

The Work Session of the Washington Township Committee was called to order by Mayor Tobin at 7:33 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Comm. Popper, Short, Walsh, Nedd, Mayor Tobin, Attorney Jansen, Administrator/Clerk Gallets, Assistant Administrator Burd

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Adequate notice of this meeting was sent to the Observer Tribune and the Morristown Daily Record on January 8, 2007 and was posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building on the same date. This meeting is being held at the Washington Township Municipal Building, 43 Schooley's Mountain Road, Long Valley, New Jersey. Notices of this meeting were sent, as there were requests.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE – Comm. Walsh, Harvey Ort and Dan Farrand, Washington Township farmers, met to discuss the continuation of the Department of Agriculture. They would like to see the Township draft a resolution in opposition to abolishing the Department of Agriculture at the State level, as proposed by New Jersey Governor John Corzine's 2008 budget.

Mr. Ort and Mr. Farrand presented the Township with a draft resolution for distribution to our government officials. A petition was signed by farmers and residents in support of this resolution. Both men stressed the importance of farmland preservation to the community and to their livelihood.

Mayor Tobin stated that he was surprised by the action toward the farming community, and that the announcement was without any advance notice.

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Tobin opened the meeting to the Public.

Armin Wagner, 33 Naughtright Road stated that he has two farms in preservation. He stated that the Department of Agriculture provides programs that enrich the entire community. He stated that it has been very difficult for the farming community to get in touch with their representatives, so they are deferring to the Township for representation.

There being no further comments or questions, Mayor Tobin closed the meeting to the public.

Mayor Tobin stated that the Township Committee will review the documentation provided. He reiterated that he is surprised by the lack of notice by the State government regarding the elimination of the Department of Agriculture, and is opposed to the Governor's proposal.

The members of the Township Committee agreed that they are surprised by the proposal to abolish the Department of Agriculture and, with some changes in verbiage, they will support the resolution presented to them for review. Comm. Nedd also suggested that the Governor may be trying to reduce governmental costs, therefore, along with the resolution, alternatives should be provided.

FIRST AID SQUAD MUTUAL AID – In response to **Comm. Popper's** inquiry for statistical information regarding emergency calls, **Chief Chris Tamburro, Long Valley First Aid Squad**, along with **Vice President, Glen Carrara** who is in charge of the Squad's information systems, attended the Work Session to respond to questions from the Township Committee. More specifically, Comm. Popper is interested in the number of calls, location (town), the type of call, the type of complaint, and to which facility individuals are transported so that a cost/benefit analysis for possible shared services can be prepared. **Mayor Tobin** summarized that Comm. Popper is seeking where the resources and demand for First Aid Squad services are derived. Chief Tamburro stated that providing long range historical information is time consuming, and the squad must respect patient confidentiality. The requested data has been compiled on a disk which can be accessed through a Microsoft program, which Comm. Popper can review. Chief Tamburro explained that the Long Valley First Aid Squad is not a revenue generating resource, and does not want to bill for services. Chief Tamburro is a proponent of the free exchange of information and ideas, however, the First Aid Squad does not support the use of taxpayer funds to assemble the desired statistics by an outside source. Mayor Tobin stated that a special Township Committee meeting will need to be called for further discussion on this issue, sometime in the summer months. In attendance will be an outside expert, the First Aid Squad, Committee Members, and the public. **Comm. Short** inquired about mutual aid response calls to Tewksbury. Chief Tamburro explained that they provide secondary coverage and will gather the additional information requested. **Comm. Nedd** stated that he is against the idea of turning the Long Valley First Aid Squad into a billing organization.

SENIOR RESOURCE CENTER PRESENTATION – **Ms. Paige Urban, Program Coordinator of the Senior Resource Center** was unable to attend the Work Session and will make her presentation to the Township Committee at the April Work Session.

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Tobin opened the meeting to the Public. There being no comments or questions, Mayor Tobin closed the meeting to the public.

ORDINANCES

BUILDING FEES – The funds that the Building Department collected were extremely low this past year. A recommendation was made to increase certain building fees to align them with the fees that are charged in other townships. The fee increases would be in line with the fees recommended by the DCA of the State of New Jersey. **Mayor Tobin** stated that he would like to receive information regarding the major activities that occupy the Building Department's time before increases can be justified. **Attorney Jansen** explained that the fees are intended to cover operating costs and should be adjusted upward or downward depending upon the amount of surplus or deficit in funds. The fees are not intended to be a revenue generating mechanism. A motion was made by Comm. Short, seconded by Comm. Walsh to proceed with this amendment by ordinance. The Township Committee will consider the introduction of an ordinance at the March 17, 2008 Regular Meeting.

ZONING FEES – Comm. Short made a motion, seconded by Comm. Nedd that zoning permit fees be included in the above referenced ordinance. **Attorney Jansen** suggested that it would be better to wait until he had a chance to consult with **Ginny Kesper, Zoning Officer** and then present an ordinance at the April meeting. The Township Committee agreed.

CHAPTER 168, SOLID WASTE, RECYCLING – The Township Committee will consider the introduction of an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 168, SOLID WASTE, OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON, COUNTY OF MORIS, STATE OF NEW JERSEY" at the March 17, 2008 Regular Meeting.

DISCUSSION

TAX OFFICE SECURITY – **Chief Bailey, Police Department** was asked to provide information regarding the viability of security procedures at the Tax Office. This inquiry was prompted by the behavior of a resident who visited the Tax Office. Chief Bailey will research logistical and financial information regarding such an endeavor and present it to the Township Committee.

CALIFON AGREEMENTS - **Attorney Jansen** explained that agreements were originally prepared that were in effect, revisions to the existing agreement. His office was then directed to prepared comprehensive, stand alone agreements. The Township Committee would like the Police services agreement to include language that states that any additional equipment or communications service costs specifically related to the policing of Califon will be incurred by Califon. Further discussion on this matter will be in closed session. The agreements will then be forwarded to Califon.

Comm. Popper further inquired about the sharing of Judges for Municipal Court. **Attorney Jansen** responded that the contract states that the parties agree that the shared court will share personnel.

PBA NEGOTIATIONS – SET NEGOTIATING TEAM – **Comm. Short and Mayor Tobin** will be the PBA Negotiating Committee.

A-1880 – REFERENDUM MANDATE ON LOCAL BONDS – **Mayor Tobin** stated that A-1880-Referendum Mandate on Local Bonds is the legislative initiative which provides that every bond issue must go to referendum. Mayor Tobin is concerned that associated costs are not covered by the State with this procedure. The Township Committee agreed to the language set forth in a letter opposing this referendum mandate.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS AND PROTOCOL – The Township Committee assigns liaisons from the Committee to various groups. The liaison's role is to be the contact person for the group for the exchange of ideas and concerns. In general, protocol has been that anyone may contact the group directly for the quick exchange of information, however, with more substantial issues, the liaison should be approached first.

PIERCE PUMPER - WARRANT – A letter has been sent to Pierce by Administrator Gallets.

Mayor Tobin suggested a five minute recess at 8:25 p.m. before 2008 budget discussions begin. The meeting reconvened at 8:39 P.M.

2008 BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS – Mayor Tobin noted that the State cut aid to our community by close to \$200,000. Instead of increasing the budget, the Township Committee has decided to make further cuts. Recommendations were discussed among the Committee members **including but not limited to** personnel hires (delaying or omitting), health insurance/workers compensation reductions, reduction of new promotions, reduction in advertising, Library funding, delaying sidewalk construction, reduction in litigation reserves, reduction in uncollected tax reserves, reduction in the purchase of police vehicles, reduction in existing municipal vehicles, delaying the purchase of the new pumper, and increasing the use of surplus, planting a municipal shade tree nursery, and renegotiating the document shredding contract. **Comm. Nedd** also suggested reducing debt service payments significantly. This suggestion was made after consulting with CFO Lifer. Comm. Nedd will provide numbers for each recommendation based on appropriate extrapolation. The Committeemen will prioritize the recommendations at the Regular meeting.

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Tobin opened the meeting to the Public.

Tom Lopezzo, 47 Flintlock Drive asked the Committee to reexamine the costs of fuel and commodities such as sand, salt and asphalt when they revisit the budget as he feels the numbers are too low. Additionally, he asked the Committee to seriously consider personnel reductions. He further stated that it is the Committee's responsibility to provide essential municipal services in a quality manner at an affordable cost. He feels that there is an oversimplification of this responsibility in focusing only on tax reduction. He finally asked that the Committeemen focus more on their responsibilities instead of political posturing.

There being no further comments or questions, Mayor Tobin closed the meeting to the public.

CUCINELLA GYM USE

Comm. Short commented on investigating the continued use of the Cucinella gym for basketball at no charge. It was noted that the five year agreement may have expired.

2008 SCHOOL BUDGET

Comm. Short stated that he would like to see someone appointed to review the school budget should it fail. **Attorney Jansen** stated that a resolution will need to be adopted, provided funds are available in Committee Projects.

PLANNING BOARD

Comm. Short said the Committee needs to appoint someone to the Planning Board and the Highlands Compact.

COMCAST

Comm. Popper inquired whether Comcast had responded to the letter that was sent. Administrator Gallets said they had responded and Comm. Popper can review it.

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March 12, 2008

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The Township Committee went into Executive Session at 11:25 P.M. upon approval of the following resolution:

RESOLUTION #R-44-08 -EXECUTIVE SESSION – PERSONNEL: HEALTH BENEFITS;
SALARY/WAGES
PENDING LITIGATION; COSTA PERCHEM
CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS: ANIMAL
CONTROL

Motion was made by Comm. Short, seconded by Comm. Popper that the foregoing resolution be adopted.
Motion was carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Comm. Popper, Short, Nedd, Walsh, Mayor Tobin

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: None

The Township Committee came out of Executive Session at 11:45 P.M.

The meeting adjourned at 11:46 P.M.

Dianne S. Gallets, Clerk