

SPECIAL WEST AMWELL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

May 6, 2009 - 6:00 p.m.

The West Amwell Township Committee met on the above date at 6:02 p.m. Present: Mayor Corboy, Committeemen Masterson (6:20) and Molnar. Also in attendance were West Amwell Elementary School representatives Todd Fay, Cindy Magill, Donna Tolley, Victor Paerg, Lynn Meara, and reporter Linda Seida.

In compliance with the Public Meetings Act, Mayor Corboy announced that this Special Meeting was called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act with notices faxed to the Lambertville Beacon, the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Trenton Times on April 27, 2009. A copy of this notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk.

The meeting was recorded via digital recording system and a copy of the CD is on file in the Office of the Municipal Clerk.

WEST AMWELL SCHOOL BOARD – DEFEATED BUDGET REVIEW/DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE RESOLUTION
Appreciation was extended to the school board members for their letter outlining some potential areas for budget reduction. The consensus was that the budget failure was as much to do with the high school vote as it was to economic times. Disappointment over the public's lack of understanding about how much effort is made in finding ways to cut expenses and contain costs was expressed. A brief exchange over the school's K-12 regionalization direction and problems inherent in that process took place.

A discussion ensued over efforts made to bring special education students back into the school; money saved by so doing; student classification problems; and, child study team concerns, in general. Also touched on was the State's ever shrinking funding levels; the problems this causes the local community and municipal leaders; and, the need to throw this problem back to the State was they are not providing the necessary funding levels in rural municipalities. It was noted was that the defeated budget was under cap; required but \$96,307 in new tax dollars; and, that there was apparent confusion over the \$180,000 in surplus allocated for a new roof. The timing for the latter expenditure is critical as 40% of the cost will be picked up by the State. The role of grants and PTO fund raising to fill in budget short falls was relayed as was concern over when the breaking point will be reached whereby education would be affected.

The proposed budget cuts were reviewed and it was noted that there are some risks involved, especially in the area of pre-school handicapped. Only curriculum related field trips will be funded, with the exception of the 6th grade overnight trip, and all other trips will be self pay. A cutback to the language program; the elimination of an aide for special education; and, a reduction in maintenance supplies rounded out the \$65,000 package.

RESOLUTION #90-2009

Resolution Certifying the General Fund Tax Levy for the West Amwell Township Elementary School Board of Education for the School Year 2009-2010, by the Governing Body of the Township of West Amwell, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey

WHEREAS, the voters of the Township of West Amwell in a duly held election, did fail to approve the General Fund Tax Levy Budget of the Board of Education of the Township of West Amwell for the school year 2009-2010; and

WHEREAS, the Education, Budgets and Appropriations Law, N.J.S.A. 28a-22-37, requires the Governing Body of Township of West Amwell, after consultation with the West Amwell Township Elementary School Board of Education, to determine the amount which is necessary to be appropriate in such budget and to certify to the County Board of Taxation the total amount so determined; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body of the Township of West Amwell has consulted with representatives of the West Amwell Township Elementary School Board of Education, and has thereafter determined the amount necessary to be appropriate; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body of the Township of West Amwell, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that the following determination is hereby made:

- 1. The original tax levy on the ballot for the base budget: \$3,528,222.
- 2. The amount of reduction to the tax levy for the base budget: \$ 65,000
- 3. The amount of tax levy being certified for the base budget: \$3,463,222
- 4. Specific line item reductions:

Account Number	Description	Amount
a. 11-190-100-500	Field Trips	\$10,000
b. 11-120-100-101	Spanish Teacher 1/5	\$10,000
c. 11-213-100-101	½ Resource Teacher	\$27,000
d. 11-215-100-106	Preschool Aide	\$ 9,000
e. 11-000-261-420	School Maintenance	\$ 9,000

- 5. Supporting reasons for reduction: Based upon a review of all data provided by the Board of Education, meetings with representatives of the Board of Education, numerous public hearings and consideration of the public need, it has been determined that the reductions set forth herein can be effectuated without a reduction in programs or negatively impacting upon the education of the students.
- 6. The revised budget is sufficient to provide a thorough and efficient education.
- 7. There was no additional general fund tax levy considered by the voters.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the West Amwell Township Elementary School Board of Education, Superintendent of the Hunterdon County Department of Education, and the Administrator of the Hunterdon County Board of Taxation.

Molnar motioned to adopt the Resolution and Masterson seconded. Roll Call: Molnar-aye, Masterson-aye, Corboy-aye

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:56 p.m. on motion by Molnar, seconded by Masterson.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora L. Olsen, RMC
Township Clerk