

TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY

Budget Meeting Minutes
March 3, 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 10:05 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

Finke, present; Klingel, present; Kovacs, present; Marks, present
Elbassiouny arrived at 10:30 a.m.

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; Evan Howell, Tax Collector, and Lydia Schmidt, Tax Assessor

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

RESOLUTIONS

Mayor Kovacs stated Resolution 12-43, Salary Resolution, will be held until after the budget is discussed.

Mr. Finke requested Resolution 12-41, A Resolution to Amend the Washington Township Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual to Include the Transitional Duty Policy and Guidelines for a Functional Capacity Evaluation, be held until the March 20th meeting. The Committee had no objections.

A motion was made by Finke, seconded by Marks, to approve Resolution 12-42, Resolution Authorizing the Execution of an Interlocal Agreement for Sharing Equipment and Personnel Between the Township of Washington and the Township of Mansfield in Warren County.

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

Mayor Kovacs requested L. Schmidt and E. Howell give a brief explanation in regards to Resolution 12-36, Resolution to Cancel 2011 Taxes, Block 28 Lot 5.08. E. Howell explained how there was an error with the assessed lot. L. Schmidt spoke to the Committee about the glitch in the computer program and suggested following through with the Correction of Error Statute. The Committee and E. Howell discussed the options with D. Evans.

Mr. Elbassiouny joined the meeting at this point. L. Schmidt recapped the situation for him. E. Howell will provide exact dollar amounts for the resolution by the March 20th meeting.

A motion was made by Finke, seconded by Klingel, to instruct L. Schmidt to file a Correction of Error Statute for Block 28, Lot 5.08 and to refund \$9,077.11 subject to lien redemption.

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

NEW BUSINESS

A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Marks, to approve Eileen Parks to attend "NJ Planning & Zoning Administration Program" classes on March 16, 23 & 30, April 20 & 27, and May 4, 2012; and to approve both Peter deBoer and Suzanne Heerwagen to attend "Preparing Recycling Tonnage Reports" classes on March 16 and 23, 2012.

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

The Committee discussed the Proposed 2012 Clean Communities Grant Budget Request. Mayor Kovacs stated the Committee is not prepared to take action at this time.

2012 BUDGET DISCUSSION

D. Evans provided the Committee with copies of the summarized budget form and discussed his recommendation of a \$0.02 tax increase which would equate to a modest monthly increase of \$4.23 per homeowner. He explained this would maintain stable local taxes for the next few years. Mr. Finke questioned the money from the sale of the old municipal building. D. Evans explained a portion is being used to eliminate old debt. Mr. Finke would like to use the remainder of the money so as to not raise the taxes. The Committee discussed. Mayor Kovacs discussed the proposed purchases of a generator and DPW truck. Mrs. Marks questioned a new truck. J. Cooper explained it is a 1987 dump truck that needs to be replaced. Mayor Elbassiouny felt the money from the municipal building should be used to pay down debt, not make purchases. Mr. Klingel would like to see a five year capital plan prepared. Mayor Kovacs stated K. McCarthy will work on this once the budget is completed. The Committee continued the discussion. D. Evans suggested adopting a bond ordinance in 2012 to purchase the generator and pay it off in 2013 without incurring any further debt to the Township. The discussion of these purchases will continue at a future meeting.

A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Kovacs, to introduce the budget on March 20th with a \$0.02 increase. D. Evans noted this is consistent with what the Committee did in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

ROLL CALL: Klingel, yes; Kovacs, yes; Elbassiouny, no; Finke, no, Marks, no – Motion failed

Mrs. Marks stated she was unclear on what information was included in the motion. Mayor Kovacs and D. Evans explained.

A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Marks, to introduce the budget on March 20th with a \$0.02 increase.

ROLL CALL: Klingel, yes; Marks, yes; Elbassiouny, no, Finke, no; Kovacs, yes

Mayor Kovacs explained the salary resolution, which includes a 4% increase for the two bargaining units, 4% increase for the Tax Collector, CFO and Clerk, 3% increase for the seven full-time employees and no increase for the part-time employees. Mr. deBoer read a letter from J. Rossi, Construction Official. J. Rossi wrote his employees have not received a pay increase in the past three years and he requested a 2% increase for them. He noted their salaries come from permit fees, not the Township budget. J. Rossi rescinds his name from the list of employees. Chief McDonald feels the department heads should have the same increase as those in the bargaining units. Mayor Kovacs stated the difference in giving the seven full-time employees 4% instead of 3% would be approximately \$4,000. Chief McDonald and Mr. Elbassiouny discussed. Mr. Finke would like to revise the salary resolution to only include contractual employees and revisit the remaining employees when the budget is finalized. K. McCarthy provided the Committee with the salary increase dollar amounts.

A motion was made by Marks, seconded by Klingel, to approve Resolution 12-43, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees – Police, each receiving a 4% increase.

ROLL CALL: Marks, yes; Klingel, yes; Elbassiouny, abstained; Finke, no, Kovacs, yes

A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Elbassiouny, to approve Resolution 12-44, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees – DPW, each receiving a 4% increase.

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

A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Kovacs, to approve Resolution 12-45, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees – Clerk, CFO & Tax Collector, each receiving a 4% increase. Mr. Finke questioned if the CFO should receive an increase as he hasn't been employed a full year. Mayor Kovacs and D. Evans replied yes since it is by statute. Mrs. Marks noted she was hopeful those required to receive 4% by statute would voluntarily take 3%. Mr. deBoer stated he spoke to those individuals and their reply was no.

ROLL CALL: Klingel, yes; Kovacs, yes; Elbassiouny, no; Finke, no; Marks, no – Motion failed

Mr. deBoer reminded the Committee that this is a State law and doesn't understand how the motion could fail. He discussed this with the Committee and D. Evans.

Mayor Kovacs requested another roll call on the motion. A roll call was taken to approve Resolution 12-45, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees – Clerk, CFO & Tax Collector, each receiving a 4% increase.

ROLL CALL: Klingel, yes; Marks, yes; Kovacs, yes; Elbassiouny, yes; Finke, no

Mayor Kovacs requested one resolution be prepared after this meeting which incorporates the resolutions approved today.

Mayor Kovacs requested a motion for the seven full-time employees to receive a 4% pay increase. Hearing none, a motion was made by Marks, seconded by Klingel, to approve Resolution 12-46, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees – 7 Full-Time Employees, each receiving a 3% increase.

ROLL CALL: Marks, yes; Klingel, yes; Elbassiouny, no; Finke, no; Kovacs, yes

A motion was made by Elbassiouny, seconded by Marks, to approve Resolution 12-47, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees – Code & Construction Employees, each receiving a 2% increase. Mr. Elbassiouny reminded the Committee he previously stated he would support a 2% increase, nothing more.

ROLL CALL: Elbassiouny, yes; Marks, yes; Finke, no; Klingel, yes; Kovacs, yes

Mr. Elbassiouny feels that although J. Rossi declined a pay increase for himself, he should be included. A motion was made by Elbassiouny, seconded by Klingel, to approve Resolution 12-48, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees – J. Rossi.

ROLL CALL: Elbassiouny, yes; Klingel, yes; Finke, no; Marks, yes; Kovacs, yes

A motion was made by Elbassiouny, seconded by Klingel, to approve Resolution 12-49, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees – Employees With No Change in Salary. This only includes the miscellaneous positions that have not changed.

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

PAYMENT OF BILLS

A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Marks, to approve the payment of the bills.

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

Mayor Kovacs requested the Clerk provide everyone with proper copies of what was discussed at this meeting. Mr. deBoer noted the Township Administrator position is not listed on any of the resolutions.

A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Elbassiouny, to approve Resolution 12-50, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees – P. deBoer, receiving a 4% increase on the Township Administrator portion of his salary.

ROLL CALL: Klingel, yes; Elbassiouny, no; Finke, no; Marks, abstained; Kovacs, yes – Motion failed

A motion was made by Elbassiouny, seconded by Finke, to approve a 2% increase for the Township Administrator portion of P. deBoer's salary. Mayor Kovacs reminded the Committee the Township has a contract for a 4% increase for P. deBoer.

ROLL CALL: Elbassiouny, yes; Finke, yes; Klingel, no; Marks, abstained, Kovacs, no – Motion failed

The Committee discussed. Mr. deBoer stated that although he has a five year contract which is valid until 2014, he requested a 3% pay increase.

A motion was made by Elbassiouny, seconded by Klingel, to approve Resolution 12-50, Resolution to Authorize and Approve Salaries and Wages for Certain Employees – P. deBoer, receiving a 4% increase on the Township Administrator portion of his salary.

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

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Mayor Kovacs opened the meeting to the public. Hearing no one, Mayor Kovacs closed the public portion of the meeting.

ADJORNMENT

Hearing no further business to come before the Committee, a motion was made by Marks, seconded by Klingel, to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 a.m. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna C. Godfrey
Township Clerk