

MINUTES OF THE BUDGET MEETING OF
THE TEANECK TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
HELD IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2010

Mayor Feit called the Open Session Meeting of the Teaneck Township Council to order at 7:06 p.m., and asked all those present to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: C. Hameeduddin, DM. Parker (arrived at 7:42 p.m.), C. Honis, C. Toffler, Mayor Feit.

Absent: C. Gussen, C. Katz.

Also Present: W. Broughton, Municipal Manager; J. Evelina, Senior Clerk; C. Loschiavo, Clerk Typist.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by Resolution 322-09, setting the 2010 meeting dates, and Resolution 384-09 amending the 2010 meeting dates, sending a copy to THE RECORD, THE SUBURBANITE, THE BERGEN NEWS/SUN BULLETIN, THE JEWISH STANDARD, and THE COUNTY SEAT, filing a copy in the Township Clerk's Office and posting it on the Municipal Building bulletin board, and the Mayor hereby directs that this statement be included in the minutes.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR GOOD AND WELFARE

Mayor Feit inquired whether any member of the Council had any comments prior to opening the meeting to any comments from the public.

No one had any comments.

Mayor Feit declared that any members of the public who wished to be heard come forward and state their names and addresses for the record. Comments were limited to five minutes per person.

Art Vatsky - 950 Garrison Avenue - questioned why the old police headquarters were abandoned, which was a waste of a valuable resource; stated Council is making bad financial decisions as a result of litigation.

Joan Davis - 976 Alpine Drive - questioned the natural gas account, the PAL Building, fencing, CSX, fire hydrants; demanded that no artificial turf be placed in Votee Park; and requested that Council minimize the Township's debt.

There having been no further persons who wished to speak, Mayor Feit declared that the public comment portion of the meeting was now closed.

Mayor Feit explained that Council appropriated funds to remediate the old police headquarters and funding for fire hydrants is not negotiable.

PRESENTATION BY TOWNSHIP AUDITOR:

Mr. Ferriaoli of Ferriaoli, Wilkatz, and Cuva began his presentation with a review of the 2009 Annual Debt Statement. He stated that the Township is in excellent shape with regards to debt, which is at 0.44%, an increase of 0.10%, as compared to the maximum allowance of 3.5%. The decline of equalized value is reflective of the real estate market, but it must be monitored as it impacts the percentage of debt.

With respect to revenue, the Township received \$170,000 less on interests on investments and deposits, due to low interest rates. This decrease reduced the surplus. Information on the amount of state aid for 2010 has not been released yet and will not be released at least until Governor Christie presents the state budget in March. At this time, Mr. Ferriaoli can only estimate that state aid may be reduced by approximately \$169,000, based on the current trend in Trenton.

In general, the amount in surplus held up in 2009, although it is \$231,395 less than in 2008. He recommended not to sell bonds this year, but to stay with notes at a savings of \$159,000 and monitor the interest rate. Infrastructure and capital projects should continue to be funded through the capital budget.

OTHER EXPENSES BUDGET (listed by account number):

090 - Mr. Broughton advised Council that he made the requested adjustments from the January 13th meeting to the Council budget and confirmed that only \$3600 was spent on the website in 2009.

110 - Mr. Broughton reported that he will provide a list of courses and seminars attended in 2009 that was encumbered against the training budget to Council.

125 - Mr. Broughton explained that the expenditure is for 20 dell computers as part of a cyclical replacement program and an laptop for the Tax Assessor to use when he is attending tax appeal hearings.

160 - Mr. Broughton explained the encumbrances for the legal budget since transfers were required to cover the 3rd and 4th quarter expenses for labor counsel. He stated that an additional \$300,000 needs to be transferred to complete the 2009 payments. DM. Parker asked if the 2010 estimate was enough to cover the bills. Mr. Broughton replied that it depends on the year and amount of litigation the Township will face, but the human resource director will help decrease the need to spend funds for investigators.

170 - Mr. Brought advised that \$3500 increase in professional services was due to an increase in the amount of cases that required interpreters.

741 - Mr. Broughton reported that this account was revised to reflect the reduction of the rate of gasoline to \$2.50 per gallon.

SALARY & WAGES

POLICE - Mr. Broughton recommended hiring 6 officers to maintain staffing at 99 officers. C. Hameeduddin stated that there are pending retirements and if a cap on sick leave is enacted, there may be a mass exodus; therefore Council must keep into consideration the affect for 2011 and offsetting shortages through overtime.

Chief Wilson believes the department needs 101 officers, but that 99 is a palpable number. He explained that overtime is not the solution as there is still a potential for unforeseen circumstances. He requested that Council make the decision to hire more officers soon, since there are 7 to 8 individuals eligible for retirement this year, and if 5 recruits enter the academy, they will be able to commence patrol in late 2010, with the possibility of reinstating community policing.

DM. Parker asked if residents were safe. Chief Wilson responded that residents are safe but there are less services and things are just taking longer. He explained the increase in service calls by 12%, as well as increases in burglaries and robberies.

Council reviewed the request and will hold all staffing increases for further consideration at a future budget meeting.

DPW - Mr. Broughton advised Council that the department has many vacancies and the authorized amount of employees has not changed since 1983. He is seeking to address the staffing issue and enhance recycling services which have not changed since 1987.

Mr. Broughton presented Council with options regarding outsourcing recycling, hiring permanent personnel for recycling, or a combination of hiring permanent drivers and seasonal employees. The seasonal employees would be paid about \$12/hr with no benefits. His recommendation was to hire 3 permanent drivers and 6 seasonal employees to pick up recycling services every 2 weeks plus 3 new trucks (at a \$37,500 down payment) at a cost of \$318,000.

MANAGER - Council asked for an update on the hiring additional personnel for the Manager's office. Mr. Broughton responded that he has reviewed resumes for the executive assistant position and will start interviewing next week. With respect to the human resources director, he developed a committee of department heads who will have the most interaction with this individual. The committee with the assistance of labor counsel will be reviewing resumes next week.

C. Toffler inquired how much of a year's salary will be paid to the individuals and if benefits are also included. Mr. Broughton advised that he expects to have both positions filled in March, so 75% of the salaries will be paid in 2010 and the figures presented do not include benefits, which are approximately 35% of the employee's salary.

DM. Parker suggested to lower the budgeted maximum for both salaries by \$5000 each and referenced the Clerk's salary when she was the executive assistant and that it was a different economy during that time. She mentioned that the revised positions of the Fire Department were not finalized either.

C. Hameeduddin stated departments need resources to work, some have more than others, there has to be a balance and Council needs to look at staffing levels.

C. Toffler expressed that she wished to have recycling conducted in house.

Council determined to review the salary and wages budget and capital budget at the next budget meeting on February 3rd.

ADJOURNMENT

C. Hameeduddin moved to adjourn the Budget Meeting at 9:15 p.m. Seconded by C. Honis.

In Favor: C. Hameeduddin, DM. Parker, C. Honis, C. Toffler, Mayor Feit.

Opposed: None.

Absent: C. Gussen, C. Katz.