

A special meeting of the East Amwell Township Committee came to order at 7:34 PM. Present were Mayor Peter Kneski, Deputy Mayor Linda F. Lenox, and Committee members Timothy Martin and Larry Tatsch were present. Committee member Patricia A. Cregar was absent. Township Administrator Timothy Matheny and Treasurer/CFO Jane Luhrs were also in attendance.

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, a copy of notice of this meeting was filed in the Clerk's Office, posted on the bulletin board, and sent to the Hunterdon County Democrat, Times of Trenton, and Star Ledger on April 12, 2010. Notice was published in the April 15, 2010, issue of the Hunterdon County Democrat. The purpose of this meeting is to hold a public hearing on Capital Ordinances 10-06, 10-07 and 10-08, to introduce the 2010 Budget, to discuss Township Committee meeting days for 2010, and to enter executive session to discuss contracts. The public is invited to attend and comment at the open portion of the meeting. Action may or may not be taken.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ORDINANCE 10-06 AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR LEVELING AND SUBGRADE RECONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS TOWNSHIP ROADS AS GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL, IN THE COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, NEW JERSEY AND APPROPRIATING \$60,000.00 FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND.

As proof of publication, the legal notice from the Hunterdon County Democrat issue of April 15, 2010 was provided. The ordinance has been posted on the bulletin board and available to the public since introduction on April 8, 2010.

Mr. Matheny explained that there is considerable work to be done on roads, and funding was taken out of the operating budget and put into the capital budget to for repair. The roads may be overlaid in the future.

Motion by Deputy Mayor Lenox, seconded by Mr. Tatsch, and it was carried unanimously to open to the public.

Tim Mathews, 72 Linvale Road, asked what roads would be repaired. The ordinance shows that the roads include, but are not limited to, Rocktown, Lindbergh, Orchard and Zion Roads.

Motion by Deputy Mayor Lenox, seconded by Mr. Tatsch, and it was carried unanimously to close to the public.

Ordinance #10-06 was adopted on a motion by Mr. Tatsch, seconded by Mr. Martin, and carried unanimously by roll call vote: Mr. Martin, yes; Mr. Tatsch, yes; Ms. Lenox, yes; Mr. Kneski, yes.

ORDINANCE 10-07 AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR PURCHASE OF VARIOUS ROAD EQUIPMENT AS A GENERAL IMPROVEMENT FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL, IN THE COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, NEW JERSEY AND APPROPRIATING \$24,000.00 FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND.

As proof of publication, the legal notice from the Hunterdon County Democrat issue of April 15, 2010 was provided. The ordinance has been posted on the bulletin board and available to the public since introduction on April 8, 2010.

Mr. Matheny explained that the ordinance will allow for the purchase of various road equipment, including a power angle plow, motorized bed edger, and a zero turn mower. He explained that the plow will be used by the fleet, including the older truck which was repaired last year. The edger will be used at Clawson Park and in the Township yard, and the zero turn mower will be used on municipal property and the firehouse field. Putting the funding into capital will reduce operating expenses.

Motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lenox, and it was carried unanimously to open to the public.

Tim Mathews, 72 Linvale Road, asked if this was all net new equipment, i.e., adding equipment. Mr. Matheny said yes, mentioning that the municipality never had a motorized edger before.

Motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lenox, and it was carried unanimously to close to the public.

Ordinance 10-07 was adopted on a motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Tatsch, and it was carried unanimously by roll call vote: Mr. Martin, yes; Mr. Tatsch, yes; Ms. Lenox, yes; Mr. Kneski, yes.

ORDINANCE #10-08 AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR PURCHASE OF A 2011 FORD F350 PICKUP TRUCK WITH A 6.7L V8 TURBO DIESEL ENGINE AS A GENERAL IMPROVEMENT FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL, IN THE COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, NEW JERSEY AND APPROPRIATING \$36,000.00 FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND.

As proof of publication, the legal notice from the Hunterdon County Democrat issue of April 15, 2010 was provided. The ordinance has been posted on the bulletin board and available to the public since introduction on April 8, 2010.

Mr. Matheny said that new pick-up truck will replace an older maroon color one, which has been in the fleet for about 15 years and was driven by [previous Road Supervisor] Wayne Marion. The truck has many miles on it and requires major repairs, which may cost thousands of dollars (including an engine repair which would be difficult to do). When first discussed at the budget meetings, DPW was looking at a figure of \$64,000 with all options they wanted. The truck was found on the state bid list, includes a plow, and has all options.

Mr. Tatsch asked about auctioning off the old truck; Mr. Matheny explained that there is a potential for trade, and if this is not done, he may consider doing an internet bid with Gov Bid, which is a better way to get rid of surplus equipment. He reminded the Township Committee that the value on the existing truck "is not great."

Motion by Deputy Mayor Lenox, seconded by Mr. Tatsch, and it was carried unanimously to open to the public.

Tim Mathews, 72 Linvale Road, asked if the truck was linked to the plow purchase. Mr. Matheny explained that it will have a small plow, and he mentioned that the plow in the other ordinance was a large plow for a vehicle like a dump truck.

Motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Tatsch, and it was carried unanimously to close to the public.

Mr. Tatsch asked if the truck and plow could be used at the school; Mr. Matheny said it could be used for small areas, but the majority of the work at the school would be done with big plows.

Ordinance 10-08 was adopted on a motion by Mr. Tatsch, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lenox, and it was carried unanimously by roll call vote: Mr. Martin, yes; Mr. Tatsch, yes; Ms. Lenox, yes; Mr. Kneski, yes.

AMENDMENT TO THE 2010 OPEN SPACE TRUST FUND

The Clerk reminded the governing body that they approved the 2010 Open Space Trust Fund at their meeting on March 11, 2010. An amendment is necessary to include an additional \$20,000 for park maintenance salary expenses.

Mrs. Luhrs further explained that the DPW employees will document their mowing and maintenance hours for Clawson Park and the recreation fields, and the salaries and wages for this work will be charged to the Open Space Trust Fund to relieve the operating budget.

Motion by Mr. Tatsch, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lenox, and it was carried unanimously to open to the public for comments on the amendment.

Tim Mathews, 72 Linvale Road, asked who would be paid the \$20,000, i.e., the same people maintaining the parks and recreation fields, or a private contractor. Mrs. Luhrs explained that the salary would be for current employees, and if a vendor was hired, it would be an "other expense." She also commented that the Township did use an outside contractor a few years ago, but "the job wasn't done well," and it was not as economical as having employees do the work.

Motion by Deputy Mayor Lenox, seconded by Mr. Martin, and it was carried unanimously to close to the public.

+++++

An Amendment to the 2010 Open Space Trust Hearing – April 26, 2010

Purpose: as designated by N.J.S.A. 12-15.7, the tax may be used for acquisition of lands for recreation and conservation purposes, development of lands acquired for recreation and conservation purposes, maintenance of lands acquired for recreation and conservation purposes, acquisition of farmland for farmland preservation purposes, historic preservation of historic properties, structures, facilities, sites, areas or objects for historic preservation purposes, payment of debt service on indebtedness issued or incurred by a municipality for any of the purposes above. During the budget process each year, a public hearing is held on the allocation of funds raised by the open space tax.

The 2010 Open Space Trust Fund will be used for the following:

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------|
| -- | Development of Lands for Recreation and Conservation: | |
| | Recreation Fields | -- |
| \$ 36,000.00 | Maintenance of Parks & Lands for Recreation and Conservation: | |
| 56,000.00 | <u>Add Salaries and Wages</u> | <u>\$20,000.00</u> |
| | Clawson Park Maintenance | \$25,000.00 |
| | Soccer Field Maintenance | \$ 6,000.00 |
| | Recreation Fields Maintenance | \$ 5,000.00 |
| \$ 30,000.00 | Acquisition of Farmland | |
| | Down Payments | -- |
| | Soft Costs | \$30,000.00 |
| | Green Acre Acquisition | -- |
| -- | Historic Preservation | ----- |
| | Other Expenses | ----- |
| \$ 66,000.00 | TOTAL TRUST FUND APPROPRIATIONS | |
| 86,000.00 | | |

+++++

Motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lenox, and it was carried unanimously to approve the amendment to the Open Space Trust Fund.

INTRODUCTION OF THE 2010 BUDGET OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL

Mrs. Luhrs explained that for the third year in a row, the municipality came under the 4% levy cap on the increase in taxes to be raised, based on calculations and worksheets. There was a

loss of significant state aid, and Mrs. Luhrs outlined other factors, including slashing operations by \$170,000, reducing capital by \$80,000, debt service went up \$90,000, deferred charges and statutory expenditures went down \$25,000, and the reserve for uncollected taxes went up \$8,000. There was \$180,000 net reduction from 2009 with decreased appropriations and revenues less than last year. The tax rate last year was .1491 cents; the tax rate for 2010 will be .1501 cents, or an increase of .0011. As an example, a house assessed at \$450,000 paid \$670 in 2009 and will pay \$675 in 2010. Operations are "bare-boned," no raises were given to employees for two years, and Mrs. Luhrs concluded that the budget "was as lean as you can get."

A question was raised as to what would happen if state aid is cut again next year; Mrs. Luhrs could not answer. Committee members discussed the reduction in state aid and energy receipts over the years. Mrs. Luhrs explained that it was a state calculation, every municipality was cut, and East Amwell Township's loss was 23%.

Mrs. Luhrs explained the budget with a 100% tax rate, i.e., 43.7% goes to the local school; 25.4% goes to the regional school; 19.2% goes to the County; 8.2% goes to the fire district; 2.2% goes to municipal farmland; and 1.3% goes to the municipality. Mr. Martin said, "This is a definition of a shoestring."

Mr. Tatsch calculated that the difference between .1491 and .1501 equated to about .74-.75 per cent increase.

Mayor Kneski thanked Mrs. Luhrs for her work on the budget. He also thanked staff and boards for meeting goals. He commended everyone for a "fabulous" job in these economic times and thanked everyone for the input and help. He concluded that he thanked Mrs. Luhrs especially "for the hours and hours" she put into the budget, doing "a fantastic job, and she cannot retire at the end of the year."

Mr. Tatsch also wanted to thank the staff, realizing that there would be no salary increase again this year. He stated that he really wanted to see something for the employees this year, but it was not possible.

++++
RESOLUTION #65-10

Introduction of the 2010 Budget
(As Attached to the Permanent Set of Minutes)

By Order of the Township Committee,

Peter Kneski, Mayor

++++
Motion by Mr. Tatsch, seconded by Mr. Martin, and it was carried unanimously by roll call vote to approve the introduction of the 2010 Budget: Mr. Martin, yes; Mr. Tatsch, yes; Ms. Lenox, yes; Mr. Kneski, yes.

The public hearing is set for a special meeting on Thursday, May 27, 2010, at 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Kneski also wanted to thank the Township Committee for their assistance in preparing the budget, mentioning many hours of work and many discussions, all of which were very important.

DISCUSSION ON 2010 TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

Mr. Tatsch explained that there were requests from two residents to change the meeting day of the Township Committee because it falls on the same night at the County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) and for other reasons. The attorney was asked about his attendance, and he would have difficulties in attending on another Thursday night. It was noted that the Township Committee meetings have always been on the second and fourth Thursdays,

and the only difference this year is that the second meeting was eliminated. He concluded that there would always be conflicts, and he didn't see how to get away from all conflicts.

Mayor Kneski added that a shift to the middle of the month defeats the purpose of why the Township Committee set up the schedule they had, i.e., the intent is to have the meeting early in the month, and if necessary, a special meeting could be held, including being held on the 4th Thursday of the month. His suggestion was to leave the calendar as is for the year and eliminate the need to re-advertise the meeting. He suggested that the Township Committee may want to revisit the matter at the end of 2010 in preparation for the New Year. Mr. Martin agreed that changing now would be disruptive. Deputy Mayor Lenox appreciated the resident's concern for moving the meeting to allow her to attend the CADB meetings.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Motion by Deputy Mayor Lenox, seconded by Mr. Tatsch, and it was carried unanimously to open to the public.

Tim Mathews, 72 Linvale Road, asked for budget clarification about the salary line in the Open Space Trust Fund budget. Mrs. Luhrs explained that the Fund has a separate budget, outside of the regular 2010 Budget being introduced at this time.

Mr. Mathews asked about the amount for Raritan Township traffic enforcement; it is \$10,000 for 2010 and can be found in the general appropriations total of \$2,668,795.59. There are no details provided in the budget document itself.

Mr. Mathews commented on the revenues sheet provided by Mrs. Luhrs, and he concluded that the Township Committee "did good work, and thank you."

Motion by Deputy Mayor Lenox, seconded by Mr. Martin, and it was carried unanimously to close to the public.

RESOLUTION TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION

+++++
RESOLUTION #66-10

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, East Amwell Township Committee is of the opinion that circumstances presently exist; and

WHEREAS, the governing body of the Township of East Amwell wishes to discuss contracts; and

WHEREAS, minutes will be kept and once the matter involving the confidentiality of the above no longer requires that confidentiality, then minutes can be made public;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the public be excluded from this meeting.

By Order of the Township Committee,

Peter Kneski, Mayor

+++++
Motion by Deputy Mayor Lenox, seconded by Mr. Tatsch, and it was carried unanimously to approve the resolution at 8:08 p.m.

Executive session began at 8:10 p.m.

The regular meeting resumed at 9:10 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lenox, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Teresa R. Stahl, RMC/CMC
Municipal Clerk