

The Special Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Washington was called to order by Mayor Short at 7:07 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Comm. Popper, Tobin, Walsh, Mayor Short, CFO Lifer,
Administrator/Clerk Gallets, Assistant Administrator Burd

MEMBERS ABSENT: Comm. Harmon

Adequate notice of this meeting was sent to The Observer Tribune and The Morristown Daily Record on February 17, 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 Senior Citizen Center, East Springtown Road, Long Valley, New Jersey. Notices of this meeting were sent, as there were requests.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

BUDGET DISCUSSION:

POLICE GRANT – **Chief Bailey** explained the new “Cops Hiring Recovery Act” grant, citing three reasons for applying for the grant. The grant is intended to allay both layoffs and proposed lay offs and to provide funding for shortfalls of officers. One person would be hired for a three year period, starting at the lowest base salary, and would be retained for an additional twelve months beyond the three year period. **Comm. Walsh** stated that at this time, with the possibility of further shared services with neighboring townships, the grant should be sought. **Comm. Popper** stated that he feels it is wise to pursue federal funding, but is bothered by the mandate to maintain the police force at a certain number. He feels that the Township should take advantage of the funding to hire at least one individual. **Comm. Tobin** stated that he is opposed to the submission of an application for the federal grant before the police contract is settled. **Mayor Short** stated that he is opposed at this time to applying for the grant due to fiscal constraints and unknown future events. The Committee authorized the submission of the application based on Chief Bailey’s confirmation that we are able to withdraw or decline the grant once awarded.

Motion was made to submit the application for the Cops Hiring Recovery Act grant and was carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Comm. Popper, Walsh, Mayor Short

NAYS: Comm. Tobin

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Comm. Harmon

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Short opened the meeting to the public.

Lloyd Fleming, 98 Fairview Ave, inquired about the number of police officers required to be listed on the grant application given the impending retirement of two officers. It was explained that the timing of these individual’s retirement is unknown, and cannot be considered to reduce the mandated number placed on the application.

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

2009 MUNICIPAL BUDGET DISCUSSION

Suggested additional reductions within the operating budget were discussed, including : staffing changes resulting in a benefit of \$45,000; the reduction of a part time police position saving \$10,000; reducing personnel at the recycling center, reducing the reserve for uncollected taxes; a utilities reduction of \$10,000; etc. Mayor Short has pressed the Environmental Commission to increase county funding for the recycling center. In response to a question posed by Comm. Popper, **CFO Lifer** commented that every adjustment made to the budget will have a ripple effect. CFO Lifer further stated that the number in the budget for surplus is too high. His recommendations for the operating budget were intended to help the Committee get the budget adopted. Washington Township will be handling the Heath Services for Chester Township which will generate \$60,000 in revenue next year. The Township is slowly correcting the budget over time. Non contracted employees will be taking three unpaid days off in 2009. Field usage fees were discussed as to when they would be implemented. January 1st, 2010 was discussed. **Mayor Short** commented that the Committee is very close to the number they need to pass the budget. **CFO Lifer** will redo the budget with the new numbers from this evening. Furloughs were discussed to ensure that non-contracted employees were treated fairly. **Comm. Walsh** is discussing voluntary furloughs with the union employees.

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Short opened the meeting to the public.

Chief Bailey inquired about a telecommunications ordinance which went to the Planning Board for review. Assistant Administrator Burd will contact Ginny Kesper to inquire about its status.

Comm. Popper inquired about a generator for the Long Valley First Aid Squad. He suggested contacting Paul Costic at the MUA for good pricing on generators.

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

The Township Committee went into Executive Session at 8:30 P.M.

RESOLUTION R-51-09 -EXECUTIVE SESSION – COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: POLICEMEN’S BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

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

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

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Comm. Harmon

The Township Committee came out of Executive Session at 9:00 P.M.

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 P.M.

Dianne S. Gallets, Clerk