

# SPECIAL WEST AMWELL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

## January 27, 2009 – 4:30 p.m.

The West Amwell Township Committee met on the above date at 4:30 p.m. Present: Mayor Corboy, Committeemen Masterson and Molnar. Also attending were Betty Jane Hunt, Lolly Hoagland and Ron Shapella.

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 January 22, 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 not recorded.

### **BUDGET WORKSHOP:**

Mayor Corboy shared his ideas on additional budget cuts and encouraged input from the other committee members. The budget sheets were reviewed as follows:

Page 1 – General Administration: Codification of Ordinances reduced \$400

Page 6 – Revenue Administration: A determination is needed about how these are split between the employing municipalities. Conferences/Meetings/Due reduced to \$300

Page 19 – Police Department: Committeeman Masterson to prepare a work schedule that the department will have to abide by. OT reduced to \$43,000

Page 21 – Aid to Volunteer Fire Companies: Information has been received concerning fire company finances. The line remains at \$18,000

Page 22 – Aid to Volunteer Ambulance Companies: Harry Heller provided statistics on call volume for the two squads: Amwell Valley – 43 (16%); Lambertville-New Hope – 234 (84%). \$2000 restored to Amwell Valley with \$8000 to go to Lambertville-New Hope

Page 26 – Streets and Roads Maintenance: Request for cell phone reimbursement denied. Brief discussion on cutting road maintenance line but determined to be at survival level. No change

Page 27 – Solid Waste Collection: A \$150 annual permit fee for weekly trash drop off starts July 1<sup>st</sup>. This figure is about half that of private hauler charge and would only affect those actually using the depot. Concern was expressed that complete elimination of the service would see an increase of garbage at roadside. It is now time to advertisement for the garbage and trash bids. Drop off time will be 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.—a half hour reduction. A suggestion was made and approved to eliminate the dumpster at the municipal building for a savings of \$1500. A November clean up will be considered but will depend on the amount of Clean Communities money received and/or other available funds in the fall. This activity does not have to be bid as the amount does not exceed the bid threshold. Quotes can be obtained during the summer based on the number dumpsters instead of a flat fee. However, tighter controls will be needed, including permits for size and number of loads. The escalating amount of building materials and commercial dumping was noted. The latter needs to be taken care of by the contractor and will have to be addressed by the construction office.

Page 28 – Buildings and Grounds: \$2000 for well capping at the Firehouse was eliminated.

Page 29 – Vehicle Maintenance: The \$15,000 remaining for the lease of new police car was cut. Committeeman Molnar will look into using PolyTech for routine maintenance.

Page 31 – Public Health Services: \$5000 removed from Soil Test Witnessing program. The proposal is to have witnessing fees paid directly to witness with a separate check to cover administrative fees submitted to the Township. An ordinance change will be required.

Mayor Corboy reiterated his idea of writing to all professionals and vendors requesting a 10% reduction. He also proposed a 10% shorter work week/10% cut in employee compensation in lieu of layoffs. A voluntary 5 week furlong was also mentioned for consideration. These cuts are needed to help get under the operations cap and will show Township efforts to reduce expenses for the application for extraordinary aid.

A brief exchange over the lawsuit ensued. The need for information to be released concerning the number of offers made and rejected was noted. There will be another meeting with the attorney next week.

Lolly Hoagland noted that Township employees are some of the lowest paid in the County; that things keep getting worse; and, that many employees work several jobs. She also suggested that consideration be given to hiring the prosecutor as an employee with payment based on a per court session basis. Concern about how the reduction in OT for police will affect Court sessions was raised.

Glenn Baran offered a couple of suggestions: 1) the use of comp time in lieu of overtime and/or 2) making all positions 'management.'

Mrs. Hoagland offered that the cleaning service could be discontinued to save money. The employees could vacuum and do weekly trash removal. An every-other-week option was considered due to the situation at the police station and the fear that the buildings would get run down. The service would need to be contacted if this course is adopted.

The mayor will hold a meeting with the employees to discuss the 10% reduction proposal and consider any ideas they may have. A letter will be distributed prior to the meeting. Mrs. Luhrs was requested to produce a dollar number that the decrease would yield. An answer from the police about foregoing their 4% raise this year is still pending. Preparing to bid out professional work for next year needs to be get underway.

Information was relayed from the Construction Official about lost permit revenues from the recent woodshop renovation at South. The amount lost from the entire project is unknown. If the high school was not exempt, there would have been over \$12,000 in fees for just the woodshop. In addition, there are ongoing plan reviews and inspections. There should be some way by which the burden could be split between the sending districts. This led to a discussion about the unequal burden of police coverage and salting/plowing/man hours borne by township residents for these services to the school. Committeeman Molnar will speak to the superintendent about the latter and there's a draft letter under review for the former. The situation at ESC was also mentioned and will be discussed with Lt. Bartzak. It was proposed that a letter be sent stating that they will be charged for police calls with bills to follow.

Attention turned to capital projects. According to Engineer Clerico, a funding ordinance of \$294,000 for the Rocktown Hill drainage project which anticipates a \$200,000 reimbursement from NJDOT will be needed. He has also advised that there is DRJTBC money available and asked if he should make application for another section of Rocktown-Lamb. Road. Section 14 would require discussion with the property owners as it would involve the realignment of the road to eliminate the sharp curve and the extension of the driveway on Block 20 Lot 3. The project would have to be completed by the end of 2009. As Township finances are not favorable for the drainage project, perhaps the DRJTBC would consider funding the \$100,000 shortfall. Although the project is a distance from the current road work, Rocktown Hill is a main feeder to

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Rocktown-Lamb. Road from Route 31. The engineer will be requested to inquire whether or not this item would be considered.

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:09 p.m. on motion by Molnar, seconded by Masterson.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lora L. Olsen, RMC  
Township Clerk