

**BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
WASHINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES – Budget Meeting March 10,
2011**

The Budget Meeting of the Borough Council of Washington, Warren County, New Jersey was held in the Council Chambers of Borough Hall at 7:00 P.M.

Roll Call: Boyle, McDonald, Gleba, Valentine, Torres, Jewell - Present
Higgins - Absent

Also Present: Rich Phelan, Borough Manager
Kristine Blanchard, Borough Clerk
Natasha Turchan, CFO

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.

Departmental Budgets

John Burd DPW Department

Buildings and Grounds – Mr. Burd explained the gutters on this building need to be fixed and right now we are not sure how much that will cost. We are also not sure of the extent of the damage.

Road Repair and Maintenance – Mr. Burd stated that most of this increase is due to snow removal. The Borough had a bad winter this year and snow removal is very unpredictable. The rest of the money would be for road repair for the roads that are in real need.

Councilwoman Gleba asked about the office supplies. Mr. Burd stated that these supplies will be used at the new garage.

At this time Manager Phelan needed to leave the meeting due to a family emergency.

Fire and Safety Code Enforcement

Mr. Monus explained that the \$940.00 increase in his budget is for fire safety programs. The programs are for all ages. The supplies are used for Fire Prevention Week in October and the Open House held by the Fire Department.

Mayor and Council

Increase of 417.00 due to office supply increase. Ms. Blanchard also stated that she included league registration fees for Mayor and Council if they choose to attend the conference this year. Councilman Boyle requested to have his salary removed from the Mayor and Council salary line item.

Municipal Clerk/Elections

Ms. Blanchard stated the Municipal Clerk's budget has an increase of \$9,095.00. One increase is in the Legal Advertising line item. Every year this line item consistently is over budget due to large advertisements that sometimes are difficult to plan for. The other portion of the increases is due to the codification of ordinances. This has not been completed since 2007. It has become difficult for employees, citizens, and professionals to find updated legislation.

Shade Tree Committee

Ms. Halpin stated the Shade Tree Commission is asking for \$5500.00 additional this year. The Commission will not be receiving a grant this year. The Commission accomplishes a lot throughout the year with very little money. If the Shade Tree Commission does not have this amount we will lose our Shade Tree USA designation.

Planning Board

Ms. Titus stated the Planning Board is looking for an additional \$184.00. Professional Services can be reduced to \$2500.00. Legal Services can be reduced by \$184.00 then there would be no increase at all.

Tax Collection/Revenue

Ms. Stasyshan stated her increase of \$210.00 is for advertising costs. The tax sale costs have been increasing over the years; more than likely due to the economy.

Councilwoman Gleba asked the CFO why such a big increase in the water line item. The CFO stated last year's budget was short in this line item. Councilwoman Gleba stated NJ American Water donates the water and the well pump at the pool will be fixed. Mayor McDonald stated he is not sure the well pump will be repaired in time for the filling of the pool.

Councilman Jewell asked about the heating costs at the garage. The CFO stated the heating oil has been reduced for the old garage and natural gas was increased. Mayor McDonald stated energy costs are very unpredictable right now. He also noted the new garage is larger.

Councilwoman Gleba asked about the grants in the budget. The CFO stated once the award for a grant is given; then it can be placed in the budget via a Chapter 159 Resolution. Grants have no impact on the budget.

Councilman Valentine asked about the presentation by the Freeholders on the County Tax Structure. Mayor McDonald stated we are still waiting to hear from the Freeholders for a date.

Councilman Jewell stated he had several questions on the Police Department Budget. He asked about the police mechanic. The CFO stated that Washington Township wants to allocate some of the costs for the mechanic to police. This person spends a lot of time working on police vehicles. The CFO stated the only item that requires the Borough's approval is the SUV purchase.

Council agreed that no further budget meetings would be held this week. The Borough Clerk will cancel the remaining meetings.

Motion made by Valentine, seconded by Torres to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Ayes: 6, Nays: 0
Motion Carried

Respectfully submitted,

Kristine Blanchard, RMC
Borough Clerk