

WESTAMPTON TOWNSHIP

7:00 PM CLOSED SESSION REGULAR MEETING 8:00 PM

APRIL 27, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 PM by Deputy Mayor Vince Robbins. Requirements of the Sunshine Law were read. This meeting was advertised in the Burlington County Times January 6, 2010. The flag was saluted and there was a moment of silence.

Roll Call:

Committeeman Adams	Present
Committeeman Daniels	Present
Committeeman Maybury	Present
Committeeman Robbins	Present
Mayor Camp	Absent

George Saponaro, Solicitor, was present.

Donna Ryan, Clerk/Administrator, and Marion Karp, Deputy Clerk were present.

Minutes of the April 13, 2010 meeting. Motion to accept by Mr. Adams, second by Mr. Daniels. All voted yes. Closed session minutes of April 13, 2010. Motion to accept by Mr. Maybury, second by Mr. Adams.

Comments on agenda items

Norm Miller – asked about the dedication of Ikea Drive. He asked if the roads would be turned over to the Township; Donna answered that they would be eventually. This is on the agenda for a reminder.

Gary Kritz – talked about the budget increase discussed at the last meeting. He asked for a fiscal report from the Committee on how they arrived at that number and what exactly was being paid for. Deputy Mayor Robbins told him that the budget is posted on the Township website along with the details on what is being spent. Donna explained that lack of revenue was a major problem this year for the budget – building permits were way down, hotel occupancy fees, etc. He wanted to know what was cut as far as Township expenses. The mandate from the State is that everyone should contribute to their healthcare; the proposed tax hike is a 21.8% increase. How is this fiscally responsible? He doesn't get it. Deputy Mayor Robbins answered that the Committee is not in agreement with this tax increase; they are split on the budget. He invited all Committee members to comment. Mr. Adams commented that there have to be more cuts and these cuts must be equal and even across the board. Mr. Daniels said while he doesn't disagree with his colleagues, he understands we are in extraordinary economic times. We have lost the ability to generate revenue that was always there and our surplus is gone. He values each employee we have in Westampton Township; this has been a tough decision. He had hoped that

everyone would be willing to bring something to the table in light of the tough economic times. His decision was made with the best interests of the citizens at this point in time.

Gary Kritz – he doesn't think the Committee is serving the public interest. He thinks the Police/Fire/EMT department should share equally in the cuts, not just the Public Works and Administrative employees. It is the fair thing to do to lay off and ask for contributions to health care, which would be more in the public interest than such a large tax increase. He thinks the taxpayers should have a chance to vote on the municipal budget. He thinks we will have a town of foreclosures. Shared sacrifice means shared sacrifice. The tax payers should not have to carry the burden if the employees are not willing to make concessions.

Mr. Maybury – we started out the budget with a 1.7 million dollar deficit. We are fortunate to have many ratables. The Committee has considered everything the public has suggested; they have not taken this lightly. There will be more layoffs in the future if the economy keeps on its current track.

Janet Curran – this is one of the toughest budgets in a long long time.

Deputy Mayor Robbins – this isn't something that has happened over night, it has built up over many years in NJ. He commends everyone on the hours they have put into this. Some feel more cuts can be made, some feel enough have been made. They need to get the budget passed.

Garfield Harper – it's not fair to pick on one group of employees in the Township, all employees should have to share in this. He got into an argument with the Mayor this week. He thinks that the chipping needs to be cleaned up; there is much of it lying around the Township. The Public Works department is working at the new sports complex instead of doing the chipping. There are people laid off that could be running the chipper. It's not fair to the tax payers.

Mr. Maybury- the decision to construct the sports complex is not one that he agreed with. It is adding to the budget crisis. The Committee voted to give back \$2500 of their \$3710 yearly stipend; he understands what he is saying.

Garfield Harper – hears different things about the contract negotiations with the police.

Mr. Maybury – they cannot comment on the negotiations because they are still underway.

Continued Agenda Items

Dolan Contractors – this is continued; there won't be anything new on this until June or July

Old Business

Rancocas Village traffic – still in the process working with the Public Works department on striping the crosswalks.

New Business

Police Report – there are five officers being honored under the ProCops program. The ceremony will take place on May 13th.

EMS Report – Fire Chief Wylie Johnson will be sitting down with FEMA for storm reimbursement. They will be sending out their first quarterly electronic newsletter. Deputy Mayor Robbins asked about the new billing company transition. It will take place on May 1st according to Wylie.

Municipal Court Report – should have a yearly report in May

Bureau of Fire Prevention Report

Public Works Report – Mike Meenan stated that the department is backed up. He knows there are a lot of concerns with chipping. Much of this has to do with the remnants of the last snowstorm. They are working on it, it is going slow but they are doing what they can.

Ordinances

5-2010 Cap Bank Ordinance – second reading. Motion to approve by Mr. Maybury; seconded by Mr. Adams. All voted yes. This was opened to the public for comment. Gary Kritz asked if this was included in the budget. Donna explained that this is a spending cap and it is done annually to maintain it if necessary. This does not impact the tax rate at all.

6-2010 Bond Ordinance – first reading. Motion to approve by Mr. Daniels; seconded by Mr. Maybury. Deputy Mayor Robbins asked if this money was previously committed; it has been and comes out of the Open Space fund and does not impact the budget. All voted yes.

Resolutions

56-10 Payment of Vouchers – motion to approve by Mr. Adams; seconded by Mr. Maybury. All voted yes, Deputy Mayor Robbins abstained. Deputy Mayor Robbins – there is a payment to the company he runs on the bill list, there for he will be abstaining from the vote.

57-10 Include Hogan & Chitester Farms in the Agriculture Development Area – motion to approve by Mr. Daniels; seconded by Mr. Adams. There will be no expenditure of funds at this time. If it approved by the County, we would have a 20% cost share which would come out of the open space fund. All voted yes.

58-10 Temporary Capital Budget – motion to approve by Mr. Adams; seconded by Mr. Maybury. All voted yes.

59-10 Executive Session – for discussion of personnel and legal matters. Motion to approve by Mr. Maybury; seconded by Mr. Adams. All voted yes.

60-10 E Ticket System Purchase – this will save us money; is a safer method than hand writing a ticket. Motion to approve by Mr. Daniels; seconded by Mr. Maybury. All voted yes.

Correspondence

NJ American Water – rate increase. We have fought these at times and sometimes not. It is not known what the percentage of the increase is at this time. The public hearing is usually held at our Municipal Building.

Dates to remember

May 1 – Ham Dinner in Rancocas 4-7 PM

May 11 – Public Hearing on the 2010 Budget

May 13, 2010 – Hilton Garden Inn grand opening celebration

May 30 – Memorial Day

Comments

Fire Chief Wylie Johnson – the documents are being worked on for the merger with neighboring EMS

Mr. Adams – the Deputy Mayor did a fine job tonight

Mr. Daniels – the Deputy Mayor did a nice job; the Mayor should know that in his absence he is adequately covered. The local School Board election was held on April 20th; the budgets for both Westampton schools and Rancocas Valley were defeated. 58% of the budgets voted on were below cap. They will be meeting with both school boards to discuss the defeated budgets.

Deputy Mayor Robbins – encourages everyone to attend the budget hearing on May 11th and to express their opinions; he encouraged them to call the Committee members and try to change their minds. Remain involved and please attend.

Public Comment

Gary Kritz – wants to address Mr. Daniels comments regarding the school budget. He is abhorred that if the school budget is defeated the Township Committee gets the final say. He wants them to keep the people in mind who voted no more taxes. He is not against education but is against additional taxes. Please keep in mind that the people spoke. Don't compound the mistake; they are tired of it and are being forced out of their homes. The schools have failed to do the fiscally responsible thing over the years which is to consolidate. Please respect that the people have spoken. Standardized test scores in Westampton are low; the answer is not to keep increasing the salaries.

Deputy Mayor Robbins – the budget will come before the Committee for review; if they present them with something they don't like, the school board can appeal the Committee's decision to the County Superintendent.

Garfield Harper – why do the schools need several principals, administrators, and a superintendent? It's ridiculous. Deputy Mayor Robbins invited him to attend a school board meeting to get the best bang for his buck since it is in that forum that he should be commenting about the schools.

Janet Curran – thanked all the Township employees; they always treat everyone with respect. Regarding animal control, we no longer have Wes Goodfellow. She had to call because she found a dog and found out that we have a shared service for animal control with Willingboro Township. When we are ready, we will issue an RFP and bid out the animal control services. We have a temporary contract at this time with Willingboro.

Joe Zaczek, 23 Kingswood Court – is relatively new in the Township. He is curious about the agreement being ironed out with our EMS department. It was explained to him that since the negotiations are still underway, it cannot be revealed. He wants to know what the responsibility is of the paid EMS employees while they are working. He knows what the mutual aid arrangement is. He wants to know if we get a call in another town do we send our paid people or do we send our volunteers. He is worried about our career staff leaving our town on other calls. It makes sense to him to have the volunteers go on the mutual aid calls and have the paid staff stay in the Township where their salaries are being paid.

Dave Walker – is a Township Public Works employee. He wants to know if it is true that a part time employee is being hired in the Police Department. Donna explained that it is true, and the employee is a temporary replacement for someone who is out. He saw our trash haulers out this weekend picking up chipping. He wanted to know where we are getting the money to pay for this as well as for the new employee. Donna answered that we got a special rate on the wood collection and that we did this to help out the Public Works employees. He asked if chipping and leaf collection were being eliminated from Township services. Donna answered that they absolutely are not.

Robert (last name unknown), 11 Berkshire Lane - asked about policies in the EMS department. Solicitor George Saponaro stated that they could not answer this at this time. Mr. Patrick explained that had to call 911 last Thursday for his wife who was unconscious; he expected a fast, professional response but did not get that. It took 7 or 8 minutes for them to get to his house when it should have taken 3 minutes. This was not the place to direct complaints; this should be directed to the administrator and not in a public forum.

There were no further comments and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marion Karp, Deputy Clerk

