

MINUTES OF THE BUDGET MEETING OF
THE TEANECK TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
HELD IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 2012

Mayor Hameeduddin called the Budget Meeting of the Teaneck Township Council to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked all those present to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: C. Parker, DM. Gussen, C. Honis, C. Toffler, Mayor Hameeduddin.

Absent: C. Stern, C. Katz.

Also Present: W. Rupp – Ferrara, Turitz, Harraka & Goldberg Esqs.; W. Broughton, Township Manager, J. Evelina, Township Clerk, I. Abbasi, Executive Assistant.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by Resolution 268-11, setting the 2012 meeting dates, sending a copy to THE RECORD and THE JEWISH STANDARD, filing a copy in the Township Clerk's Office and posting it on the Municipal Building bulletin board, and the Mayor hereby directs that this statement be included in the minutes.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR GOOD AND WELFARE OR PUBLIC INPUT ON ANY MATTERS ON THIS AGENDA

Mayor Hameeduddin inquired whether any member of the Council had any comments prior to opening the meeting to any comments from the public.

No member of Council commented.

Mayor Hameeduddin declared Good and Welfare and Public Input on Any Matter on the Agenda open to members of the public. Members of the public who came forward provided the following information, and comments were limited to five minutes per person.

Leslie McKeon, Teaneck – reiterated prior comments from a previous Council Meeting, supporting a revaluation of Township properties; discussed the annual tax base and tax appeals; and discussed the process of undertaking a tax appeal.

Patrick Crowley, Teaneck – amplified remarks regarding the Senior Center; discussed the course offerings at the Senior Center; and discussed the socialization at the Senior Center with programs, such as mail stuffing.

Jane Irwin, Teaneck – discussed senior residents opting to age in place; referenced statistics regarding senior residents; suggested the Senior Center allow for the use of the gym during the day; and urged the allocation of additional funds for senior courses.

Resident (No Name Announced), Teaneck – discussed her benefit of the exercise classes; the frequency at which they are offered; and the parking situation at the senior center.

Chuck Powers, Teaneck – thanked DM. Gussen for drawing attention to the cost of the Interim Chief Financial Officer (CFO); emphasized his concern for the alleged discrepancy with GZA GeoEnvironmental's presentation at the previous Council Meeting; and referenced his discussions with colleagues regarding the alleged incorrect data.

Ken Hoffman, Teaneck – thanked the Township Council and Manager for releasing information on Votee Park to the public, as quickly as possible; felt that the data presented by GZA GeoEnvironmental Inc. was confusing; requested that Council ask GZA GeoEnvironmental for a

more simplified chart with contaminants and their levels, compared to State and Federal requirements; and felt that both top and bottom soil should be included in said chart.

Alan Sohn, Teaneck – expressed concern over the figures in the reconciliation in the 2011 and 2012 budget; alleged the figures of the Self Insurance Fund were incorrect; asked about the availability of the Township Manager’s Annual Report; requested annual managerial reports be provided to the public; referenced the Township Code regarding the Manager’s Annual Report and the statutory requirements of the annual budget and its submission; spoke about the decrease of the ratable base in the budget; spoke about the reconciliation of budget figures; and requested that Council make budgetary figures more understandable to the general public.

Alex Rashin, Teaneck – enumerated services which he wished to see cut, including the position of building inspector; referenced his experience with Township electrical and plumbing inspectors; requested a salary freeze for Municipal employees; requested information regarding the increases in the tax assessment line item and diesel fuel line item; referenced a duplication in the Township Clerk’s budget line item; and inquired as to the levels of increases to certain Departments.

Howard Rose, Teaneck – expressed his concern regarding the Township’s revenue figures and requested the Township Council allow the Tax Assessor to discuss assessments at a Council Meeting.

Ron Costello, Teaneck – spoke about volunteering and its place as a hallmark of the Township; and referenced Dr. Powers’ experience and his prior consultative work in the environmental science field.

There being no further persons who wished to speak, Mayor Hameeduddin declared that the public comment portion of the meeting closed.

Mayor Hameeduddin inquired whether any member of the Council or the Manager wished to respond to the public’s comments.

Mayor Hameeduddin requested that the Manager confirm the accuracy of GZA GeoEnvironmental Inc.’s charts and statistical tables.

Mr. Broughton responded that the statistical tables are correct and have been given to him directly from GZA GeoEnvironmental Inc. He added that he will speak to GZA GeoEnvironmental to work on simplifying the tables and statistical charts. Mr. Broughton noted that he would discuss the Self Insurance Fund during the budget presentation. He clarified that the presentation and budget book are presentations and do not represent the official budget document which will be submitted to the State of New Jersey.

Mayor Hameeduddin clarified that salaries are contractually-mandated; and Council does not have the ability to freeze or alter salaries that are already under contract.

C. Toffler concurred that salaries are negotiated through bargaining units; agreed that there will be an influx of senior residents visiting and utilizing the recreation center; suggested alternatives to finding amenities for seniors at no cost, including the utilization of the open gym; suggested a missed course policy to reduce a waiting list; suggested a parking shuttle service; referenced prior annual Manager’s reports that can be found online; and inquired as to the increase in the Council’s budget.

Mr. Broughton answered that the Council’s budget would be discussed shortly.

DM. Gussen inquired as to the purpose of the change.

Mr. Broughton responded that the increase in question is a 2% increase for Council’s salary.

DM. Gussen referenced the Council’s salary since 2006, the nature of the proposed budget and the process at which it is changed.

Mr. Broughton clarified that he prepares a budget that allows for the removal or reduction in a line item easily.

C. Toffler referenced the Assessor's increase in the budget and the shifting of funds to other accounts without annotations in the budget to describe where the funds were moved.

Mr. Broughton responded that his presentation would detail the shifting of funds, in addition to the three scheduled budget hearings later this month.

DM. Gussen discussed the parking issue at the Rodda Center and referenced the property directly opposite the substation on Palisades Avenue and whether or not it could be repurposed for the use of a parking lot, the potential of adding it to the Capital budget, and discussing it upon Superintendent Crockett's budget presentation.

C. Toffler asked the Manager who would be certifying the Township's budget.

Mr. Broughton responded that the CFO on staff at the time, whether a new hire or Ms. Christine Brown, will certify the budget.

C. Toffler inquired if Mr. Bianchi would be certifying the budget at all.

Mr. Broughton responded that Mr. Bianchi will not be certifying the budget.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Mr. Broughton thanked the Department Heads present for their efforts in helping him execute his duties as the Township Manager and appreciated their efforts. He requested all department heads speak about their department after introducing themselves.

C. McKearnin, Township Engineer – thanked the Manager and Council for the opportunity to speak at tonight's meeting, discussed his tenure as Township Engineer, his work on capital improvements, including the Road Resurfacing Program, the Green Acres Grant for the Synthetic Turf Field; and discussed the work on Library HVAC Project and upcoming engineering projects.

Glenna Crockett, Superintendent of Recreation – discussed her tenure as the Superintendent of Recreation, the Department's mission, the 2011 course offerings to the public at large; cited the increase in the senior population in Teaneck between the 2000 and 2010 census; discussed rental permits to Teaneck sports groups, the maintenance of the Rodda Center, special events including the July 4th Community Celebration, movies in the park, the Center's staff composition and thanked the Departments that help make Recreation a success.

Fran Wilson, Director of Public Works – thanked his fellow colleagues for creating an enjoyable work environment, thanked the Manager for the opportunity to speak about the Public Works 2012 budget; discussed the 2011 winter snow storm, the flooding of the DPW complex, several natural disasters, including Hurricane Irene and the October 29th Snow Storm, the completion of the leaf pick-up, given the delay caused by the 10/29 storm; spoke about his request for additional personnel given significant percentage increases in work orders for all four (4) units in the Department; and urged Council to consider his request for additional personnel.

Michael McCue, Director of Public Library – spoke of his tenure as Library Director, the Library's new use of QWERT codes, the return of funds to the budget due to the selection of a new insurance carrier, the completion of the HVAC sooner than anticipated; requested Council look favorably at changing the windows in the reference room; and discussed the amount of items lent from the library to Teaneck residents and neighboring visitors.

Steven Gluck, Construction Official – discussed his tenure with the Township, the Building Department's charge to enforce the Uniform Construction Code, the construction activity in relation to the general economy, Teaneck's above normal pace of new building activity and rehabilitations; cited 2011 statistics regarding the issuance of permits and their monetary value in terms of construction; discussed the self sufficiency requirement of the Building Department, the

Building Department's projection of slight increases in building activity, and the activities of the zoning and planning board.

Chief Anthony Verley, Fire Chief – spoke about the Fire Department fielding the most calls in history; enumerated the nature of service calls; spoke about the receipt of grant-funded equipment; spoke about the reduction in staff while admirably executing their duties; and requested additional staff to better deliver service to residents.

Kevin Lynch, Purchasing Agent – discussed his tenure with the Township of Teaneck; read letters into the record from visiting students of the Teaneck Community Charter School regarding his job functions; and described the purchasing process.

James Tighe, Tax Assessor – discussed his tenure with the Township of Teaneck; spoke about the volume of the 2011 tax appeals; spoke about the state of the real estate market in the Teaneck and neighboring markets; cited his 2011 recommendation, given the lack of information and data to perform a revaluation; spoke about the County Board's decision to force Assessors to consider a revaluation or reassessment to properties in their municipalities; defined the difference between a revaluation and reassessment; discussed the addition of added assessments and their value; spoke about the composition of the Assessor's staff and the shift of funds from the legal budget to the Assessor's budget to defend tax appeals.

Ken Katter, Health Officer – discussed his tenure with the Township of Teaneck; spoke about the mission of the Township's Health Department; discussed the certifications of the department's staff, the Teen Clean Program, health services with Holy Name Medical Center, Animal Control through the County; discussed various statistics relating to inspections and summary abatements without the increase of fees; spoke about events held with the assistance of the Social Services Advisory Board; referenced Health Inspector Mereos' recent certification as a Health Officer and the Department's staff now holding three Health Officer certifications; and noted that the Department matched every statistic if not surpassed 2010 levels.

Dean Kazinci, Human Resources Director – thanked his colleagues and the Manager for their efforts; cited his personal and department's experience with the Township; and spoke about the department's work for Township employees in a quick and efficient manner.

Mr. Broughton presented to the Township Council and public his 2012 proposed budget. His presentation addressed the preparation process of the budget including statutory requirements, Council hearings on the budget with public input; the statutory dates of the introduction and approval and adoption of the budget, assumptions of fund balance (surplus) revenues, the reserve for uncollected taxes, BCUA rate increase; outlined the proposed levy increase on the average assessed home, the tax breakdown of the total tax levy, the breakdown of categories by appropriations, the breakdown of the salary and wage accounts and the percentage of employees under labor contracts vs. those employees not covered by a labor contract, his recommendations for 2012 staffing levels for the Police, Fire, Public Works, Manager's Office, and Recreation Department given pending retirements, promotions and an increase in requests for service, the current work on hiring additional dispatchers for police and fire, his recommendation not to currently fund the Deputy Manager position in 2012; however, he further recommended that the Deputy Manager position and other deputy positions be considered for departments in the near future. He discussed terminal leave funding; recommended overtime amounts for the police, fire and public works departments; referenced the 2011 calendar year's use of overtime, other expenses and items such as group insurance that are included in this line item, contributions to the self insurance fund, other insurance premiums, debt service, PERS and PFRS reduction in payments, the 2011 tax collection rate and the estimate of the reserve for uncollected taxes. He informed that the collection rate was not available at this time but will be published shortly; discussed the responsibility of the Township to turnover funding by statute to the Board of Education and county; discussed grants and their non impact on the budget; highlighted other expenditures in the budget; discussed the increase in the budgeted amount for the Assessor's department and money added to handle tax appeal defenses; discussed the Township Clerk's budget which includes funding for elections and proposed software by the Clerk to streamline materials from the Clerk's office for the public, the Manager's budget including inventory control software for insurance purposes, the Manager's work on power purchase agreements in addition to a consortium in process for shared services, the shifting of funds to their proper areas in the budget, the inclusion of funds for a long-term debt analysis in the annual audit, the transfer

of funds to the Human Resources department for staff recognition items, the inclusion of funds for the interim CFO, the legal services budget, the shifting of funds to more appropriate locations, the Planning and Zoning board fees being placed in their respective budget, funding for tax appeals being placed in the Assessor's budget, the Fire Department's funds needed for new hires, police vehicles, fund balance (surplus) figures as of January 1, 2012 in the Self Insurance General Fund, the Workman's Compensation Fund, payment to a specific workman's compensation claim, specifically, Police Officer Abraham's estate, snow plowing funds, tree trimming, tree planting funds, fuel and diesel budgeted amounts and health and human services funds. He discussed the budgeted amount given a new contract for the aforementioned services; discussed additional costs in the police department in the pistol range for lead accumulation removal; discussed debt service, note interest, costs for additional recreation supplies, employee group insurance contributions and the decrease in this line item, deferred and statutory expenses and the reasoning for their reduction, the reduction in the Council's line item given the payment of the website in the 2011 budget, estimated revenue figures broken down by category, factors impacting the budget, the impact of tax appeals on the budget, the ratable base reduction, objectives in the coming months including increasing revenue, consolidated dispatch, power purchase agreements and enumerated the tentative agendas for upcoming budget meetings.

DM. Gussen requested clarification regarding the amount of police officers detailed in the proposed Manager's budget book.

Mr. Broughton clarified that the current police department's staffing will remain at 96 officers.

DM. Gussen spoke about the possibility of consolidating civilian dispatch and the current practice of utilizing fire fighters to conduct dispatch duties. He further requested clarification regarding the number of fire fighters who would be back on the fire truck if civilian dispatch was implemented.

Mr. Broughton clarified that with civilian dispatchers, one fire fighter will be placed back on the fire truck per shift, and this is included in the authorized strength of 93 fire fighters.

DM. Gussen asked the Manager to clarify the salary breakdown of the Manager's Department.

Mr. Broughton responded that the \$313,000 budgeted for the Manager's office includes funding for the staff positions held by Ms. Ragone and Mr. Abbasi and the inclusion of part-timers to assist the Clerk's office. He added that the reasoning behind the additional part-time staff for the Clerk's office was that a part-time receptionist would fall under the Manager's office.

C. Parker suggested that a Deputy Clerk be considered for hire and that a discussion during the budget process be held regarding same.

C. Toffler concurred with C. Parker's suggestion.

C. Toffler questioned whether or not non-residents used the senior programs and whether or not they received priority over resident users of the facilities.

Mr. Broughton responded that non-residents pay to use the senior center and do not receive priority over residents.

Mayor Hameeduddin discussed the terminal leave benefit and going forward requested this benefit be eliminated for newly-hired department heads.

Mr. Broughton noted that this item could be up for discussion but insofar as terminal leave, this is currently a contractual discussion.

C. Parker inquired about the length of service for department heads to receive terminal leave benefits.

Mr. Broughton responded that department heads need to be working for 25 years upon retirement to receive this benefit.

C. Parker questioned whether the terminal leave amount budgeted for 2012 was a realistic figure.

Mr. Broughton responded that the figure was for sick and vacation leave pay out to employees and this amount was normally the proper amount.

DM. Gussen referenced recent large scale exits from the police and fire department and this caused the Township's exposure to be reduced. He also discussed the cap on terminal leave for the PBA union and other employees for sick leave.

C. Parker questioned the accuracy of the number of retirees from the police and fire department, upcoming and budgeted in terminal leave.

Mr. Broughton responded that we may have 1 or 2 employees coming up for retirement in the police department and felt that this budgeted amount was appropriate.

DM. Gussen discussed the salary savings in new hires; and discussed the benefit of the difference in salary savings and how it was utilized.

C. Parker inquired as to the status of FEMA reimbursement funds for the October 29th snow storm.

Mr. Broughton responded that the reimbursement takes time to be received.

DM. Gussen noted that 2011 was a banner year regarding extra staffing needs due to weather related incidents and felt that a reduction in overtime figures may be more realistic.

Mr. Broughton spoke about the need to budget appropriate funds given last year's unpredictable weather pattern and that these figures could be revised during the upcoming budget meetings.

C. Toffler discussed the new installation of generators on residential homes and noted that overtime for the fire department may be high given new generator installations.

Mr. Broughton felt that the overtime figure for the fire department was quite accurate.

C. Parker requested if the figure for health figures were current given the amendment in the law.

Mr. Broughton responded that the figure is current given the partial implementation of the law and full implementation would take place in July.

DM. Gussen spoke about the impact of grants on the budget.

Mr. Broughton discussed how grants are spent on specific items and do not have much of an impact on the budget.

C. Toffler asked if the Township would be investing in the new financial software recommended by the Manager.

Mr. Broughton responded that the financial software was not included in his presentation due to press time. He spoke with the auditor regarding the benefit of transitioning to the Edmunds software system and the need to transition given the search for a new CFO and high use by 85% of municipalities in the State. Mr. Broughton also discussed the total cost of the software with the maintenance costs included.

DM. Gussen referenced Mr. Gluck's comment regarding self sufficiency and asked the Manager to clarify his statement for the public.

Mr. Broughton discussed the building department's funding being sustained by the fee collection brought in from permits and fees.

DM. Gussen discussed the success of the use of self insurance and inquired whether or not the Township has been shopping for competitive rates in the workman's compensation field.

Mr. Broughton responded that our insurance carrier has shopped the market and not found more competitive rates but this item was being looked into at this time. He further noted that the balance in this account may be decreased as our exposure to certain cases is lessened in the near future.

DM. Gussen felt that this calendar year would include less snow given most of the snow season had passed at this point.

Mr. Broughton answered that the snow plowing fund includes the months of October, November, and December in the event of snow.

DM. Gussen added that this budget can be reduced as we move forward in the snow season without a snow storm.

DM. Gussen also requested back-up documents regarding the per gallon cost of fuel and diesel.

ADJOURNMENT

DM. Gussen moved to adjourn at 9:15 p.m. Seconded by C. Honis.

ROLL CALL

In Favor: C. Parker, DM. Gussen, C. Honis, C. Toffler, Mayor Hameeduddin.

Opposed: None.

Absent: C. Stern, C. Katz.