

The February 9, 2005 Special Meeting of the West Milford Township Council was called to order at 7:07 p.m. by Councilman Joseph Elcavage, chosen by the Township Council to Chair the meeting in the absence of Mayor Joseph DiDonato and Council President William Gervens.

Councilman Joseph Elcavage advised that in accordance with Chapter 231, Public Laws of 1975 of New Jersey, adequate advance notice of this Workshop meeting was advertised in the Herald News in its issue of January 31, 2005; copies were provided to the Suburban Trends, The Record, the Star Ledger, and Greenwood Lake News and posted continuously on the bulletin board in the main corridor of the Town Hall and on file in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Roll Call

Present: Councilmembers Joseph Elcavage, Robert Nolan, James Warden, Carmen Scangarello and Paul Bailey.

Absent: Council President William Gervens and Mayor Joseph DiDonato.

Also Present: Township Administrator Richard Kunze, Township Treasurer Arthur Magnotti, Tonya Cubby from the Office of the Township Clerk, Tax Collector Cindy Mooney, Tax Clerk Rita DeNivo, Deputy Tax Assessor Gale Barth, Health Officer Kenneth Hawkswell, Recreation Director Renee' Palermo, and Library Director Barbara Cordaro.

Purpose

Review of the proposed 2005 Municipal Budget.

Formal action may be taken at this meeting.

Review of 2005 Municipal Budget

Treasurer

Township Chief Financial Officer Arthur Magnotti reviewed the Treasurer's portion of the 2005 Budget. When questioned about the budget format that the Township uses, he replied that it is a standardized budget format employed by all New Jersey municipalities.

Tax Collector

Tax Collector Cindy Mooney reviewed her department's budget requests for 2005. Items discussed were:

- Centralization of office supplies
- Certification for 4 staff members in Tax Collection department
 - Advertisement fees
- Fees for Services to update tax programs
- Scanning tax files to digital or microfilm format by volunteers
- Tax collection via credit card - 1 1/2% fee to Township
- Increase of collection rate
- Upgrade of computer equipment

Tax Assessor

Deputy Tax Assessor Gale Barth reviewed the Township Assessor's 2005 Budget requests with the Township Council. Items discussed included:

- Farmland Assessments
- Use of GIS technology
- New construction
- Highlands Legislation - anticipated impact on Township

Health

Health Officer Ken Hawkswell discussed the Health Department's 2005 Budget requests. Issues covered included the following:

- Health Department income from clinic reimbursements
- Marriage Certificate copy charges
- Electronic filing of medical supplies claims - to be researched
 - Housing Standards Board overview
- Environmental division review - septic and well inspections
- Stormwater regulations
- Belchers Creek water testing

Councilman Warden questioned the \$100,000.00 increase in the Health Department salaries between 2002 and 2004. Mr. Hawkswell replied that the Health Inspectors had each advanced 3 steps, increasing their salaries substantially. A discussion about Desk Audits followed. Mr. Hawkswell noted that the Inspectors had appealed to the former Manager and were successful in

getting increases. Councilman Elcavage asked for a written explanation on how this occurred and why the budget increased \$100,000.00.

The Township Council and Mr. Hawkswell continued to discuss the Health Department 2005 Budget, including:

Pompton Lakes Agreement for Health Services
Animal Control and West Milford Animal Shelter agreement
Dog and Cat census anticipated - required by the State of New Jersey every [4] years
Fee for Services - Animal Shelter Society

Parks & Recreation

Recreation Director Renee' Palermo addressed the Council regarding the Recreation Department's 2005 Budget by beginning with a review of various programs within the Recreation Department.

Councilman Nolan inquired why the revenues received by the Recreation Department for programs aren't reflected in the Recreation portion of the budget. Chief Financial Officer Art Magnotti replied that revenues are in the General Services portion of the budget under Anticipated Revenue.

Councilman Nolan inquired about the 26% increase in Recreation Department salaries, from \$117,000. to \$148,000.00. Renee' Palermo explained that additional programs resulted in an increase in salaries and wages for staff to run the programs.

Renee' Palermo requested an increase in the Bubbling Springs budget, adding more staff. She mentioned an increase in fees for Bubbling Springs to offset increase in salaries. Councilman Nolan was reluctant to increase fees for Bubbling Springs.

Other items regarding Parks and Recreation that were reviewed by the Township Council were:
Computer training for staff
Hillcrest maintenance
Parks maintenance increase, including adding leaf removal service at Town Hall, Library, Museum

Councilmen Nolan and Warden questioned salary increases in the Park's Division.

Councilman Elcavage requested information in Council packets on Recreation's numerous salary increases.

Additional items discussed were as follows:
Senior Services
Veteran Services
Welfare

Councilman Elcavage, as Councilmember of the Local Assistance Board, discussed the Welfare budget. Councilman Nolan questioned the \$7,000.00 salary.

Renee' Palermo discussed an increase of \$35,000.00 in Celebration/Events portion of the budget due to anticipated special events in 2005 including \$7,500.00 for a Fireworks display at Jungle Habitat, Concert at Jungle Habitat, Gazebo Concert Series at Bubbling Springs. Revenue for each event would be placed into a trust account to be used each year for special events. Councilman Scangarello, Councilmember of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee reviewed the anticipated 2005 events with the Council.

Renee' Palermo gave an overview of the Transportation Department. She noted that there are no transportation for youth programs at this time, but a recommendation for additional service are forthcoming as a result of the research done by the Transportation Advisory Committee.

At the conclusion of the Recreation Department budget review, Councilman Nolan requested a summary of salaries in the Recreation Department budget. He inquired whether Renee Palermo, Arthur Magnotti, and the auditor were comfortable with the accounting procedures that were in place regarding Parks and Recreation receipts. Arthur Magnotti replied that they were comfortable with the procedures in place.

Councilman Elcavage requested a summary of all the grants received, and whether matching funds were applied.

Councilman Bailey requested a summary of all the Recreation revenue versus expenses.

Councilman Elcavage announced a short recess at 8:40 p.m.

