

APPROVED: June 1, 2010

WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP COUNCIL  
BUDGET WORK SESSION #1  
April 16, 2010

CALL TO ORDER: President Borek called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

This is to advise that the notice requirement provided for in the "Open Public Meetings Act" has been satisfied. Notice of this meeting was properly given and transmitted to The Times and Princeton Packet; filed with the Clerk of the Municipality; and posted in the West Windsor Township Municipal Building at North Post and Clarksville Roads on March 31, 2010.

ATTENDEES: President: Borek; Vice President: Geevers; Council: Ciccone, Khanna, Morgan; Mayor: Hsueh; Business Administrator: Hary; Chief Financial Officer: Louth; Tax Assessor: Benner (9:30 a.m. to 10:20 a.m.); Coordinator of Community Development: Pat Ward (10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.); Township Engineer: Guzik (10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.); Code Official: Valeri (10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.); Manager of Land Use: Surtees (10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.); Assistant Manager of Engineering: Aronson (10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.); Chief Pica (11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.); Manager of Fire and Emergency Services: Yates (11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.); Township Clerk: Young

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Ms. Young led the salute to the flag.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

TAX ASSESSOR

Mr. Benner advised that home values have declined, commercial properties are still unsettling, and rents are stable but soft. He noted that lending is stringent and these trends will not change anytime soon. Mr. Benner informed Council that the four positives in the current Township affairs are:

- The State has taken itself out of the assessment process and the Township goes directly to the County Board of Taxation.
- Appeals are down for 2010.
- Out of the original forty-five appeals, three have rolled over, three appeals are actively negotiating, and two appeals are considering settlement.
- Compliance plan for 2011: adjustments are going down and the worst of the residential crisis is over.

Council addressed questions to Mr. Benner regarding property values, assessments, how redevelopment will affect home values, tax base, vacant properties and their effect on the tax rate, demographics between commercial and residential and the effect of some State statutes on assessing properties.

Ms. Louth noted that a penny is worth \$608,800.00 and advised that the 2010 average assessment is \$549,345.00.

Mayor Hsueh spoke of the 4% cap for 2010 and the inevitable 2.5% hard cap for 2011. He informed Council that there will be reduction in services within the Township.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Ward outlined the responsibilities for each Division and noted that Community Development is a revenue producing Department.

Planning and Zoning Division

Mr. Surtees advised that the Division earns \$42,000 a year in farmland leases and \$22,000 from cell tower leases. He also spoke of goals and projects in the works for 2010.

Council addressed questions to Mr. Surtees and advised him that they are reviewing the sign ordinance at the May Agenda Session.

#### Construction Division

Mr. Valeri spoke of the number of permits, certificates of occupancy, and inspections completed in 2009 along with the revenues earned in 2009, and the potential revenue for 2010.

Mr. Valeri explained that most of his overtime is seasonal and is generated from evening and weekend residential needs. He outlined all the current projects that the Construction Division is working on. Mr. Valeri advised that there are at least ten more years until the Township is at full build-out.

Council chose to hold off questions until all the presentations were given.

#### Engineering Division

Mr. Guzik noted that the Engineering Division assists with other Township Boards and Committees, works on pre-construction and construction projects, monitors and maintains infrastructure, updates all Township maps, and aids with Administration and resident requests.

Council addressed questions to the Division Heads.

Mr. Morgan noted that the actual percentages were misleading and did not give a clear factual picture of money spent and saved. He also inquired about car allowances versus actual mileage, wage freezes, overtime reduction, and hindrances that can be resolved through better legislation

Mr. Khanna asked about the number of personnel, the Divisions' influence on revenues, and the use of technology to become more efficient.

Ms. Ciccone also inquired about what costs were recommended versus what was charged, overtime, and green initiatives.

Ms. Geevers asked about the status of the Rite Aid reconstruction, flexibility in overtime hours, increase of fees for permits, and the cost of work that is being done for the parks and schools which does not add to the Township's revenues.

Mr. Borek inquired about inspections and the mandates of State statutes.

Ms. Ciccone suggested that each Department/Division create a list of suggestions to change policies, ordinances, and State statutes.

Mr. Morgan suggested that the Council address issues that are barriers to the Township from becoming more business friendly.

Mr. Hary advised that the GroWW Festival funds were eliminated from the budget, and suggested that funds be added for this event on an every other year basis. He also noted that the Environmental Commission's budget was cut, but that the Chair and Administration will look into getting grant funds to sustain the Commission for 2010.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

Chief Pica advised the Council that 40,000 calls were answered by the Police Division in 2009, an increase over 2008, due to the boost in population. He outlined the responsibilities of the Police Division noting that their number one priority was responding to emergencies. Chief Pica reviewed the responsibilities of the Police Dispatcher which is a twenty-four hour, seven days a week job that often requires a lot of overtime. He outlined the issues concerning the high amount of overtime that is generated by the dispatchers.

Ms. Geevers suggested that the Police Division consider other means to reduce the overtime such as a central dispatching unit, contributions from businesses such as Nassau Park and the Hyatt Regency, and grants.

Mr. Yates advised that the Office of Emergency Management Service responds to fires, emergencies and Hazmat situations. He explained that the Division has twelve full-time employees and the evening and night hours are covered by Township volunteers. Mr. Yates noted that a minimum of five employees must be on duty at all times. He also reviewed some of his overtime challenges.

Mr. Hary noted that \$45,000 is donated to the Princeton Junction Fire Company and to the West Windsor Fire Company. He advised that the Twin W received \$35,000 from the Township.

Council addressed questions to Chief Pica and Mr. Yates.

Mr. Morgan noted concerns about traffic lights working in conjunction with EMS vehicles, cameras at certain lights around town, improvement of crosswalk markings, and shared services for dispatchers and weekend employees.

Mr. Khanna noted concerns with overtime, salaries, personnel, and the Township's volunteers.

Ms. Ciccone discussed the right of first refusal and how it affects the Township's overtime. She also reviewed opportunities for shared services, vehicle rotation, and the use of hybrid cars, and also crosswalk safety.

Ms. Geevers also spoke of crosswalk safety, the use of volunteers to reduce overtime, wage freezes, salaries, and emergency service fees for Township events.

Ms. Louth advised that salaries are up because of the redistribution of hours for Uniform Fire Code officials and the shifting of existing staff salaries.

President Borek explained that area alerts affect West Windsor primarily because of the train station.

PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Drummond reviewed the Department's major functions to include street cleaning and repair, pickup of yard debris, maintaining detention basins, sports fields and playgrounds, support all sewer maintenance and service, and snow removal. He advised that the Department is struggling with picking up the large volumes of leaf and brush debris.

Council addressed questions to Mr. Drummond.

Mr. Morgan inquired about overtime, meal reimbursements, snow removal, and Kelly Bill calculations.

Mr. Khanna asked questions about reducing pickups for garbage disposal, and leaf and brush pickups.

Ms. Ciccone suggested that the Township take on an aggressive campaign for recycling and reducing waste to help cut down on the number of garbage pickups. She asked about chemicals used to reduce the corrosion of sewer pipes and manholes.

Ms. Geevers suggested that some type of public education be implemented for recycling and waste reduction. She inquired about a location for residents to drop off their leaf, brush and yard debris. Ms. Geevers spoke about the need to offset employee hours to reduce overtime and the possibility of outsourcing the snow removal to effect cost savings.

President Borek inquired about the shift in funds to pay for snow removal costs and the funding of the snow removal trust fund. He urged Administration to take a stand in reducing garbage pickups and the associated costs. President Borek also spoke about the need to go out to bid for all contracts on a yearly basis so that the Township can get the best prices for the services required.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion to go into closed session to discuss personnel and Union contract negotiations: Geevers  
Second: Morgan  
VV: all ayes

Council went into closed session at 2:21 p.m.

MEETING RECONVENED

Council came back into open session at 3:02 p.m.

Council agreed to make arrangements for another budget session within the next week or two.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn: Morgan  
Second: Geevers  
VV: All approved

The meeting was adjourned at 3:02 p.m.

---

Sharon L. Young  
Township Clerk  
West Windsor Township