing projects, just over \$1 million remained available, with the proposed project's amount having dropped slightly. The five-year capital improvement plan for equipment (not infrastructure) remained unchanged.

Manager Price presented the draft budget figures: \$6.69 million for the general fund, \$8 million for the bond fund, \$2.6 million for the sewer fund, and just over \$1 million for the river fund. He noted macroeconomic trends showing real estate taxes declining relative to inflation due to lack of reassessments. The proposed budget was balanced with no tax increase, maintaining the overall tax rate at 8.59 mills. All real estate tax would go to the general fund rather than the road tax since the road fund was considered overfunded. No money would be added to reserves this year, unlike the previous year when \$300,000 was added. The budget included \$8 million for infrastructure projects and a higher-than-expected amount (\$700,000 vs. planned \$300,000) for sewer repair projects.

The committee then reviewed specific budget decisions. Updates included revised quotes for police station improvements: \$13,000 for the police locker room renovation (including new lighting fixtures, deep cleaning, paint, and minor fixtures) and \$10,200 for replacing knee boards and repainting the police station. The pool liner repair estimate was reduced from \$20,000 to \$9,000 as it was determined only the splash pad needed repairs.

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Mayor Perry strongly advocated for the police locker room renovation, explaining it was "much needed" and would provide space for evidence storage, training, and proper facilities for officers. The committee generally agreed the locker room was a priority but questioned the necessity of the knee board replacement.

The committee discussed several community center improvements, including carpet replacement (\$15,000), floor replacement (\$11,000), window treatments (\$3,500), and furniture updates (\$10,000). Ms. Pulkownik and others emphasized the importance of improving the community center to attract more rentals and community events. The committee also debated whether to repair just the stage roof (\$10,000) or the entire roof (\$22,000) of the community center, with Engineer Keenan noting significant water damage to the wooden stage floor during rainstorms.

After deliberation, the committee decided to approve the police locker room renovation, all the community center improvements (carpet, floor, furniture, and the entire roof), while leaving approximately \$7,000 in discretionary funds that could be allocated to the sewer fund if needed. They agreed to phase some of these improvements throughout the year, potentially scheduling less critical items for later quarters to ensure financial flexibility.

The meeting concluded with Manager Price confirming that the budget would be advertised and made available for public review, with the final meeting to pass the budget scheduled for December 11th.

Budget Meeting Introduction and Fund Balance Updates

Manager Price opened the meeting by outlining the agenda, which included reviewing fund balances, bond project tracking, capital expense plans, draft fund budgets, macroeconomic trends, and budget planning decisions. He reported significant changes to fund balances, noting that funds had been moved from checking accounts to reserves, particularly for the road fund and sewer fund, which would generate approximately \$20,000 next year. The overall total amount had decreased due to payments to contractors for infrastructure work, though grant funding of nearly \$1 million was expected soon. The bond fund reserve was down to \$781,000, but funding was expected to return from ongoing projects.

Bond Project Tracking and Capital Improvement Plans

Manager Price updated the bond project tracking sheet with previous decisions and potential public works requests. He noted that after committed and completed projects, just over \$1 million remained available. The five-year capital improvement plan for

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equipment remained unchanged. Manager Price then presented the draft budget figures: \$6.69 million for the general fund, \$8 million for the bond fund, \$2.6 million for the sewer fund, and just over \$1 million for the river fund. He highlighted macroeconomic trends showing real estate taxes declining relative to inflation due to lack of reassessments.

Budget Overview and Proposed Approach

Manager Price presented the balanced budget proposal with no tax increase, maintaining the overall tax rate at 8.59 mills. All real estate tax would go to the general fund rather than the road tax since the road fund was overfunded. No money would be added to reserves this year, unlike the previous year when \$300,000 was added. The budget included \$8 million for infrastructure projects and a higher-than-expected amount (\$700,000 vs. planned \$300,000) for sewer repair projects. Manager Price then reviewed updates to specific budget decisions, including revised quotes for the police station improvements and reduced pool liner repair costs.

Police Facility Improvements Discussion

The committee discussed police facility improvements, with Mayor Perry strongly advocating for the \$13,000 police locker room renovation. She explained it was "much needed" and would provide space for evidence storage, training, and proper facilities for officers. The committee generally agreed the locker room was a priority but questioned the necessity of the \$10,200 knee board replacement and repainting. Ms. Pulkownik and Mr. Oliverio expressed preference for improvements that would benefit the broader community rather than cosmetic updates to areas with limited public visibility.

Community Center Improvements Deliberation

The committee discussed several community center improvements, including carpet replacement (\$15,000), floor replacement (\$11,000), window treatments (\$3,500), and furniture updates (\$10,000). Ms. Pulkownik emphasized the importance of improving the community center to attract more rentals and community events. Mr. Oliverio noted the poor condition of the floor with lifted tiles. The committee also debated whether to repair just the stage roof (\$10,000) or the entire roof (\$22,000), with Engineer Keenan reporting significant water damage during rainstorms that was affecting the wooden stage floor.

Final Budget Decisions and Conclusion

After deliberation, the committee decided to approve the police locker room renovation, all the community center improvements (carpet, floor, furniture, and the entire roof), while

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leaving approximately \$7,000 in discretionary funds that could be allocated to the sewer fund if needed. They agreed to phase some improvements throughout the year, potentially scheduling less critical items for later quarters to ensure financial flexibility. Manager Price confirmed that the budget would be advertised and made available for public review, with the final meeting to pass the budget scheduled for December 11th.

Action Items

- Manager Price mentioned updating the bond tracking sheet with October numbers before the next meeting.
- Manager Price mentioned updating the "after committed projects" figures at the next meeting.
- Manager Price mentioned advertising the budget and making it available on the website and at the office for public review.
- Mr. Oliverio mentioned holding the final budget meeting on December 11th to pass the budget.
- Manager Price mentioned scheduling community center improvements in different quarters throughout the year.
- The committee agreed to consult with the library board about the children's room door request due to leadership changes and security concerns.
- Engineer Keenan offered to send photos of the water damage to the stage roof to interested committee members.