

BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
WASHINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES – Budget Meeting April 14,
2010

The Budget Meeting of the Borough Council of Washington, Warren County, New Jersey was held in the Council Chambers of Borough Hall at 6:00 P.M.

Roll Call: Boyle, Higgins, McDonald, Gleba, Valentine, Housel - Present
Cioni – 6:20 p.m.

Also Present: Rich Phelan, Borough Manager
Kristine Blanchard, Borough Clerk

Mayor McDonald led everyone in the flag salute.

Mayor McDonald 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.

Mayor McDonald stated that this is a workshop meeting to review departmental budget requested with department heads; therefore there will be no public comment.

Departmental Budgets

- Code Enforcement

The Code Enforcement Officer stated that his budget contains vehicle maintenance for the Fire Prevention/Code Enforcement vehicle, which is now four years old. There is also an increase due to the need to purchase zoning applications and violation notices.

- Fire Safety Official

The Fire Safety Official stated that there is an increase in books and publications due to the need to purchase up to date code books. There are no reference books in his office. His budget also includes a request for fire prevention week material. These materials are handed out to the schools.

- Fire Department

The Fire Chief stated that the Fire Department reduced their budget by 10% his first year as chief. He stated the Fire Department is doing a lot of

fundraising so as not to burden the taxpayer. Councilman Boyle asked about the fire bay doors that need to be replaced. Chief Klausfelder stated that the fire department has raised the money to replace the bay doors and will start the project soon.

Councilwoman Gleba inquired about possible savings in health benefits. Manager Phelan stated that he has reached out to several companies; unfortunately the Borough does not employ enough people to make it a viable option.

Manager Phelan stated the State of New Jersey has reviewed our introduced budget. We have to make some changes to our budget. The most significant change is the reserve for uncollected taxes must be changed to \$917,000.00. We will be trying to get this changed with the state. Unfortunately, this will raise the municipal portion of taxes from 29.82 to between 30 and 32 cents.

- DPW

DPW Supervisor, John Burd stated that the departmental request is the same as last year with the exception of the road materials line item which includes costs for snow plowing. Mr. Burd made a few additional suggestions regarding repairing some streets that are in extremely poor condition. The total estimated cost for repairing Prospect St., McDonald St., Sunrise Terrace, Oakridge Road, Oakwood Terrace, Robin Road, North Jackson Ave, and Vanatta St. is \$38,200.00. Manager Phelan will review the capital budget to see if there are monies available there.

- Recreation Department

The Recreation Director gave Council additional information regarding the fee based programs run by the Recreation Department. The pool received \$65,634.91 in revenue in 2009. The total operating expenses for the pool are \$112,036.87. The balance in the Recreation Trust account is \$82,143.50; \$57,923.00 of which is swim program related. Some of the \$57,923.00 could offset the operating expenses at the pool.

- Municipal Court

The Court Administrator stated that her budget has remained flat. Her only request is that she and her deputy be reimbursed for classes they had taken for their certifications. The Borough did not originally pay for the recertification classed due to the potential shared service agreement. Council agreed to reimburse the Court Administrator and the Deputy Administrator for certification classes they have taken in 2010.

- Municipal Library

The library is currently requesting \$204,000.00 for 2010. Council discussed various options regarding the library funding. \$194, 280.00 is required by statute. Councilman Housel asked what cutbacks the library would have to make if the funding was cut to \$194, 280.00 The Library Director stated that the Library would have to make some cuts on the purchase of books but would be able to function with the \$194,280.00; however if the library needed to purchase there own health insurance they would not be able to stay open. Motion made by Higgins, seconded by Gleba to fund \$194,280.00 to the Municipal Library and the Borough will pay the health insurance benefits.

- Shade Tree Commission

The Shade Tree Commission presented their budget to Council. Most of the \$14,585.00 budget is for emergency tree removal that needs to be done during storms, etc. The Shade Tree Commission did receive a \$7,000.00 grant for tree maintenance at the park.

At this time Council recessed for ten minutes.

Council resumed the Budget Workshop with all members present.

Mayor McDonald asked Council how they would like to proceed with the borough pool. He asked if Council would like to consider the options now, or would they like to discuss this at the next Council meeting after they have had time to gather more information. Council concurred that the pool options will be discussed on Tuesday, April 20, 2010.

Councilwoman Gleba stated she would like to see reductions in the pool budget be made with the difference being made up by the use of some funds in the recreation trust account.

Motion made by Boyle, seconded by Higgins to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Ayes: 7, Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Respectfully submitted,

Kristine Blanchard, RMC
Borough Clerk