

A special meeting of the East Amwell Township Committee came to order at 7:30 PM. Present were Mayor Peter Kneski, Deputy Mayor Dart Sageser, and Committee members Patricia Cregar, Tim Mathews, and David Wang-Iverson. Treasurer/CFO Karen Baldino was 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 February 13, 2013 and revised on February 26, 2013. The purpose of this meeting is to meet the Treasurer/CFO to discuss the 2013 budget, to discuss personnel in executive session, to discuss coverage in the Finance Office, and to approve a temporary budget resolution and a resolution to authorize signatures. The public is invited to attend and comment during the open portion of the meeting. Action may or may not be taken at the open session.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Baldino pointed out some change sheets, based on discussions at the February 7, 2013, meeting and other changes:

On Financial OE page, increase the auditor line by \$1,000 as per the contract signed for 2013; Changes on Page 2 of the change sheets were made as follows:

- Building OE, reduction by \$7,500 for DEP permit not needed;
- Additional \$500 for the Public Defender and \$4,000 for the Prosecutor, based on the new court arrangement with Franklin Township.
- Reduce amount of Social Security/Medicare OE by \$191.25.
- Capital Improvement Fund (CIF) increase of \$10,000 for 5% down payments for salt barn and equipment barn.

A new page 25 showed an increase of reserve for uncollected taxes of \$317,956.21 with a change in the collection percentage from 97.96 to 97.94% in line 11. Total general appropriation is \$2,344,494.25 together with the reserve figure is now \$2,662,450.46. Fire District tax was also corrected from \$219,000 to \$218,838. The municipal open space tax was estimated at \$300,000 (reduced by \$15,000) based on the reassessment, with Mrs. Baldino saying the number could go up or down from there.

Capital Budget for 2013 – 2017 included \$163,000 for Clawson Park Maintenance (grading improvements) – the ordinance has been introduced and up for adoption on March 14. This has no effect on appropriations since funding will come from the open space fund. An additional \$52,500 was added for the equipment barn reconstruction, and \$10,000 was added to the Capital Improvement Fund (CIF) for 5% down payments for this barn and the salt barn (total of \$51,800 from CIF for the proposed budget).

If the budget were to be fully funded without any increase in taxes, \$185,544.26 would be necessary unless there was an increase in another revenue.

The budget included the assumption that a fifth worker would be hired, and it did not include a salary increase for staff or the Administrator. Mayor Kneski contacted the Township Attorney, and he agreed that the Open Space Trust Fund (OSTF) could be used for paying down open space debt.

Mr. Wang-Iverson referred to page 3 of the handouts, referencing the amount of \$350,000 for open space debt. He also asked about the (\$38,000) in the line for delinquent taxes; there is a percentage calculation that must be used to anticipate uncollected taxes, and this figure is \$38,000 less than in 2012.

Mayor Kneski noted that state aid will be the same amount as received last year, according to notification he received. Mr. Wang-Iverson mentioned conversations with (former Township Committee member) Larry Tatsch about the percentage of state aid received in comparison with other municipalities, e.g., West Amwell received around \$930,000 because of Texas Eastern presence in their municipality, and Delaware Township received a slightly higher amount (15% more). On a question from Mr. Wang-Iverson, Mrs. Baldino explained that one could go on line to see how state aid is determined, noting that wealthier municipalities get less than poorer ones.

Mrs. Baldino spoke about looking for sources of revenue, mentioning \$80,000 in the capital surplus account that can be anticipated as revenue or used to fund a smaller project. Down payments cannot come from that source, but they could come from the Capital Improvement Fund. This fund could also be used for small projects, but not as a source of revenue for the budget. She also cautioned about utilizing too much of these funds and not having money available later in the year if a project materializes.

Mayor Kneski asked Mrs. Baldino for suggestions to achieve a flat budget and make up the \$185,500. Mrs. Baldino suggested using the OSTF, noting \$617,000 in open space debt and only \$350,000 coming out of the fund. Mr. Wang-Iverson also noted that that Clawson Park grading would be coming out of the OSTF. Additionally, Mrs. Baldino explained that there was an unfunded ordinance in 2011 to purchase the Drift and Zuegner properties in the amount of \$180,000; options were to fund the ordinance or go out for bond anticipation notes (i.e., add them to notes due in May). She also cautioned about depleting the trust fund. On a question from the Committee, Mrs. Baldino explained that the bond ordinance adopted in 2011 authorized the purchase and authorized borrowing money for the properties. There were refunds from other agencies, but the Township's obligation was \$180,000 (not reimbursed); the township has to replenish the capital fund balance (cash deficit).

Mayor Kneski also spoke with Mr. Tatsch, who reminded him that the large amount of money being held in the OSTF was to have \$1,000,000 in reserve for the purchase of the Higgins property if it were acquired. Some discussion took place with the Township Committee members regarding the property not being imminently available for preservation and the potential to rebuild the fund in the future.

Mr. Wang-Iverson asked about restructuring debt in 2010 and the 2003 bond; Mrs. Baldino felt that the restructuring probably resulted in some savings. Mr. Wang-Iverson spoke about short term budgeting being "troublesome" for the next five years, but he was concerned with taking money from the OSTF at this time (i.e., already using \$163,000 for Clawson; \$180,000 to fund authorized debt in the bond ordinance, and \$50,000 for the budget line item for debt). Deputy Mayor Sageser spoke about leveraging the OSTF and extending debt for future generations. Mrs. Baldino's debt spreadsheet showed that the Township should have debt paid off by 2024. Dialogue took place about potential to bond for the debt, with Mrs. Baldino suggesting bond anticipation notes rather than bonds (not enough debt to bond), possible note interest, amount to be paid per year, accumulating additional capital projects to roll into a bond, the differences in life expectancy of purchases in bond regulations, etc.

Mr. Mathews suggested that the Clawson Park grading and paving could be deferred, and some discussion took place. The ordinance has been introduced and is slated for adoption at the next regular meeting. If the ordinance is adopted and the project not pursued, the ordinance could be cancelled. Some comments were made about awarding the bid if a good price was obtained, and the Clerk mentioned that the Township would have to pay for the bid process if it occurred, whether they awarded or held the project in abeyance. Mayor Kneski spoke about safety issues identified and not addressed, cautioning about potential liability; he suggested that perhaps the critical areas might be addressed.

A question was raised about how much of the budget was attributed to the fifth DPW employee; from May through December; the cost would be \$38,000 including benefits. A full year would be around \$65,000. Reducing the budget by \$38,000 would still equate to a \$146,800 budget deficit. Some discussion took place about the Department of Public Works budget, and it was noted that DPW Member Jason Silverthorn was in attendance for these discussions.

Mrs. Baldino spoke about having \$60,000 in the capital improvement fund (CIF), part of which could be used for down payments or to fully fund small projects, once again cautioning the Committee to keep some money in this fund for future down payments or projects. Some discussion took place on the use of the CIF for the down payments, including whether or not to reduce the capital projects or not putting funding in the budget from the CIF until the project is ready to proceed. Mrs. Baldino reminded the Committee that they would have to have money in the budget for the down payments if they wanted to proceed with the projects.

Mr. Mathews provided the following scenario: eliminate the \$51,800 in CIF for capital projects, bringing budget deficit to \$146,800, removing the \$38,800 for the fifth roadman, bringing the deficit to \$94,400, and taking that amount out of the OSTF. Mrs. Baldino also mentioned the \$30,000 for the debris removal, saying most of the money was spent, with some outstanding bills. Mayor Kneski said that FEMA reimbursement would be forthcoming at some time, i.e., in all likelihood 75% of expenses although there was some speculation at one time that it would be 100% - this will go into surplus once it is received.

Deputy Mayor Sageser asked about the traffic patrol by Raritan Township, stating the relationship with Raritan Township ended today; he asked if options were being considered and assumed that the fines and fees on both sides of the equation "were a wash." Mrs. Baldino said that nothing changed in the budget numbers.

RECYCLING COMMITTEE AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION: Joyce Corboy, Recycling Coordinator and Secretary for the Environmental Commission, was present at this time. She spoke about the proposal for shredding coming in at \$450 for 3 hours and \$300 for 3 hours "as a nice service for residents" - the intent of the Recycling Committee is to hold the secure shredding event at the May recycling depot, and members of the Amwell Valley Business Association are willing to help. Tonnage from the shred will count towards the Township's tonnage report. Clean Communities money will be used for the event, with Mrs. Corboy explaining the money can only be used for specific categories, with this being one of them; it is also used to pay for the monthly depots. Committee members discussed the 2 vs. 3 hour shred, and it was decided to hold it for 3 hours.

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RESOLUTION #36-13

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell that they hereby support the use of Clean Communities Funding to pay for shredding services for three hours for an event being arranged by the Recycling Committee for the May 2013 depot.

By Order of the Township Committee,

Peter Kneski, Mayor

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Motion by Deputy Mayor Sageser, seconded by Mr. Mathews, and carried unanimously.

The Clerk will confirm insurance coverage for the event.

Mrs. Corboy explained that both the Recycling Committee and Environmental Commission are eager to resume a yearly newsletter in the Spring to advertise events (e.g., Clean Up Day, Roadside Clean Up Day, baseball, etc.). The Committees do not believe that information is getting to residents at this time. She obtained costs from Hunterdon County, and they would be able to print a 6 page newsletter for \$434 and an 8 page letter for \$427. Postage costs are still being determined, but she believed it would be under \$1,000. Funding would also come from the Clean Communities Grant. There is currently \$2,000 in the budget for printing and binding 2000 flyers; this amount will be removed from the draft budget since it will come from grant funding. Mrs. Corboy said that she will have to have the newsletter done by mid-March in order to mail by the end of March. She further explained that the increase in salary for both boards pertained to her work on the newsletter.

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RESOLUTION #37-13

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell that they hereby support the production of a newsletter by the Environmental Commission and Recycling Committee utilizing Clean Communities funding, not to exceed the available balance.

By Order of the Township Committee,

Peter Kneski, Mayor

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Motion by Mr. Mathews, seconded by Mrs. Cregar, and carried unanimously.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS: Jason Silverthorn, filling in for the DPW Superintendent in his absence, was present at this time. On a question about page 45 of the budget and the contract for materials, he explained that the Township purchases different types of stone under contract, that there is an escalation clause in the contract that may be extended for two years, and the contract allows purchase up to 500 tons for each product. Mr. Silverthorn continued by stating that the Township doesn't have a paver, so application of the material is dumped, pushed with a grader and backhoe, and raked. He commented on difficulties doing repairs in the summer with other responsibilities such as mowing, maintenance, etc., particularly after the storms in the last couple of years. Deputy Mayor Sageser asked about having a fifth worker, and Mr. Silverthorn spoke about normal day activities, e.g., paperwork to be done; if one man is out, three men work together (i.e., one man cannot work alone); additional mowing equipment is being purchased, and having another worker would mean more productivity. He provided an example of a summer work week with specific activities taking place. He mentioned that the Township will probably see more damage to roads this year after winter weather, and more repair work/materials will be needed. Mr. Silverthorn also mentioned that many years ago, there were 8 men on the crew. On a question, Mr. Silverthorn answered that the Township did not get any road work grants last year, and the crew used road materials for filling in potholes, explaining the process in detail. Mayor Kneski also mentioned the state law to have flagmen during road work.

Deputy Mayor Sageser asked about Lindbergh Road work; Mr. Silverthorn explained that this work was listed in the grant application last year (not awarded) and again requested this year. He explained that this road, along with Zion Road and Stony Brook Roads, are priorities this year, grant or not, since the roads are getting narrow. The possibility of removing funding from this line was mentioned.

Deputy Mayor Sageser asked about an increase in storm expenses from \$500 to \$1,000. Mr. Silverthorn spoke about receiving quotes for debris removal in the amount of \$8,000 but having FEMA estimating \$16,000. DEP fees are also an issue. Removal has not yet been scheduled.

Mr. Mathews asked Mr. Silverthorn to prioritize the salt barn and equipment barn projects. Mr. Silverthorn explained that the equipment barn project includes insulation and heat, i.e., the building is a tin shell, the township stores expensive equipment (including new equipment) in the barn, and moisture is causing corrosion. Additionally, temperatures in the building are around 50 degrees, so heating the building results in high electric bills. The intent is to insulate walls and overhead, including heavy plastic and blown insulation, into the barn. The heating contractor will also run a line for gas heat at no additional charge. Mr. Silverthorn also added that the 50 degree temperature in the building causes air lines to freeze up in the vehicles, and getting vehicles operational for daily work is often delayed.

Mr. Silverthorn further explained that the salt barn is 30 years old and is an old Agway barn with corrugated sides and roof. The correct size panels are no longer made, and the roof is leaking (i.e., incorrect sized panels do not seal properly). Joists are decaying and the walls are pushing out - there are dirt mounds around the outside to keep the structure from collapsing. The intent is to pour a concrete floor, with 10 foot walls and put a short barn on top to get a 20 foot height. He further explained that the Township is in "Tier 2" stormwater area but must adhere to "Tier 1" requirements for construction, including the concrete base. Mayor Kneski concurred with this.

Deputy Mayor Sageser mentioned Environmental Commission concerns with salt use, rather seeing grit being used. Mr. Silverthorn mentioned liability on the mountain, with grit getting into the waterway, problems with grit getting into the drainage pipes, and not being able to melt ice in the areas without sun. He said that even if the Township used grit, they would still have to store it to keep it from freezing and compacting.

Some discussion took place about the Hunterdon County garage in the southern area in West Amwell. Logistically, it would not be a good idea to use materials from the garage (i.e.,

distance and travel time); Mr. Silverthorn also outlined some problems in West Amwell with the state garage and salt pollution issues. Mr. Silverthorn commented on also getting information from Raritan Township. He concluded that the existing building leaks, no one makes the proper panels anymore, and it was unclear whether how long the existing building would last without collapse.

On a question about safety signs and equipment, Mr. Silverthorn said that \$1,100 of the \$1,500 in this line was spent last year. He explained that the \$3,500 in the line item is to replace signs that are removed or damaged, and state regulations require 8 inch letter replacement signs rather than 6 inches. He outlined specific costs for hardware also (e.g., \$2/tamper proof nut and \$1.10 for a plastic washer).

Deputy Mayor Sageser asked about the line item for Road Maintenance Repair (p. 45 of budget sheets) for \$22,000; Mr. Silverthorn will check with the DPW Superintendent if this is an accurate number. Some discussion took place on using this line to offset the cost of the fifth roadman; one comment included the fact that if there was a fifth man, they would probably need the material to continue repairs.

Deputy Mayor Sageser asked about the \$3,500 for rolling stock; Mr. Silverthorn explained that this is the smaller items, such as oil, oil filters, sign bolts, plow bolts, etc. Vehicle maintenance was also increased by \$1,000 due to the age of the fleet, including a 15 year-old backhoe that recently called for \$4,000 in repairs. It was explained that the backhoe is a "vital machine," i.e., opens roads, removes trees, etc.

AMWELL VALLEY LITTLE BASEBALL LEAGUE: Alan George, League President, and Kevin Leighton, Sponsorship Coordinator, were in attendance. Mr. George mentioned their previous request for funding for improvements, stating that last year the Township assisted with mowing the fields and port-a-johns. He spoke with Mr. Matheny about getting assistance this year, and he was advised to speak with the Township Committee. Mr. George was asking for the same assistance as last year. He was told that there was funding for mowing still listed in the budget. Mayor Kneski also mentioned that there was a building inspection done for the snack shack, and it is "in fine shape from a safety perspective."

Mr. George mentioned the roofs on the dugouts and their suggestion that the Township purchase the fencing rather than the League paying for a fencing contractor. He noted that "we can push this off until next year." Mr. Silverthorn felt that the DPW could put the dugout roofs on "in-house," with the help of a fifth man. He asked about the mowing, i.e., was it just mowing or mowing and fertilizing at last year's cost of \$3,000; Mr. Silverthorn wanted to get additional quotes. Mr. George will get information to him, reminding the Township Committee that the League wanted more aggressive mowing (more than once a week) for better playing fields. It was noted that the Township mows once a week outside the play area, and the League maintains the fields for play from March through July.

GENERATOR: Mr. Silverthorn reminded the governing body that they joined the County's pre-mitigation plan, and he obtained information on power generator rental. The Township would pay \$175.00 per year to participate and during events, the Township would receive a call asking if they wanted a generator - the Township will have an hour to respond yes or no. The DPW would drive to Piscataway to pick up a 125 horsepower generator at a cost of \$1,375 per week, and it will power the whole building. An inlet box at a cost of \$15,000-20,000 will be required instead of a transfer switch at a cost of \$32,000. Mr. Silverthorn will have more information on this within the next week. The Township has two diesel trucks, and the generator would operate on diesel. If the equipment was picked up, it will save a delivery fee (i.e., the Township has a trailer capable of handling the weight of the generator). Mayor Kneski provided information on his home generator; Mr. Silverthorn explained that the one being proposed for the municipal building would operate on a manual switch, not an automatic one.

Mayor Kneski said that nothing was being cut from the preliminary capital budget yet, i.e., "ducks were (being put) in a row."

The Clerk recognized some staff members in the audience and asked if they were here to present information prepared by the Deputy Clerk on salary and wage in other municipalities; staff

members said no. Mrs. Baldino said that the budget prepared did not anticipate a salary increase for staff. Mayor Kneski said that they have not finished discussing this part of the budget.

FARMLAND/OPEN SPACE: Farmland/Open Space Preservation Committee (FOSPC) Vice Chair Dick Ginman and Member Fred Gardner were in attendance.

Mr. Ginman earlier provided the Clerk with a worksheet entitled Targeted Farms And Open Space Projections (Attached To This Set Of Minutes) and a statement from Mr. Gardner on Open Space. Mr. Ginman explained that the total for the target farms would be \$2,223,000, but more likely \$309,620 for the top 20% of the list (as a guess). Open Space targets would total \$950,528 with a likelihood of \$348,864. He concluded that "the five year horizon" would equate to about \$658,000, and keeping \$700,000 or more in the OSTF as a buffer would be prudent.

Mr. Gardner commented on Mr. Wang-Iverson's previous comment tonight that the next five years would be difficult and Mrs. Baldino's comment about the life expectancy of land being 40 years. He did not believe it made sense to have 60% of debt in open space in five years, stating that there was a very long life benefit of land. He had two questions: 1) With \$670,000 in short term bonds, if other obligations were found, would be it wise to go out for bonds for 20 years and reduce debt to \$100,000 per year from the budget? 2) Referencing the 2003 bond with a \$840,000 in principal and the 2010 issue at 4% interest, he was unsure if the bond owners would consider options that would reduce interest, given the current economic climate. He asked about the possibility of extending both of these bonds at a lower percentage to benefit against larger dollar annual requirements and pushing the debt out to the future since future residents will be benefiting from the preservation. He assumed that the bond underwriters would have information on whether this could be done prior to finalizing the budget. Mrs. Baldino said that this would depend on whether the bonds were callable or not, that the life span of the purchase comes into play again, and that the Local Finance Board would have to allow it; she questioned whether this could be done prior to the budget being introduced.

Further discussion took place between the Township Committee and FOSPC members, with the following highlights: on a question from Mr. Mathews, Mrs. Baldino said that the 2003 and 2010 bonds were co-mingled with open space and equipment; Mr. Wang-Iverson suggested that this would affect the term of the bond. Mr. Gardner spoke about putting the five years of bond anticipation notes together with the barns and other capital expenditures. He spoke about going for a shorter term bond, noting that over the long run, preservation projects save the Township money. Mr. Gardner asked the Treasurer about the bond anticipation note process, i.e., rolling over five years with part of the principal being due the third year.

Mr. Ginman suggested that financing options are worth looking at, and Mrs. Baldino suggested getting information from bond counsel, including whether the bonds are callable. Her last day is tomorrow, but she will contact bond counsel to discuss options. A suggestion was made to have bond counsel give a presentation to the Township Committee, with Mr. Mathews commenting on asking them about not catching the error in a previous bond ordinance. Mr. Mathews offered to meet with bond counsel on behalf of the Township Committee; Mayor Kneski felt that all members should participate in the discussions. Deputy Mayor Sageser suggested getting this finalized before introduction of the budget might be difficult, but knowing all options was important. Mr. Wang-Iverson agreed that it was important to get information to determine what the impact would be on the budget. Mrs. Baldino commented on having the budget introduced by March 15.

Mr. Gardner cautioned that municipal bonds have different regulations than corporate bonds, but he believed getting information from counsel was important. Further comments were exchanged, including the following highlights: Mr. Mathews commented reduced open space of 4 cents after the reassessment, i.e., less than \$300,000; Deputy Mayor Sageser suggested that bond counsel look at the bonds and parameters (i.e., callable in five or ten years, etc.); the intent is to have a public discussion with bond counsel to see if this is an option and what will be achieved with the reinvestment; Mrs. Baldino will contact Bond Counsel Andrea Kahn tomorrow to ask about refinancing, for how long, cost savings, etc. If the answer is no and it is not feasible, the Township Committee will have to decide where they stand and whether to pay to have counsel appear at a meeting. The governing body and FOSPC members reviewed the debt list previously provided by Mrs. Baldino for term specifics. The possibility of having a

conference call with bond counsel was also mentioned, and Mrs. Baldino will follow up on this tomorrow.

Mr. Mathews summarized where he was with the budget: \$185,44.26 as a deficit to eliminate, remove the fifth roadman to reduce it to \$146,744, remove \$51,800 from CIF, add back \$2,000 from Recycling Committee (expenses covered under Clean Communities); take \$90,000 from OSTF, leaving \$700,000 in the OSTF as a buffer. Some discussion took place between the governing body members, with the following highlights: including the Clawson Park project and debt, the OSTF was being reduced by \$400,000 from the \$1,200,000; the possibility of taking \$70,000 from OSTF and \$20,000 from capital surplus was mentioned; Mayor Kneski would like to see the fifth roadman included in the budget, commenting on getting further information on the reassessment, other sources of revenue going forth, and a bond solution; Mr. Wang-Iverson agreed that reducing debt payments to \$100,000 over the next four years would be helpful, if bond counsel agrees; Committee members agreed that the information FOSPC provided about targeted areas was helpful.

Mrs. Baldino agreed that she wanted to help the Township get through the budget process (even though her last day in the office is March 1). Mr. Mathews asked Mrs. Baldino to prepare the new budget with what was discussed tonight and make a separate version with a salary increase. Deputy Mayor Sageser suggested consideration of a 1.75 percent salary increase, based on cost of living, "as a fair way to keep pace with inflation."

Mrs. Baldino recapped changes made this evening: Instead of eliminating capital fund \$51,800 from the budget, she will use half of the number from CIF and half from capital fund balance (i.e., reduce CIF by \$25,000 and increase anticipated revenue from capital fund balance by the difference), take out road reconstruction from the capital budget, leave salt barn, equipment barn, Holland and Catepillar in capital budget. Mr. Silverthorn explained that even if a grant is not obtained, some maintenance work was necessary on Lindbergh Road; he was advised that he could use money from the operating budget. Some comments were exchanged about leaving the project in the capital plan, on whether the project could be financed next year since the grant has not yet been awarded, or later amend the capital budget.

Mrs. Cregar spoke about the information she provided to the Committee regarding the Senior Citizen's organization and their financial records; the governing body was previously copied on this information. Their budget was briefly discussed, including reference to the organization carrying over \$6,000 in their budget; the governing body was in agreement that they would reduce their funding from \$4,000 to \$2,000 (as shown on page 56 of the budget sheets). On a question from Mrs. Baldino, she was advised that the \$250 for the County Senior Citizen's Organization is a different county entity, with Mrs. Cregar adding that this donation has been in the budget for many, many years.

Mrs. Baldino again recapped her review of the budget: Taking out Lindbergh and Stoney Brook Road project from capital, the CIF was being reduced by \$39,100, reducing CIF figure from \$51,800 to \$18,500, using \$40,000 from the capital fund balance, adding \$2,000 more into the budget from Recycling and \$2,000 more from Senior Citizens, the adjusted deficit was \$123,046 if the extra roadman was kept, and including the 1.75% COLA adjustment for staff. Using OSTF money for the budget may mean a reduction to less than \$700,000 in the fund, noting that electricity and mowing for the fields come out of that fund. The budget will be prepared with a salary adjustment and one without the adjustment. Mr. Wang-Iverson suggested notifying the public that the governing body did bring the budget from a \$185,000 deficit to a zero percent tax increase, and also show that the amount for salary increase and the fifth employee were the reasons for the increase. Mayor Kneski again noted that the intent is to keep a zero tax rate increase with or without extra employees or salary increases. He noted that even with an additional 10% reduction, there is a problem without new revenue sources.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Nancy Cunningham, 14 Wertsville Road, commented on taking one-third out of OSTF and causing a decimation of the fund for the next five years in order to help with the budget, i.e., using funds for ball fields and mowing. She suggested that the Township may consider not

paying for mowing. She spoke about the intent of not raising taxes but eventually have the need to increase taxes significantly by keeping them flat instead of raising them incrementally.

Ms. Cunningham said that she is at Clawson Park regularly and has seen improvements made to the paths with very few ruts. Mr. Silverthorn said that the DPW addressed the ruts after heavy rains, adding that there are drainage problems. Ms. Cunningham suggested that the paths are in good shape, and the governing body might reconsider what is being proposed for Clawson Park this year, given the budget constraints. Mayor Kneski said the Township did not need a \$163,000 liability with the pathway conditions, stating that the bid may come in far less than what is projected.

Ms. Cunningham mentioned the consideration of a fifth member of the DPW adding \$38,000 to the budget. Mrs. Baldino explained that there is a temporary employee in the budget now, and the \$38,000 was from May to December. Ms. Cunningham cautioned that a fifth man could mean \$60,000 in the budget next year with no other increases in revenue. Some discussion took place about using temporary contractors rather than hiring a fifth employee. Mr. Silverthorn mentioned the "strong skill level" of the current employee and the fact that temporary contractors have to be paid at prevailing wage; this was attempted with snow plowers with no success (e.g., finding willing contractors for temporary work on short notice).

Ms. Cunningham strongly supported giving the employees a raise, particularly in light of consideration of hiring another DPW employee, adding that "not giving them a raise was not a smart policy move." She mentioned that the staff were terrific and did a good job; governing body members agreed.

Motion by Mr. Mathews, seconded by Deputy Mayor Sageser, and carried unanimously to close to the public.

Mrs. Baldino left the meeting and agreed to email the governing body members after she speaks with bond counsel tomorrow.

There was a short recess before going into executive session. When the session resumed, the Clerk was asked to get information on how to get a question on the November ballot to increase the OSTF tax. Some discussion took place, including drawing on the fund for purchases, including the Higgins farm, how to address the budget if the tax is voted down, etc.

RESOLUTION TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION

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RESOLUTION #38 - 13

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 personnel; 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

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Motion by Mrs. Cregar, seconded by Mr. Wang-Iverson, and carried unanimously.

Executive session began at 10:35 p.m. (For the record, Rice Notices were given to Employees Christine Rosikiewicz and David Barrick.)

The regular meeting resumed at 10:55 p.m.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT COVERAGE

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RESOLUTION #39-13

RESOLUTION TO APPOINT AN INTERIM ASSISTANT TREASURER AND TO AMEND RESOLUTION #16-13 AUTHORIZING SIGNATURES ON TOWNSHIP BANK ACCOUNTS

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell that they hereby amend Resolution #16-13, Authorizing Signatures on Township Bank Accounts, as follows:

Remove the Names Karen Baldino, Treasurer, and Maria Andrews, Assistant Treasurer;

Replace with Christine Rosikiewicz, appointed as Interim Assistant Treasurer until the position is filled; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Ms. Rosikiewicz will be paid at the current salary she is receiving as a substitute, which falls within the salary range for an Assistant Treasurer.

By Order of the Township Committee,

Peter Kneski, Mayor

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Motion by Mrs. Cregar, seconded by Mr. Wang-Iverson, and carried unanimously.

TEMPORARY BUDGET AMENDMENT

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RESOLUTION #40-13

(As Attached to The Original Set of Minutes)

By Order of the Township Committee,

Peter Kneski, Mayor

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Motion by Mr. Wang-Iverson, seconded by Mr. Mathews, and carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion by Mrs. Cregar, seconded by Mr. Mathews, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 p.m.

Teresa R. Stahl, RMC/CMC
Municipal Clerk

