



**TOWNSHIP OF DOWNE
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
March 23, 2011**

Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act adequate notice of this meeting was sent to the Official Newspaper and was posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board. Mayor Dennis Cook called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 pm.

The flag salute was conducted.

ROLL CALL

Robert Campbell, Committeeperson	Present
Lisa Garrison, Committeeperson	Present
Tammi Reynolds, Committeeperson	Present
Steve Simmerman, Deputy Mayor	Present
Dennis Cook, Mayor	Present

Also present: Mr. John Carr as Solicitor and Richard DeVillasanta, Clerk

Mayor Cook asked for a motion to enter into the 2011 Budget Workshop portion of the meeting.

Motion made by: Mr. Campbell to enter into the Budget Workshop portion of the meeting and was seconded by Mrs. Reynolds. The motion carried

Roll Call:

Robert Campbell	Yes
Tammi Reynolds	Yes
Dennis Cook	Yes
Lisa Garrison	Yes
Steve Simmerman	Yes

Motion Carried

2011 BUDGET PRESENTATION

Mayor Cook stated that everyone has received a copy of the presentation for review. This represents a lot of hard work on the part of the Committee, various officers within the Township, Mr. DeVillasanta and Nadine Lockley. Mayor Cook continued that the spreadsheets represent all the input received to date.

Mrs. Garrison stated that no one asked her for her input. Mayor Cook answered that every committee person was requested to submit their information last year. The information also includes input from various offices within the Township. During this workshop everyone will have adequate opportunity to have their input included.

Mayor Cook explained the changes made in an effort to make the budget information clear for everyone. The Miscellaneous line items have been broken out to better explain how funds are expended. Also under Salary and Wages, there are no salary increases shown in this budget.

After discussion the Salaries & Wages line item under the Township Committee was reduced from \$25,000 to \$20,000.

Mr. Simmerman asked for explanation under the League of Municipalities line item amount of \$1,000.

Mrs. Garrison stated that the League of Municipalities charges \$50 for each member to attend therefore the amount should be \$250 not \$1,000. That line item was cut from \$1000 to \$250.

Mr. Simmerman asked who is collecting mileage. Mrs. Garrison stated that no one is collecting mileage. That line item should be cut.

Mrs. Garrison asked how will the seminar/classes and school, education and training be broken up into two separate categories. The line items were combined and \$500 was allocated if someone chooses to attend a program.

Mrs. Garrison asked what falls under Miscellaneous. After discussion \$200 will be allocated to Miscellaneous.

Other expenses \$500 dues/memberships, \$250 League, \$200 Miscellaneous. We can round other expenses to \$1000 which is a difference of \$3500.

Mrs. Garrison asked for an explanation on the 13% increase in the Other Expenses categories under the Township Clerk.

Mayor Cook explained that a number of line items have been added to the Clerk Account that we incorrectly placed in various other accounts. They are now all centralized under the Clerks Account.

The mileage line item in the Clerk Account and Finance Account was changed to \$500 each.

The League of Municipalities Line Item under the Clerks Account was changed to \$100.

The Software Lease Line Item was moved to the Finance Account.

The second salary and wages line item of \$500 should be moved to the salary and wages category.

Change the Payroll Services line item amount from \$3000 to \$5300. Remove the \$500 allocated to salary and wages.

Remove the League of Municipalities line item under the Finance Account.

No changes were made to the Collection of Taxes Account

The Tax Map line item was changed to \$2000.

The Professional Service (TTL) was changed to \$5000.

Discussion ensued on the Engineering Professional Services line item. Further discussion would be conducted in closed session.

The Planning Board School, Education & Training line item was reduced by \$200.

The Newspaper Ad line item was reduced to \$750.

Miscellaneous line item was reduced to \$400.

Dues & Membership reduced to \$315.

The Liability Insurance line item was reduced to \$22,351. The Workmen's Comp line item was reduced to \$22,351. The Group Insurance Employee Health was reduced to \$40,500.

The Comcast Cable line item for Emergency Management was reduced to \$360.

Mrs. Garrison expressed concern that we need to monitor the use of vehicle gas and diesel fuel.

The Gas (vehicle) line item was reduced to \$4000.

The salt line item was increased to \$5000.

The uniforms & shoes line item was reduced to \$800.

The recycling buckets line item was removed. These buckets should be moved to the Clean Communities Grant account.

Miscellaneous expenses for Garbage and Trash account will be further reviewed and discussed later.

The Equipment line item should be removed.

The Janitorial Supplies line item was reduced to \$1000. The Paper Supplies line item was reduced to \$1000.

The water cooler line item was reduced to \$250.

The gypsy moth miscellaneous line item was removed.

The recreation committee account should be reduced to \$2000.

The cell phone account line item was reduced to \$1000.

The Social Security line item was reduced to \$16,500.

Discussion took place on using the monies in the reserve account to offset the 2011 budget. The over expenditures for 2010 are being carried over into the new budget when there are other ways to deal with it now and carry it. Cumberland County is in the worst stated financially then any county in New Jersey. We need to look at how we can help our town and not put extra burdens on them.

Ken Moore explained the Townships situation and the projections of our situation in 3 years and 5 years if a local purpose tax is not instituted now to help offset some of the townships expenses.

Discussion took place on how the county taxes are going up and the school taxes are going up but if the residents get taxed to death, how are they are going to pay their taxes and where will that put us.

The township needs to start looking at a future plan for the township. If there is an emergency in this township we are not prepared to deal with it. Just last year we had to repair the bulkhead in Gandy Beach three times.

Mrs. Garrison stated we were planning for our future but who planned for two bulkhead blowouts in one year. We authorized those piling to be placed to protect the wallboard and give us more time and then we stopped all work. We have another opportunity with the solar project, they are still interested. We have a letter here with an offer. This is revenue.

Mayor Cook interrupted this letter isn't helpful. This is not going to generate any revenue.

Mayor Cook continued that given the Gandy's Beach situation we are going to need every bit of that \$70,000 allocated to get us through this year.

RESOLUTION

Resolution 40-2011 A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and Committee to go into Executive Session for the Purpose of Personnel

Mayor Cook asked for a motion to move into Closed Session.

Motion was made by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mrs. Reynolds.

Roll Call:

Robert Campbell	Yes
Tammi Reynolds	Yes
Dennis Cook	Yes
Lisa Garrison	Yes
Steve Simmerman	Yes

Motion Carried

After returning from closed session the committee discussed the engineering fees going forward to 2011 and it was decided to put \$50,000 in the Engineer Fees line item amount. This is a reduction of \$20,000 from the proposed budget.

Mrs. Garrison asked the auditor to explain what the changes in the budget discussed tonight would do to the proposed local purpose tax amount. Mr. Moore stated the proposed amount would change from 17 to 13 cents.

Discussion continued on whether to put the reserve in the current budget.

Mayor Cook expressed his appreciation to all involved in the budget process. Mayor Cook asked for a motion to close the work session.

Motion made by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mrs. Reynolds

Roll Call:

Robert Campbell	Yes
Tammi Reynolds	Yes
Dennis Cook	Yes
Lisa Garrison	Yes
Steve Simmerman	Yes

Motion Carried

Mayor Cook asked for a motion to open the meeting to the public for comment.

Motion was made by Mr. Campbell and seconded by Mr. Simmerman.

A resident stated that in the future the public should be afforded information on the proposed budget and the previous budget and the budget cuts in order to be prepared to comment.

Mayor Cook stated this is the nature of the budget process.

Resident Bernie Sayers asked what was the purpose of the \$150,000 bond. Would that be mostly for Money Island and matching funds.

Mayor Cook answered yes that amount also includes the engineering fees.

Mr. Sayers asked about the \$6000 anticipated for the lease associated with the Edmunds Software.

Mrs. Garrison stated it is the amount of the maintenance agreement. Mrs. Garrison stated this agreement needs to be reviewed.

Mr. Sayers continued that we are spending a total of \$13,000-\$14,000 a year in software maintenance agreements. Mr. Sayers asked about the \$70,000 that no one wanted to talk about during the public portion of the meeting.

Mrs. Garrison stated that amount has been adjusted.

Mr. Carr stated that the amount was adjusted and the amount changed.

Mr. Sayers asked if the salary that Mrs. Reynolds is not taking still included in the budget.

Mayor Cook stated that it is still in the budget.

Mrs. Reynolds stated that she would like the money removed from the budget.

A resident stated the whole process has been very confusing to him and he has never seen such secrecy in a committee that should be working together. He had great hopes for the committee and the mayor in 2011 but he is starting to doubt what he originally believed. It seems Mrs. Garrison has great input and he can't understand why she was not more involved in the actual process in this budget. There seems to be a lot of conflict in the committee. It is not working in the favor of the community to be getting along like this. We need to talk about everything in this budget because it is the tax payer's budget and their community. This community has paid a large amount in attorney's fees and engineering fees since 2009, this is something else that the community needs to be enlightened about. Why are the taxpayers paying for these lawsuits against the committee?

A resident asked what happens when the funds in the surplus are put into the budget. Is that good business to do that? Mayor Cook stated that we have to be very conservative and protect the township and we are trying to develop a long range plan that the community has faith in and can budget on.

Mr. Simmerman stated that we are not going to deplete the surplus in case of an unexpected expenditure. We are trying to make cuts in other areas and not have to use the surplus funds because I believe we are going to need it in the future if something happens.

Mr. Sayers stated that he put in an OPRA request for the audio CD of numerous meeting over the last twenty years and in the last couple of months I am astounded to find out that I am not getting those audio renditions. Yesterday I picked up 3 CD's and the last 45 minutes of the Planning and Zoning board meeting doesn't exist. We spent \$2,600 for this fancy machine and unfortunately the Clerk isn't able to give us a copy of the audio. I happen to miss the Township committee meeting on March 7th but I want to be kept up with what's going on. I would like to know how come all of this time since Mr. DeVillasanta has been here, it is still not working. Or is that a secret.

Mayor Cook stated that it is inexcusable.

A resident stated that at the last meeting she was under the impression that we were talking about a general purpose tax of 8.5 cents and tonight the amount is 18.8 cents.

Mayor Cook stated that we were never talking about 8.5 cents, it was 18 cents.

A resident continued that if we are trying to save money on the street lighting, why not turn some of the lights out throughout the community instead of targeting just a few. Time is spent on these budget talks every year and not enough time is spent on what we can go do bring in revenue. We have talked about the solar thing, beach tags, and parking meters but it never seems to go any further. They get presented when we are talking about the budget and then it drops.

A resident asked if there is going to be a vote on a solar field projects.

Mayor Cook stated that we do not currently have any proposals.

Mrs. Garrison stated that she tried to bring that up and was told it is not the appropriate time. Renewable Energy Partners who were here previously are still very interested in doing a project on the landfill. They want to talk to us about it. The important thing to understand about this now is the laws have changed and the rules have changed. Any new projects going in now have to put in a surge protector. That surge protector is \$4M. They are giving us the opportunity to go back in and go with the Hansen project so that cost would not come up. Any other developer is going to have to pay that costs. I feel we should look at it again.

Mayor Cook would not take the document.

Mr. Garrison asked Mayor Cook to read the letter to the public so we can hear it. These people want to work with the township.

Mayor Cook stated that he is not going to.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, April, 4, 2011

Deputy Mayor Simmerman asked for committee comments. Is this a one man committee? The mayor will not allow committee members speak. The Mayor will not allow us to present anything that is not in favor of his position.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully Submitted

Richard DeVillasanta, Clerk

APPROVED