

# TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY

Budget Meeting  
February 13, 2010

The budget meeting of the Washington Township Committee was held this date in the Washington Township Municipal Building located at 211 Route 31 North, Washington, N.J. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Mayor Samir Elbassiouny.

SUNSHINE LAW COMPLIANCE - The Mayor noted that this meeting was being held in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Law of 1975 in as much as a notice had been published in the Star Gazette, transmitted to the Express Times, posted at the Municipal Building and a copy is on file in the Clerks Office. This agenda is subject to change by order of the Washington Township Committee before and/or during the scheduled meeting.

ROLL CALL: Elbassiouny, present; Klingel, present; Kovacs, present; Marks, present. Mary Ann O'Neil, Township Clerk and Peter de Boer, Certified Public Works Manager/Township Administrator; Barbara Emery, CFO; Suzanne Heerwagen, Deputy Treasurer; Dave Evans and John Mooney, Auditors; Chief James Mc Donald and Lt Thomas Cicerelle and Jeff Cooper, Assistant Municipal Supervisor of Public Works were also present. Strunk was absent.

## SALUTE THE FLAG

## BUDGET DISCUSSION

Evans said they are in compliance with the tax levy and approximately \$90,000 over expenditure cap. They are using the state aid numbers from 2009. They do not know what will happen to the 2010 state aid. The police costs with Washington Borough are still subject to change. Also, they need to add \$10,000 in Recreation to the budget. Evans said if the budget was reduced by \$90,000 and everything stayed the same, there would be a 2.3 tax increase on local tax, which equates to \$4.75 a month to average tax payer.

Kovacs asked about surplus. Evans said it us down, because payments to school board were accelerated, so they are down a little, but not too much.

Kovacs said they are looking at a 2.3 tax increase, but we are supposed to be saving all this money with the police departments, but we are coming up with the same numbers. The Mayor said they have not gone through a full cycle yet. Evans said the way the contract is structured, there will be a long term savings. He asked the police if their budget was a true budget, if not, they should scale it down. Marks said the Committee must look at needs, as opposed to wants. Evans said his concern at this time was getting into compliance with the tax levy and over expenditure cap. The Mayor asked the collection rate and was advised it is 97.94%.

There was a lengthy discussion on the Township paying for half the crossing guards, when reality, they only have one, the rest are in the Borough. Question was asked, why would the Township want to take on another \$70,000 for crossing guards when they are in the Borough. Evans said the contract says the Township will take over police services, but is silent on the crossing guards. Chief Mc Donald did not think they should even be on payroll. Kovacs asked if they were mentioned in contract. Marks said it is the way it is interpreted. She then asked who negotiated this contact. Evans said the attorneys.

The Mayor said, before this goes any further, a meeting should be set up to get ths straightened out.

The CFO said the medical bills are becoming extremely high. de Boer was to look into this matter. He thought the Township was only supposed to pay the deductible. Evans said now may be the time to look into another provider. The Mayor said they will be meeting with current provider, Sweat and Walters and two other companies. The Mayor and Klingel will be sitting down with them to go over plans.

There was discussion on police overtime, fuel used, police vehicle maintenance and uniforms. Klingel asked that miscellaneous be broken down further. Chief Mc Donald said it would be car washes, wiper blades, lights, radio, etc.

There was discussion on vehicle maintenance. One mechanic is doing all the work and they went from 12 vehicles to 30 vehicles. Marks said the good records must be maintained on what the mechanic is doing on each vehicle. Cooper said 60% of the work is the police vehicles. The Mayor said that Klingel will talk to the department about setting a system up on vehicles. Evans suggested billing the Borough for half the repairs on vehicles. de Boer said if this is done, they should add labor as part of the bill.

The Committee then went through the budget to try to find the cut of \$90,000 needed. CFO said if we gave back crossing guards to Borough, it would be done. The Mayor said they would have to resolve this issue. Kovacs asked if they could fire all crossing guards. Chief Mc Donald said, yes, then hire them back. The Mayor asked de Boer to check with Howard Vex on this issue. The Mayor said they must meet with Washington Borough and iron this issue out.

The Committee only gave the Recreation Commission \$5000 for the year. Cooper said they are still looking into the tennis court issue, Lavery is checking on the matter.

The Committee finished the cuts in various departments and line items to make the \$90,000. Marks said the Township has to micro manage in some ways and know where the monies are coming from and going.

There was discussion on consolidation of debt and proposed bonding schedule, but it is too premature to talk about this now.

NEW BUSINESS

de Boer said he had met with Wells Fargo and recommended them as the new Broker of Record for Washington Township. Kovacs made a motion to approve Resolution 2010-37A, Resolution regarding Liability Insurance Coverage/Change of Broker of Record (John Daly of Wells Fargo), Marks seconded.

ROLL CALL: Kovacs, yes; Marks, yes; Klingel, yes; Elbassiouny, abstain.

ADJOURN

There being nothing further to come before the Committee, Klingel made a motion to adjourn at 12:57 p.m., Marks seconded. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann O'Neil RMC/CMC/MMC  
Township Clerk