
TOWNSHIP OF WEST MILFORD, COUNTY OF PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY

Minutes of: Township Council Special Meeting
Date of Meeting: February 24, 2007
Time of Meeting: 9:00 A.M.
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Mayor Joseph Di Donato called the Special Meeting of the West Milford Township Council to order.

Adequate Notice Statement

Mayor Di Donato read the following statement:

Please note that in accordance with Chapter 231, Public Laws of 1975 of New Jersey, adequate advance notice of this special meeting was advertised in the Herald News in its issue of February 9, 2007 and February 14, 2007; copies were provided to the Record, Star Ledger, Suburban Trends 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.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Di Donato led all in attendance in a salute to the flag.

Roll Call

Present: Councilmembers Philip Weisbecker (arrived @ 9:06 a.m.), Joseph Smolinski, Robert Nolan, Carmelo Scangarello, Mayor Joseph DiDonato
Absent: Salvatore Schimmenti, James Warden.
Also Present: Township Administrator Richard Kunze, Township Clerk Antoinette Battaglia, Township Chief Financial Officer Arthur Magnotti,

Budget Overview

Administrator Kunze noted that he rescheduled the planning and building departments to March 1st because there were conflicts. Therefore, the Council will review recreation, planning, building, health and library budgets on Thursday evening.

The Township Engineer, Richard McFadden, and the Recycling Coordinator, Bill Schug addressed the Council. Mr. McFadden advised that the DPW Superintendent, Gerry Storms, couldn't attend today because his mother recently passed away.

Recycling and Solid Waste - Mr. McFadden reminded the Council that the recycling and solid waste programs have been contracted out over the past few years. Curbside recycling is now handled completely and directly by a contractor. Because of a retirement last year and a deficit of available personnel in the streets & roads division, one person is dedicated to recycling on a part-time basis. He reviewed the recycling budget noting that the proposed \$16,000 for machinery & equipment is primarily due to the tub grinder. It is anticipated that revenue to offset this will be generated because of recent fee increases. The fee increases will be imposed on commercial users and it has to be seen if the increased fees will result in reduced traffic. There is a significant increase in refuse collection which is based on the contract. The current contract will expire on July 31, 2009. In response to Councilman Nolan's question about items charged to "fees for service" Mr. Schug advised that this line item is used for electronics recycling, tire recycling, waste oil, and miscellaneous items. Miscellaneous fees cover fees for mandatory state compost fees and subscriptions. Mr. McFadden stated that tipping fees are expected to increase in the coming year. The Township pays actual disposal costs. He noted that there was a significant increase in bottle & can recycling in 2006 but paper recycling decreased. Discussion ensued on this topic. Mr. Schug advised that the Township reports all recycling to the state every year and applies for grant funding. The clean communities grants are used for education. The Council thanked Mr. Schug for attending today's meeting.

Councilman Weisbecker arrived at the meeting. He advised that he encountered snowdrifts in Upper Greenwood Lake that made some roads impassable.

Engineering - Mr. McFadden advised that, overall, there is a 3% decrease in the engineering budget. Councilman Nolan noted that there is a significant increase proposed for overtime. Mr. McFadden stated that he has repeatedly requested additional personnel to no avail. The workload for engineering has increased especially since stormwater management while staff has been reduced. To complete the work he has requested that his staff devote some time for overtime work.

Streets and Roads - Mr. McFadden stated that he had requested an additional five full-time positions and summer help in the streets and roads division. The Administrator has reduced the request to two persons. In the past five years, five positions have been eliminated through attrition. Last year this division paved seven miles of road. This division is at a point where, even if they were fully funded, staff shortages may impact their ability to pave ten miles of road. A survey conducted two years ago indicated that municipalities employ, on average, 1.79 employees per mile of road paved. West Milford has 0.138 employees per mile of road paved. With the staffing shortages and the increased stormwater regulations, this division is having difficulty ensuring conformance with state regulations without impacting other services. There are at least two-dozen outstanding projects in addition to the constantly rotating repair list. Without manpower, DPW, in his estimation, cannot be as responsive as he believes they should be. He stated that two fulltime hires in addition to additional seasonal help would be of great assistance. Mr. McFadden stated that inlet repairs are being done on Saturdays. He will be recommending some personnel moves which will reduce acting-duty pay mainly related to

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heavy equipment operators. Mr. McFadden noted that there is a proposed \$1,000 increase in the safety equipment line. This is primarily for traffic cones and barricades as well as safety equipment. All street signs must be redone to have the lettering changed from 4" to 6". The appropriation for this work will be annual until all the signs have been updated. The Township spent more on stone and asphalt than was appropriated last year because the mild winter allowed the road department to work longer than usual. He reviewed the other line items in this budget noting that there is an increased appropriation for school employees because of more training requirements from OSHA.

Public Properties/Buildings & Grounds – the proposed budget reflects an increased appropriation for the Johner building primarily for maintenance items. In response to Councilman Nolan's question about overtime expenditures, Mr. Kunze advised that there are often callouts at night. Many items in the building are becoming quite aged and must be replaced. The fees for service line item covers carpet cleaning, alarm services, drinking water, pumping septic systems, equipment rentals and HVAC consultants. The appropriation for the Wallisch property is decreasing because mowing will be handled through the recreation department.

Snow Removal - Mr. McFadden advised that most funding remains level in 2007. Because 2006 was mild, actual expenditures for snow removal were below the appropriated amounts. Discussion ensued about the snow removal trust account. Mr. Kunze and Mr. McFadden agreed that they will make a recommendation to Council later this year to have funds transferred to this reserve. Mr. Kunze explained that the budgeting for snow removal is based on averages rather than worse case scenarios. Therefore, the trust account is necessary.

Vehicle Maintenance – Mr. McFadden stated that police vehicles not replaced last year will require additional maintenance this year. There is a requested appropriation of \$31,000 for police car parts and \$10,000 for tires for police vehicles. The new police vehicles require larger tires. Because the fire departments are paying for parts for their vehicle repairs while the Township provides the labor, the requested appropriation has been reduced by \$5,000 this year. The DPW vehicles and equipment line item has been increased because the fleet is aging.

The Council thanked Mr. McFadden for meeting with them today.

Administrator Kunze noted that the Governor recently held his budget address. While the Township has not received any official overview, it is anticipated that there will be a 2% increase in aid. It appears that extraordinary aid is being cut; shared services programs will receive more funding. Mr. Kunze expects an analysis from the NJLM next week and will update Council.

Public Comments

Mayor Di Donato opened the meeting to the public. There was no public in attendance.

Councilman Scangarello made a motion to close the public portion of the meeting.

Moved: Scangarello Seconded: Weisbecker
Voted Aye: Weisbecker, Smolinski, Nolan, Scangarello.
Voted Nay: None.
Motion carried.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Council, the Township Council adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Moved: Weisbecker Seconded: Scangarello
Voted Aye: Weisbecker, Smolinski, Nolan, Scangarello.
Voted Nay: None.
Motion carried.

Approved: March 28, 2007

MAYOR JOSEPH DIDONATO
PRESIDING OFFICER

ANTOINETTE BATTAGLIA
TOWNSHIP CLERK