

The Work Session of the Washington Township Committee was called to order by Mayor Short at 7:35 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Comm. Popper, Harmon(7:36), Tobin, Walsh, Mayor Short, Attorney Jansen, Administrator/Clerk Gallets, Acting Administrator Burd, Acting Clerk Madden

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Adequate notice of this meeting was sent to The Observer Tribune and The Morristown Daily Record on January 8, 2009 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 - The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

***Comm. Harmon arrived at 7:36 P.M.**

PUBLIC PORTION

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

ORDINANCES

PEDDLING AND SOLICITING – AMENDMENT – The Township Committee will consider the introduction of an ordinance entitled, “**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON, COUNTY OF MORRIS, AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO AMEND CHAPTER 143, PEDDLING AND SOLICITING, OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON, WITH REGARD TO SOLICITATION ACTIVITIES ON PUBLIC PROPERTY**” at the August 17, 2009 Regular Meeting.

ALARM ORDINANCE - CORRECTION – The Township Committee will consider the introduction of an ordinance entitled, “**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON, COUNTY OF MORRIS, AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO AMEND CHAPTER 39, ALARM SYSTEMS, OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON**” at the August 17, 2009 Regular Meeting.

ANIMAL ORDINANCE - AMENDMENT – The Township Committee will consider the introduction of an ordinance entitled, “**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON, COUNTY OF MORRIS, AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO AMEND CHAPTER 46, ANIMALS, OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON**” at the August 17, 2009 Regular Meeting.

DISCUSSION

VEHICLE USE POLICY – **Comm. Popper** stated that the vehicle use policy echoes what was previously discussed. **Comm. Tobin** would like to see an expressed prohibition from taking the ladder truck out of town. The Committee would like to send a modified version back to the fire companies. **Comm. Harmon** inquired about a mileage log and he was informed that such logs are kept within each vehicle. **Mayor Short** stated he would like to always have a command vehicle at the ready in town. Mayor Short stated he would also like to see 7 days notice for any vehicle leaving town, and he would not like to see any vehicles staying out of town overnight. Kurt Wanner will be invited to the August 17, 2009 Regular Meeting to further discuss the vehicle use policy.

HEALTH BENEFIT PREMIUM UPDATE – LDP Consulting will attend the September Work Session meeting for further discussion on this matter. **Assistant Administrator Burd** stated that there will be a 7½% increase in premiums this year. The increase is not as bad as was anticipated because of the Township's adoption of the NJ Direct 15 Health Plan as the base plan, and increased contributions from Township employees. The dollar increase is approximately \$100,000 for 2010. Depending on continued negotiations, the increase may drop to 5%. **Comm. Tobin** stated that these numbers should be presented to the media to show the savings realized this year and the expected increase for next year. He commended the Administration for recommending the change in health plan. There have been some discussions with the School Board and the Board will be contacted again to further discuss economies of scale. **Mayor Short** stated that the State has once again had a negative pension rating. The State sent a letter indicating there would be an approximate 17% pension increase this year (approximately \$200,000). A letter will be sent to the New Jersey League of Municipalities regarding the increases and accountability for pension investments.

WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN DEFICIENCIES – The Wastewater Management Plan is being addressed by the MUA, which is the responsible entity. A letter was sent to the MUA by the DEP outlining the current deficiencies. **Mayor Short** stated that he has had meeting with a private venture that may want to develop 39 township owned acres by the middle school. Mayor Short believes that the deficiencies will be addressed by the September 16, 2009 deadline.

Comm. Popper stated that the NJDEP has issued a restriction on how much water can be taken from the ground daily. This action may force the Township to impose a permanent restriction on water allocation to the top of the mountain.

Comm. Tobin suggested that Mayor Short talk to Eileen Swan from the Highlands Commission to see if things can be moved along. Mayor Short stated he will speak to Paul Costic to see where the Township stands with regard to the Highlands.

WTPD VOICE MAIL SERVER UPDATE – The WTPD Voice Mail Server is working well. The system cuts calls to dispatchers by 75%.

ALARM RENEWAL PROGRESS UPDATE – **Administrator Gallets** stated that \$8,000 was received as of last Thursday in alarm renewals. **Bob Kelly**, Technical Specialist stated the website posting of the registration requirement has prompted the influx of renewal revenue.

COAH HOUSING FUND – Washington Township can purchase back restrictions on Peachtree units. The Township currently has a surplus of COAH units. The Township Committee will set up a meeting with Peachtree to again discuss the “buy back” of some units. The Township can use the Mt. Laurel trust funds, or risk losing the funds (per a new provision). A meeting will be set up with Bertram Associates.

ORDINANCES

LAND ACQUISITION - PUELO – The Township Committee will consider the introduction of an ordinance entitled, “AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACQUISITION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON, COUNTY OF MORRIS, AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY BY DONATION” at the August 17, 2009 Regular Meeting.

COLEMAN ROAD – WEIGHT LIMIT – The Township Committee will consider the introduction of a resolution entitled, “A RESOLUTION DECLARING THAT A TEMPORARY CONDITION DECTATES THE ADOPTION OF SPECIAL TRAFFIC REGULATIONS FOR COLEMAN ROAD FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED THREE MONTHS” in the interest of public safety at the August 17, 2009 Regular Meeting.

DISCUSSION

PARADE AND FALL FESTIVAL – ROAD CLOSING – The Township Committee approved a request to close Route 23 (East and West Mill Roads) between 11:30 A.M. and 1:00 P.M. on September 26, 2009 to allow for the Washington Township Parade and Fall Festival, pending Freeholder approval. A letter was sent to the Clerk of the Board of Chosen Freeholders, Diane Ketchum.

REASSESSMENT APPROVAL – **Comm. Tobin** had a discussion with Tax Assessor, Dolores Pecorari and he has come to the conclusion that the appeals should be circumvented by reassessing instead of responding to individual appeals. **Comm. Popper** would like more data regarding lost appeals (i.e. settled or lost). It was stated by several Committee members that most people appealing are more confident in seeking their reductions. **Comm. Popper** will discuss the matter further with Ms. Pecorari. **Comm. Harmon** suggested a revision in the way assessments are completed relative to how they’ve been done in the past, such as doing a rolling assessment by year. The reassessment will be addressed at the August 17, 2009 meeting.

BOE LETTER – **Comm. Popper** inquired about Mayor Short’s letter to the Board of Education suggesting wash rack shared services. **Mayor Short** stated that he has yet to receive a response.

SNOW REMOVAL EXCEPTION - **Comm. Harmon** mentioned a resident who inquired about an exception from the snow removal ordinance where a six foot wall abuts the sidewalks.

NEW LIBRARY DIRECTOR - **Comm. Tobin** mentioned that the Library Director has retired and a new individual has been selected. The New Director would like to meet the Committee. **Comm. Tobin** further stated

that the Washington Township Library exceeds other Libraries in the services and programs it offers.

SQUAD RESPONSE RATIO – **Comm. Tobin** inquired of **LVFAS Chief, Hagan Sniffen**, what the squad response ratio is between the centrally located station (Station 1) versus the Flocktown Road station (Station 2). Chief Sniffen responded that they are almost equal.

BILLBOARD LEASE – **Mayor Short** informed Chief Hagan that the billboard lease expires in 2010 at which time the billboard must come down.

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Short opened the meeting to the public.

Harlin Parker, 525 Naughtright Road, inquired as to why the contract negotiations with dispatch are not in open session. **Attorney Jansen** explained that, to the extent that the terms of the contract are being discussed, that is an appropriate matter for executive session. He further explained that it does not matter that they are both public entities; both are entitled to discuss their own positions and strategy in executive session so as not to be taken advantage of.

Chief Hagan inquired about whether Chester would care to sit with the Fire and EMS departments to discuss dispatching. **Mayor Short** stated that they are not willing to have those types of discussion until a contract is signed. They are still investigating whether the systems would be compatible. The County has cancelled the most recent meeting. A meeting with the Freeholders will be held tomorrow and there will hopefully be some answers.

There being no further questions, Mayor Short closed the meeting to the public.

The Township Committee went into Executive Session at 9:25 P.M.

**RESOLUTION #R-133-09 - EXECUTIVE SESSION – CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS: DISPATCH;
TEWKSBURY
COURT FACILITIES
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: CWA**

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

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

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: None

The Township Committee came out of Executive Session at 10:49 P.M.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 P.M.

Dianne Gallets, Clerk