

APPROVED: November 28, 2011

WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
AGENDA SESSION
October 11, 2011

CALL TO ORDER: President Khanna called the meeting to order at 7:00p.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 January 7, 2011.

ATTENDEES: President: Khanna; Vice President: Ciccone; Council: Geevers; Business Administrator: Hary (arrived at 7:40 p.m.); Township Attorney: Cayci; Chief Financial Officer: Louth; Township Clerk: Young

ABSENT: Borek, Morgan

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Ms. Young led the salute to the flag.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Ciccone advised that Public Comment is not a question and answer session and asked the public to adhere to the three-minute time limitation.

Mr. Greg Harris, 16 Piedmont Drive, asked Council how he could get on an agenda to discuss his issues.

Mr. Gary Zohn, 42 Hawthorne Drive, advised that he understood the comments made by Ms. Ciccone and apologized for not following the guidelines.

FOR DISCUSSION

President Khanna asked to switch the order of the agenda because Mr. Hary was not yet present to discuss the Health Care Consultant issues.

MAYOR/ADMINISTRATION

Budget Goals 2012

Ms. Louth explained where Administration is on the budget process. She advised that Administration was still compiling data and will be meeting with the department and division managers to review their budgets.

Ms. Louth advised that there will be a decrease in pension costs of almost \$200,000, an increase to the Stony Brook Regional Sewerage Authority, and an increase to debt service of almost \$200,000.

Ms. Ciccone inquired about the saving achieved through the re-bonding of Township debt at a lower interest rate.

Ms. Louth explained that in addition to refinancing the old debt at a lower interest rate, new debt was also added to the bond.

President Khanna asked for a timeline in which the Council receives the budget documents.

Ms. Louth noted that the Council will receive the budget by the statutory deadline of January 15, 2012. She advised that the missing data for the budget is the revenue which the Township receives from the State.

Ms. Ciccone asked if there was an increase in the departmental budgets. She commented on wanting to see a decrease in each division or department budget. Ms. Ciccone advised that West Windsor is a full-service community and Administration and Council may have to look at options to reduce services for a tax savings to the residents.

Ms. Geever noted that a large portion of the budget is contractual, and both health care costs and employee salaries are increasing.

Ms. Louth explained that the Township statutorily must stay within the mandate of the 2% levy cap. She noted that debt service is an exception to the statute. Ms. Louth suggested that Council provide Administration with line items they would want to see reduced.

Ms. Ciccone advised that the public needs to be educated on the difference between the tax levy and the tax rate.

President Khanna suggested that Council be part of the budget process because the budget contains a lot of data that is difficult to understand in such a short period of time.

Ms. Ciccone recommended having a consistent dialogue to keep Council educated which will assist them in keeping the residents informed too.

Ms. Ciccone suggested Administration look into having a Memorandum of Understanding with the County for snow removal on the County roads. She noted the great job Public Works does on the removal of snow after a storm.

Ms. Geever suggested also working with County on grass cutting in the medians. She advised that the County does not do a very good job at keeping the areas trimmed.

Mr. Hary informed Council that there were several retirements this year which has helped Administration reduce their headcount through attrition. He spoke about the Energy Tax Receipt funds that no longer get reimbursed back to the Township which results in a decrease in revenue. Mr. Hary explained that the biggest unknown is the effect the Union contract will have on the 2012 budget. He also spoke about future Stony Brook expenses because of revised DEP mandates.

Ms. Ciccone suggested that a discussion should be held on how the State funds education. She noted that two-thirds of the tax increase is attributed to the rising costs in the School Board budgets.

Health Care Consultant

Mr. Hary explained that laws have been passed that mandate the employees pay 1.5% of their salary toward health care premiums. He reviewed the changes in employee fees and the cost for health care over the next few years as mandated by law. Mr. Hary noted that costs will be phased in over the next four years.

Mr. Hary advised that West Windsor is one of the last Townships not to have a health care broker. He noted that a broker's average cost is 3% of the premiums which is why Administration does not want any part of utilizing a broker. Mr. Hary explained that the Township would be better served through the services of a health care consultant. He outlined the scope of services for the consultant and advised that he sent out twelve RFQs and only two responses were received. Mr. Hary reviewed the terms of the proposed agreement with the potential vendor. He noted the long term savings to the Township for having a health care consultant.

Ms. Geevers addressed questions including details and costs for the State's health care benefits.

Mr. Hary noted that State benefit plans leave the Township with no opportunity for negotiations.

Ms. Ciccone advised that Administration does not have the expertise or man hours to perform the duties of a health care consultant.

Mr. Hary noted that the professional services agreement for the health care consultant will be on the agenda for Monday, October 24, 2011.

COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMENTS

President Khanna spoke about having an update completed to the feasibility study done late last year.

Ms. Ciccone asked that it be done before the next budget cycle.

Ms. Geevers advised that the Planning Board approved an application for an addition to an existing cell tower located off of Rabbit Hill Road. She also noted that the Planning Board voted against enacting the proposed political sign ordinance introduced by Council.

Mr. Hary noted that Township staff agrees with the Planning Board recommendation.

Ms. Ciccone asked for the Animal Control information she requested several weeks ago and also the open space update she requested.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Greg Harris, 16 Piedmont Drive, spoke about the sign ordinance and the illegal signs posted throughout the Township.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn: Geevers
Second: Ciccone
VV: All ayes, Borek and Morgan absent

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Sharon L. Young
Township Clerk
West Windsor Township