

BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
WASHINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
BUDGET MEETING MINUTES
June 11, 2008

The Special Meeting of the Borough Council of Washington, Warren County, New Jersey was held in Council Chambers located at the Borough Hall at 7:30 P.M.

Roll Call: Higgins, Van Deursen, Woykowski, Turner, Oakley - Present
Housel, Cioni - Absent

Also Present: John Corica, Borough Manager
Kristine D. Blanchard RMC, Borough Clerk

Mayor Van Deursen read the following Statement into the Record:

“The requirements of the ‘Open Public Meetings Law 1975, Chapter 231 have been satisfied in that adequate notice of this meeting has been published in the Star Gazette and posted on the Bulletin Board of Borough Hall stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting as required by law.

Andrew Holt – Parking Lot Presentation

Mr. Holt reviewed with Council the original plans for the municipal parking lot. He stated they found the original designs not functional. His firm had concerns regarding the narrow entrance, the circulation pattern, and the dumpster enclosure.

Mr. Holt stated in their concept plans they tried to address the circulation deficiencies, and addressed pedestrian access. In Mr. Holts first parking lot design labeled “C” the parking lot will have a total of 108 spaces. This design is based on the inclusion of Modern Valet. These designs also include curbing, trees, and some grass which will tie the parking lot into the theme of the downtown.

The second design consists of 148 spaces this also includes the Modern Valet property and the Antique Center lot. Mr. Holt stated by including the Antique Center lot it creates another isle of parking and creates a better circulation plan.

Councilman Turner noted that angular parking would help traffic flow within the parking lot. Mayor Van Deursen asked how many parking stickers Mr. Van Cleef has. Councilman Turner stated he received 96 stickers. Councilman Turner asked what the handicapped parking obligation will be in this scenario. Mr. Holt stated it would probably be around 3.

Mayor Van Deursen asked how these parking lot designs fit in with the BID project. Mr. Holt stated that the he designed the entire parking lot to easily be phased in with the BID project.

The third design includes a center boulevard that consumes all of the Antique Center lot. This gives the entire parking lot 143 spaces.

Councilman Higgins asked for the cost estimate on the three parking lot designs. Mr. Holt stated that he does not have that information yet.

Council agreed to proceed with the design that will relate to future acquisitions. Councilman Turner noted that the parking lot will need to be able to expand simply.

At this time a motion was made by Higgins, seconded by Woykowski to enter Executive Session to discuss property acquisition.

Roll Call: Higgins, Woykowski, Turner, Oakley, Van Deursen – Yes

Ayes: 5, Nays: 0

Motion Carried

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act; *N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.*, declares it to be the public policy of the State to insure the right of citizens to have adequate advance notice of and the right to attend meetings of public bodies at which business affecting the public is discussed or acted upon; and

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act also recognizes exceptions to the right of the public to attend portions of such meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council find it necessary to conduct an executive session closed to the public as permitted by the *N.J.S.A. 40:4-12*; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council will reconvene in public session at the conclusion of the executive session;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that they will conduct an executive session to discuss the following topic(s) as permitted by *N.J.S.A. 40:4-12*:

_____A matter which Federal Law, State Statute or Rule of Court requires be kept confidential or excluded from discussion in public (Provision relied upon: _____);

_____A matter where the release of information would impair a right to receive funds from the federal government;

_____A matter whose disclosure would constitute an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy;

_____A collective bargaining agreement, or the terms and conditions thereof (Specify contract: _____);

A matter involving the purpose, lease or acquisition of real property with public funds, the setting of bank rates or investment of public funds where it could adversely affect the public interest if discussion of such matters were disclosed;

Tactics and techniques utilized in protecting the safety and property of the public provided that their disclosure could impair such protection;

Investigations of violations or possible violations of the law;

Pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation in which the public body is or may become a party; (The general nature of the litigation or contract negotiations is: OR _____ the public disclosure of such information at this time would have a potentially negative impact on the municipality's position in the litigation or negotiation; therefore this information will be withheld until such time as the matter is concluded or the potential for negative impact no longer exists.)

Matters falling within the attorney-client privilege, to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise his or her ethical duties as a lawyer; (The general nature of the matter is: _____

OR _____ the public disclosure of such information at this time would have a potentially negative impact on the municipality's position with respect to the matter being discussed; therefore this information will be withheld until such time as the matter is concluded or the potential for negative impact no longer exists.);

Matters involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance, promotion or disciplining of any specific prospective or current public officer or employee of the public body, where all individual employees or appointees whose rights could be adversely affected have not requested in writing that the matter(s) be discussed at a public meeting; (The employee(s) and/or general nature of discussion is _____

OR _____ the public disclosure of such information at this time would violate the employee(s) privacy rights; therefore this information will be withheld until such time as the matter is concluded or the threat to privacy rights no longer exists.;

Deliberation occurring after a public hearing that may result in the imposition of a specific civil penalty or loss of a license or permit;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council hereby declare that their discussion of the subject(s) identified above may be made public at a time when the Borough Attorney advises them that the disclosure of the discussion will not detrimentally affect any right, interest or duty of the Borough or any other entity with respect to said discussion. That time is currently estimated to be: SIX MONTHS (estimated length of time) OR upon the occurrence of _____;

_____;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council, for the reasons set forth above, hereby declare that the public is excluded from the portion of the meeting during which the above discussion shall take place.

Council reconvened in open session at 8:30 p.m. Motion made by Higgins, seconded by Oakley to recess for five minutes.

Ayes: 5, Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Highlands Grant Application

Manager Corica stated he provided Council of the copy of the Grant Application for their review. If Council wishes the authorization to apply for the grant can be done at the July 1 meeting. Council concurred

Budget

Manager Corica reviewed the current condition of the budget. The Borough began the process with a five cent increase which included the streets. The state took away \$200,000. The Borough is at roughly eight cents right now; which includes the lost state aid, the removal of the street projects, and adjustments made internally.

Council discussed options for decreasing the budget. Councilman Turner asked what the tax rate would be if Council removed several expenses as previously discussed in a prior budget hearing. These items included; the removal of \$2700 from the library, and additional \$2700 from library O/E, the removal of season help, the removal of \$5000 from materials and supplies, an additional \$5000 from maintenance.

Mayor Van Deursen asked the Borough Manager for other options in reducing the budget. Manager Corica stated \$12000 can be removed from legal. Councilman Higgins suggested no wage increase for part time employees. Manager Corica indicated that would be about a \$4,000 savings. Councilman Turner suggested cutting back on the contribution to the library.

Councilwoman Woykowski stated in reviewing the budget summary pages provided by the Borough Manager she noticed a trend. Many departmental budgets have increased. She stated that unless there is an extraordinary expense or justification, departmental budgets should only increase by 10% a year. If the Borough cuts back on the departmental budgets, unless justified, we can see a savings of approximately \$55,000.

Councilman Higgins noted an increase in the Emergency Squad of 25%. Councilwoman Woykowski stated that the Borough needs their financials. Manager

Corica stated the squad is now paying for their expenses and the net contribution to the squad from the Borough will go down.

Manager Corica reviewed with Council their suggestions for the Budget. He will remove the wage increase from the part time employees salary, he will move the \$12,000 in legal expenses to the Bond Ordinance, and Manager Corica will examine the budget based on Councilwoman Woykowski's suggestion that their should only be a 10% increase from year to year in the departmental budgets.

Councilman Higgins suggested the Mayor and Council adopt a Resolution to send to Governor Corzine asking for the state aid to be restored. Council agreed.

The Governing Body concurred that they would like the Borough Manager to review the budget to reduce it by two cents.

Hearing no further business to come before Council, it was moved by Turner seconded by Woykowski that the meeting be adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Ayes: 5, Nays: 0.
Motion carried.

Marianne Van Deursen, Mayor

Kristine Blanchard, RMC
Borough Clerk