

**BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
WASHINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES –
Budget Meeting February 24, 2015**

The Regular 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.

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 led everyone in the flag salute.

Roll Call: Conry, Thompson, Klimko, Noone, Heinrich, McDonald,
Higgins (arrived at 7:15 p.m.)

Also Present: Kristine Blanchard, RMC Borough Manager/Clerk
Natasha Turchan, C.F.O.

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution #47-2015 Authorizing the Application of a Treatment Works Approval for the South Prospect Street Sewer Project

WHEREAS, Finelli Consulting Engineers, LLC has prepared an application for the Treatment Works Approval for the South Prospect Street Sewer project; and

WHEREAS, the application consists of NJDEP statement of consent form that must be signed by a Borough Official;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by a Borough Council of the Borough of Washington hereby authorizes the Borough Manager to sign the Statements of Consent on behalf of the Borough of Washington for the NJDEP Treatment Works Approval Permit Application that must be submitted by Finelli Consulting Engineers for the South Street Sewer Project.

Resolution #47-2015 was moved on a motion made by Conry, seconded by Thompson and approved.

Ayes: 5, Nays: 0
Abstain: (1) Klimko
Motion Carried

At this time, Mayor McDonald informed Council that the Governor's office held a budget teleconference that he and Manager Blanchard attended. Mayor McDonald stated that it was reported in the teleconference that there will be no cut to municipal aid this year. Manager Blanchard added that the State of NJ is making pension contributions of \$1.3 billion into the New Jersey State Pension. CFO Turchan added that the state is looking towards a conversion of the current pension system to a 401k type of pension.

Councilman Thompson asked about the status of the generator purchased last year for Borough Hall. Manager Blanchard replied that the generator will be finalized as soon as the Borough finishes the Hazard Mitigation Plan which is currently being worked on. Mayor McDonald added that Borough Hall will be able to be a warming station and shelter.

BUDGET DISCUSSION:

Manager Blanchard commented on a few brief highlights of the 2015 Municipal Budget. Manager Blanchard noted that she increased the budget for buildings and grounds due to the fact that the buildings have had so many problems especially Borough Hall due to the age of the building. Manager Blanchard added that currently the increase in the budget is \$47,000. Manager Blanchard stated that it is possible to maintain a flat budget for 2015 since the preliminary Washington Township Police budget was \$40,000 less than earlier anticipated. Mayor McDonald added that the police department had a few retirements which contributed to the decrease in the police budget and their budget numbers will be finalized on Saturday. CFO Turchan added that the additional \$7,000 needed to maintain a flat budget could be removed from the library since the amount budgeted is over the amount that is mandated by the state. Mayor McDonald replied that he would like to leave the amount budgeted for the library the same as it was last year. Mayor McDonald commented that the Borough has a part time library director which is not enough and would therefore eventually like to hire a full time library director instead of filling the full time librarian position which the Borough has had trouble maintaining someone in that position. After discussion between Councilman Higgins and CFO Turchan regarding surplus, Manager Blanchard suggested using funds out of surplus to flatten the budget for 2015 and all agreed. Manager Blanchard commented that the 2015 Municipal Budget is flat; the Borough lowered the sewer costs for the community and increased the budget for Streets and Roads along with budgeting \$200,000 in sewer for the Mill Pond Dam decommissioning.

Councilman Heinrich asked about the other expenses listed under the Mayor and Council line item. Manager Blanchard replied that those expenses are made up of Council's dues to the New Jersey State League of Municipalities and also for the cost to maintain the

Borough's website. Manager Blanchard added that there is also reserve in that line item for classes for Council Members. CFO Turchan stated that the Municipal Service Reimbursements has a large increase which is for the garbage and snow removal for the homeowners association. Manager Blanchard added that this is for Washington Square since they provide those services that the municipality would normally provide. The Borough is responsible for reimbursing the association for equal to what the Borough's costs would be.

Councilman Higgins asked what Council is providing for the Recreation Commission. CFO Turchan replied that the same amount of \$76,000 was budgeted this year as it was last year which Recreation in turn uses to pay salaries. Councilman Thompson asked if any of the departments were looking to make any large purchases this year. Manager Blanchard replied that everything is listed in the budget on the capital expenditure page including \$200,000 in Streets and Roads, \$75,000 for a new dump truck, \$10,000 for the computer server, \$10,000 in fire equipment and \$2,000 in the capital improvement fund.

CFO Turchan added that Sewer debt goes down dramatically after 2017 when the infra structure loans will be paid off.

ADJOURNMENT:

Hearing no further business, a motion was made by Conry, seconded by Heinrich to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

Ayes: 7, Nays: 0
Motion Carried

Mayor Scott McDonald

Kristine Blanchard, RMC Borough Clerk