

TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY

Budget Meeting Minutes
February 11, 2012

The budget meeting of the Township Committee was held on this date at the Washington Township Municipal Building, 211 Route 31 North, Washington, N.J. The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m. by Mayor Michael Kovacs.

SUNSHINE LAW COMPLIANCE – The Mayor noted this meeting is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Law of 1975 in as much as a notice has been published in the Star-Gazette and transmitted to the Express-Times, posted at the Municipal Building and a copy is on file in the Clerk's 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
Finke, absent

STAFF PRESENT

Anna C. Godfrey, Township Clerk; Peter deBoer, Township Administrator/Certified Public Works Manager; Dave Evans and John Mooney, Municipal Auditors; Kevin McCarthy, Chief Financial Officer; Suzanne Heerwagen, Deputy Treasurer; James McDonald, Police Chief; Lieutenant Thomas Cicerelle, Jeff Cooper, Assistant Municipal Supervisor of Public Works; and Walter Godfrey, Recreation Commission Chairman

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

RESOLUTIONS

A motion was made by Marks, seconded by Klingel, to approve Resolution 12-26, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees (E. Parks).

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

A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Marks, to approve Resolution 12-27, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees (Crossing Guards). Mr. Elbassiouny asked if this is the new 52-week rate. Chief McDonald replied it is. He stated he met with the Crossing Guards and then with the Boro Manager and recapped the meetings for the Committee.

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

A motion was made by Elbassiouny, seconded by Klingel, to approve Resolution 12-28, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees (J. Teter).

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

Mayor Kovacs explained the transfer resolution will be used to cover 2011 bills that were submitted late. A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Elbassiouny, to approve Resolution 12-29, Transfer Resolution.

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

2012 BUDGET DISCUSSION

D. Evans discussed the Expenditure CAP and the Tax Levy CAP with the Committee. K. McCarthy stated he spoke with all department heads prior to this meeting and has already made numerous cuts within the departments. He explained the IT budget has been increased. The Committee discussed. D. Evans requested an itemized list of proposed IT expenses be provided to the Committee. In regards to Buildings and Grounds, Mayor Kovacs questioned the painting of the Autogiro Building and staining the Log Cabin. Mr. deBoer will look into grants available for these projects. Mr. Elbassiouny would like to see a breakdown of expenses for the Administration Building and the Police Department. The Committee discussed the benefits of this and Mayor Kovacs requested Mr. deBoer work with K. McCarthy and Chief McDonald to provide this listing. The Committee continued to discuss the various line items of the budget with K. McCarthy.

In regards to General Insurance, K. McCarthy stated the Township will be saving approximately \$47,000 with the new insurance company. The Committee discussed this line item. The Committee requested the insurance broker supply them with at least three quotes from other healthcare providers. Mrs. Marks questioned the Rescue Squad contribution. Mayor Kovacs explained.

K. McCarthy discussed the police expenses. Mr. deBoer explained how the fuel costs are separated between the DPW, Police, and Construction departments.

Chief McDonald and D. Evans discussed buying versus leasing the various police vehicles with the Committee as well as purchasing a device to let the vehicles run on battery rather than gasoline while on construction or accident sites where the car is idling for a long period of time. The Committee and Chief McDonald discussed the cell phones and air cards. The Committee discussed using the money from the sale of the old municipal building to pay down debt.

The budget discussion continued with the fuel used by both the Police and Road Departments. Mr. Klingel feels money should be allocated for unforeseen projects. Mr. Elbassiouny would like money allocated for a generator to be placed in the police budget. The budget discussion continued.

The Committee took a short recess and returned at 12:16 p.m. with all members present (Mr. Finke was absent).

K. McCarthy and D. Evans continued discussing the budget with the Committee. D. Evans will provide a six-page budget summary at the next meeting. The Committee and D. Evans discussed the tar & chip line item for road repairs. Mayor Kovacs suggested putting money into the capital improvement fund.

2012 SALARY DISCUSSION

Mayor Kovacs stated he would like to have a salary resolution available at the next meeting. K. McCarthy explained the 4% contractual obligations. Mayor Kovacs recommended the Committee's salary remain as is, a 3% increase for the full-time employees, a 4% increase for the Police Chief and a 2% increase for the part-time employees. Mr. Elbassiouny stated increases in the public sector have been frozen and doesn't feel this is the time to be giving raises to the part-time employees. Mayor Kovacs feels it is the fair thing to do. The Committee, K. McCarthy and Chief McDonald discussed. Mr. Klingel, Mrs. Marks and Mayor Kovacs agreed to the full-time employees all receiving a 3% increase. Mr. Elbassiouny agreed to 2% increases across the board. P. deBoer stated he spoke to the PBA and Teamsters representatives. As this is the last year of their contract, they would like it honored. The Committee continued the discussion and agreed to a 3% increase for the full-time employees, including the police secretaries, and no increase for the part-time employees. Increases would be retroactive to January 1st. Mr. deBoer will prepare a salary resolution for the next meeting and speak to the employees involved and ask if they would voluntarily accept a 3% increase rather than the 4% they are statutorily entitled to.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. deBoer stated he and K. McCarthy met with the Land Use Board to discuss the Escrow Management Coordinator position. K. McCarthy explained the problem they are having with the escrow accounts from past years and requests the Committee place Evan Howell in this position with a yearly stipend of \$2,750. Mr. deBoer stated the line item would still be below last year's dollar amount. Mrs. Marks stated the Land Use Board agreed to have this position created at their last meeting. The Land Use Board attorney is looking into responsibilities and how the money will be allocated. Going forward, all new escrow funds will be included in a report from the CFO to the Land Use Board in order to have better control. D. Evans and K. McCarthy discussed escrow accounts with the Committee as well as laws regarding abandoned properties. Mr. Elbassiouny recommends only researching the past five years. A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Marks, to approve Resolution 12-30, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees (E. Howell).

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

Per Mr. deBoer's request for Committee approval, a motion was made by Elbassiouny, seconded by Klingel, to authorize the Department of Public Works to remove the dais in the Parks & Recreation Building. Mr. deBoer noted all necessary permits have been obtained.

ROLL CALL: Elbassiouny, yes; Klingel, yes; Marks, abstained, Kovacs, yes

Mr. deBoer stated he is a Certified Recycling Professional. As only a few people in the County are certified, other towns have contacted him requesting he approve their Tonnage Grants. He drafted a shared services agreement that he would like to give to Attorney Lavery with the hopes of adopting it at the regular February meeting. Compensation would be given to the municipality, not to him. The Committee approved Mr. deBoer's request to allow Attorney Lavery to review this agreement.

Mrs. Marks stated she invited Dave Dempski, COAH Coordinator, to the February 21st meeting to discuss the COAH Trust Fund with the Committee. Mr. deBoer stated he will be preparing a resolution to reinstate former employee D. Edwards as an Administrative Assistant as she is the only person authorized to access the Trust Fund system.

Mr. Elbassiouny thanked K. McCarthy for his work and organization during the budget process.

ADJORNMENT

Hearing no further business to come before the Committee, a motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Elbassiouny, to adjourn the meeting at 1:00 p.m. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna C. Godfrey
Township Clerk