

JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

February 6, 2013

Municipal Building, Council Chambers

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Roll Call

Present

Mr. Dunham
Mrs. Merz
Mr. Birmingham
Vice President Sanchelli
President Yocum
Township Attorney, Lawrence Cohen
Lori Harvin, Township Clerk

Absent

Arrived 7:00 p.m.

Mrs. Harvin said, "Let the record show that Administrator James Leach and CFO William Eagen are present. Mayor Felter will be present later this evening.

Notice of Presiding Officer

President Yocum said, "This Budget/Regular Council meeting for February 6, 2013, commencing at 6:00 p.m. has been properly noticed in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by notice to the official newspapers of the Township on January 31, 2013."

Budget Meeting

2013 Municipal Budget Overview

Administrator Leach and Chief Financial Officer William Eagen came forward. Leach said that the Budget is currently at a 3.5 percent increase and the Administration is working on bringing that down. Leach detailed some of the larger increases, including: Police S&W; health insurance increases; liability insurance up \$43,000; Road S&W; pension contribution for Police up \$106,000. Leach said there is \$80,000 budgeted for the Sandy emergency but there will be a revenue from FEMA. Eagen said that the State is allowing the FEMA money to be anticipated as a revenue. The Emergency that was passed was for \$400,000, a 5 year Special Emergency, \$80,000 each year. Leach said the good news is that Administration salaries and wages are down \$31,000; Finance down \$48,000; through attrition. The Library contribution is down \$55,000 because of the decrease in ratables. The increase at this point is \$710,000 or 3.5 percent.

Yocum asked if the Budget Committee has any information to add. Dunham asked about the 40 percent increase in unemployment insurance. Eagen said it was underfunded last year. Dunham asked about the 10 percent in Division of Assessment/Salaries and Wages. Leach said a part time clerk was placed in the department. Dunham asked about the Division of Parks and the 14 percent increase in salaries. Eagen said it is the seasonal and part-timers. Dunham asked about LOSAP. Leach said that is the Length of Service Award Program for the volunteer firemen and rescue squad people. Eagen said that Program had an Audit Comment with the Auditor requiring an increase in the line item. Eagen explained that LOSAP is a line budgeting item and the LOSAP for 2012 had to be budget last year, however, the numbers do not come in until March/April of 2013. Eagen said the money that is budgeted now will not be known until next March. Birmingham asked when the money is drawn out. Eagen said it takes five years to be vested; mandatory withdrawals are taken at a certain age. Eagen said some members have resigned in order to take their money out. A rule was implemented that resigning members must remain off the squad for 30 days before the vesting process begins again. Leach said the 30 day rule was taken from Civil Service rules.

Merz commented that the Budget subcommittee is trying to look at the difference between last year's budget and this year's budget numbers and not percentages to try and see where there are areas to cut back. Merz said that as the subcommittee is meeting with the Administration and the Departments, there is discussion about prioritizing and what can be cut. Yocum said that the Department is given the overall number and is asked to go back and make the decision. Leach said that the Administration welcomes any questions and if any other Council people would like to

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come in and sit down with him and Eagen or review drainage projects or DPW equipment, their schedule will be accommodated.

Eagen said the State revises the Statutory Budget dates each year. The Municipal Introduction has been pushed back from February 10 to March 15 and the Adoption from March 20 to April 26.

Sanchelli commented that 2 phases of the Tax Reassessment have been completed over the past 2 years. Is there a timeframe for completion of this project. Leach said the money budgeted this year is to pay for the Compliance Plan that was done last year. Leach explained the basis for the reassessment plan. Leach said that by implementing the reassessment plan, the tax assessment equalization rate will remain at 100 percent. This plan also saved the cost of a Revaluation. Yocum said he feels Hopkins should come in for a 20 minute presentation. Yocum said that the money in the Budget for the Tax Reassessment serves two purposes; one is to avoid the \$600,000 Revaluation process and the other is to keep the Township's assessments very close to 100 percent.

Leach said there are several drainage projects that are being prioritized over the next few years along with the ongoing issue of paving roads. Leach said the Abenacki Water System must be completed. Leach said there are also trucks that must be purchased. Yocum said instead of looking at this as a 12 month project, it can be looked at as an 18 month project with partial funding out of next year's budget.

Leach informed the Council that Robert Cutter will be working on a Road Inspection project. This project will entail the inspection of the roads; pictures; condition; estimation of time for repaving; consultation with the engineer and road foremen and supervisors; drainage issues; categorization of the road and prioritization of the roads. Leach said that six months from now, the Engineer and Council should have a document that will contain all this information about any road in town.

Capital Overview

Police Vehicle Replacement Plan

Yocum asked the Council if there are any questions after the review of the Police Vehicle Replacement Plan. Yocum asked how many people were on the study committee. Castimore said there were 3 people on the Committee. Yocum thanked Castimore for all the detailed information on the decision that was made on the recommendation for the replacement vehicles. Merz said there was a change from what the Committee recommended to what the Chief presented and very good substantiation. Sanchelli commented that there was very good background information. Dunham and Birmingham were in agreement. Sergeant Castimore presented the findings of the report to the Council on a vehicle fleet purchase schedule which would include the purchase of 4 new police vehicles in 2013. The report included a memo from Chief Craig and recommendations from the Police Vehicle Selection Committee. Based upon the request and recommendations, the Council made the following authorization to be completed at a subsequent Council meeting with the appropriate Resolutions.

Motion: Authorize Purchase of 4 Police Vehicles:

2 – Chevy Tahoe @ \$28,400 each

2 – Ford Police Interceptor SUV AWD @ \$28,300 each

Including \$7,000 per vehicle for refitting – totaling \$28,000

Motion: Yocum, second Merz

Mr. Dunham	Aye
Mrs. Merz	Aye
Mr. Birmingham	Aye
Vice President Sanchelli	Aye
President Yocum	Aye

Recess

The Council adjourned for Recess at 6:55 p.m. and reconvened into the Regular

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meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Regular Meeting

Appointment of Firefighters to Fire Company No. 1:

Regina J. Cabrera, Andrew J. Bavosa and Todd M. Evans

President Yocum asked the new Firefighters to come forward along with Chief VanVeen. Mayor Felter administered the Oath of Office to Regina J. Cabrera, Andrew J. Bavosa and Todd M. Evans. President Yocum presented each new member with a Certificate of Appreciation and a Township pin and pen.

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

- **January 2, 2013 Reorganization/Regular All Members Present**

Motion: Dunham, second Birmingham

Mr. Dunham	Aye
Mrs. Merz	Aye
Mr. Birmingham	Aye
Vice President Sanchelli	Aye
President Yocum	Aye

Report to Council – Library Board of Trustees

(12-A)

Michael Stewart, Library Board of Trustees President, came forward and presented a report to the Council. Stewart introduced members of the Library Board: Christine Williams, Frank Bagnatti, Anne Augustyn. Stewart said that he believes the Library continues to grow because people understand all of the good things that go on at the Library. Stewart briefly reviewed current capital projects including: the generator; fire suppression system; façade work; air handler system.

Seth Stephens, Library Director, answered questions from the Council. Sanchelli asked about the fire suppression system and Stephens said that research is being done on the best system to use. Yocum suggested asking the Township Fire Official to look at the issue and Stephens said the Township Officials have been consulted. Stewart said the Library Board tries to use the Township Officials as a resource on every major project. Merz commented on the restroom renovations and Stephens said that project will be completed with the painting which will be done over Presidents' Day weekend. Merz complimented Stephens on the Violet's Porch Newsletter and all the information it contains. Birmingham said he appreciates the e-books and all the shows/lectures that the Library brings to the Community.

Yocum thanked Stephens and the members of the Library Board. Stephens said it is good to have Council liaisons who are involved and who attend the meetings.

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

January 16, 2013 Regular Vice President Sanchelli Absent

Motion: Merz, second Dunham

Mr. Dunham	Aye
Mrs. Merz	Aye
Mr. Birmingham	Aye
Vice President Sanchelli	Not Voting
President Yocum	Aye

Council Reports

Birmingham said that a few years ago the Council began discussing the loss of tax revenue from the watershed properties and also from the Verizon Personal Property Tax. Birmingham said the League of Municipalities is working on this issue. Birmingham said that Verizon still has all the poles and equipment in town. The equipment is rented to cable providers and to other companies that need the landline usage. There is a Senate and Assembly bill to clarify the language, whereby if usage drops below 51 percent of land use, Verizon does not have to pay any tax even though

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the town has to maintain the easements and properties. Birmingham asked for a Resolution to be placed on the next agenda to move Assembly Bill 3393 and Senate Bill 2324.

Dunham reported that he attended the January Library Board meeting as liaison, he attended the two fire company and one rescue squad installation dinners of officers, he attended the start of the Budget Sub-Committee meetings and toured a few streets by Lake Hopatcong with the Administrator on Monday.

Sanchelli had no report this evening. Sanchelli thanked everyone for the support after the passing of his mother.

Merz said she would like to thank the Administration for the on-site tour of the DPW and all of the equipment as part of the Budget Sub-Committee for the Budget along with the tour of the projects that are being proposed. Merz reported that the Police Chief was asked to sit on one of the Task Forces for Guns and Violence. Merz commented that the Task Force represents the State and includes State Police and Superintendents and quite a lot of other Boards and Authorities and is quite an honor.

MOTION: Cancel February 13, 2013 Budget Meeting and Schedule March 13, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. Budget Meeting

Motion: Dunham, second Birmingham

Mr. Dunham	Aye
Mrs. Merz	Aye
Mr. Birmingham	Aye
Vice President Sanchelli	Aye
President Yocum	Aye

Administrative Reports of Mayor and Administrator

Felter commented that the Council has received the 2013 Budget and it is a work in progress. Felter said he looks forward to working with the Council.

Felter said the new traffic pattern is in place on Weldon Road Bridge. The State has been asked to put signs signaling, "stop signs ahead". Felter said the Honeywell system will be used to notify people of changes in the configuration.

Leach reported that he has been in email contact this week with DPW Director/Township Engineer, Col. Jeff Elam. His tour in Afghanistan is just about over and he is in the process of being returned to the United States. Elam will be taking a vacation prior to returning to work on April 1. He will be back in the Township email system and will be in contact with Ed Haack and Patty Romano so he is up-to-date on everything.

Miscellaneous/Public Portion

Yocum opened the meeting up for questions and comments.

Anne Augustyn of 41 Paderewski Road came forward with a question about Item No. 4 under the Consent Agenda, Resolution Opposing Senate Bill 2511, Amendments to Open Public Meetings Act. Augustyn was provided with a copy of the Resolution.

Thomas Flinn, Esq. came forward along with Tim Clancy and Karen Urban of 181 South New Jersey Avenue. Flinn said that the last time he was here, he advised the Council about his clients' complaints regarding 2 neighboring properties. Flinn said he submitted at least 2 lengthy e-mails to Mr. Leach regarding the problems and he feels the responses to date are not satisfactory. Flinn said he was told he would be provided with a copy of the same report that the Council receives from the Administration. He was told that he will not receive a copy until after it is presented to the Council. Flinn said that his clients' frustration continues.

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Yocum said that he has talked to the Administration this evening and it would be very valuable to set up a meeting with everyone in attendance, including: Mr. Clancy, the neighbors on the street, Mr. Flinn, Mr. Leach and Department Heads within the Administration that have been involved in this situation. Yocum asked that the meeting be set up in the near future, within 10 days. Felter said he would like to attend the meeting also.

Tim Clancy, 181 New Jersey Avenue came forward and displayed photographs of the property at 175 New Jersey Avenue. Clancy said there are dozens of televisions, air conditioners delivered and dumped on the property. Clancy said the fuel is being improperly handled on the property. Clancy said that all he wants is Township ordinances and State laws to be enforced.

Yocum said this is why he would like the meeting set up so everyone is in the same room to address the issues.

Thomas Miller of 175A South New Jersey Avenue came forward and said he knows the landlord. Miller detailed the problems he has had with the tenants from the property.

Karen Miller of 175A South New Jersey Avenue said she was told by Mr. Gunneson to just keep calling the Police when there is a problem. Miller said that is not the answer because nothing gets resolved. Miller said that she keeps her children in the house to avoid the situation outside on the property. Miller said it is not legal to be running a salvage yard in a residential area.

Yocum said the meeting should be held, a determination can be made of what is happening on the property that is illegal and then a summons can be issued. If a summons is issued then these people will end up in Court and then a Court Order could be drawn up to end the illegal activity on the property. Yocum said that is why he would like this meeting to take place within the next two weeks. Everything may not be resolved, however, there are some things that can be addressed.

Karen Urban of 181 New Jersey Avenue came forward and said the landlord who is renting these properties should be at this meeting. Felter suggested holding an initial meeting with Mr. Clancy, Ms. Urban, the Millers, Mr. Flinn and the members of the Administration and Department Heads. After that, another meeting will be held with everyone and Mr. Gunneson. Yocum said that is a good recommendation and suggested they move forward.

Yocum left the meeting at 8:08 p.m.

Michael Stewart of 33 West Shawnee Trail came forward and asked that the Council consider a Resolution similar to the one that was passed in Charlottesville, VA, banning drones from flying over their town. Vice President Sanchelli asked Harvin to obtain a copy of the Resolution for consideration.

Sanchelli closed the public portion of the meeting.

Resolutions

Resolution #13-9: Approval of Bills

(14-A)

Motion: Merz, second Dunham

Mr. Dunham	Aye
Mrs. Merz	Aye
Mr. Birmingham	Aye
Vice President Sanchelli	Aye
President Yocum	Absent

Motion: Approve PO 12-04143 - \$220.34
PO 12-04198 - \$9.99

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PO 12-04226 - \$127.93

Motion: Merz, second Birmingham

Mr. Dunham	Not Voting
Mrs. Merz	Aye
Mr. Birmingham	Aye
Vice President Sanchelli	Aye
President Yocum	Absent

Resolution #13-10: Authorize Passage of Consent Agenda (15-A)

Motion: Birmingham, second Dunham

Mr. Dunham	Aye
Mrs. Merz	Aye
Mr. Birmingham	Aye
Vice President Sanchelli	Aye
President Yocum	Aye

Resolution #13-11: Authorize Execution of Agreement to Participate as (15-B)

A Member of the Watershed Coalition Seeking Tax Equity for the Newark Watershed Property

Motion: Dunham, second Birmingham

Mr. Dunham	Aye
Mrs. Merz	Aye
Mr. Birmingham	Aye
Vice President Sanchelli	Aye
President Yocum	Absent

Miscellaneous/Public Portion

Sanchelli opened the meeting up to the public for questions or comments.

Anne Augustyn came forward and asked what the Amendments to the Open Public Meetings Act were supposed to remedy. Merz said the Open Public Meetings Act exists now and this Bill proposed amendments to that Act. The Council agreed that the Amendments were cumbersome.

Dunham commented that he had the opportunity to visit the properties that were discussed this evening with the Township Administrator on Monday. At that time, what he observed on Monday at 12:30 p.m., did not bear any resemblance to the photos that were displayed tonight.

Adjournment at 8:15 p.m.

Motion: Merz, second Dunham

Mr. Dunham	Aye
Mrs. Merz	Aye
Mr. Birmingham	Aye
Vice President Sanchelli	Aye
President Yocum	Absent

Dated: February 6, 2013

Attested:

Approved:

Lori Harvin, Township Clerk

Richard W. Yocum, Council President