

SPECIAL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE BUDGET MEETING
January 21, 2012

A Special Budget Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranbury was held at 9:00 a.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Answering present to the roll call were: Township Committee members: Susan Goetz, Glenn Johnson, Dan Mulligan, Jay Taylor and Mayor David Cook. Also present was: Denise Marabello, Township Administrator/Director of Finance. Ms. Cunningham, Assistant Administrator/Clerk arrived later in the meeting. Mayor Cook led in the salute to the flag and Ms. Marabello gave the following Open Public Meetings Act statement:

In accordance with Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, it is hereby announced and shall be entered into the minutes of this meeting that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided:

- (1) Posted on January 9, 2012 on the Bulletin Board of the Municipal Office at 23-A North Main Street, Cranbury, New Jersey and remains posted at that location.
- (2) Communicated to the Cranbury Press, Home News Tribune and Trenton Times on January 12, 2012.
- (3) Was filed on January 12, 2012 at the Cranbury Municipal Office, 23-A North Main Street, Cranbury, New Jersey, posted on the Township's web site and remains on file for public inspection, and
- (4) Sent to those individuals who have requested personal notice.

Mayor Cook explained with the Township's budget, escalating costs are not controllable. However, the Township Committee will be looking at all expenditures.

Ms. Marabello explained the minimum funding of LOSAP and that the town historically provided the maximum amount each year inclusive of any allowable adjustments. Mr. Taylor reported the Fire Company and First Aid Squad members value the LOSAP and consider it is a key attraction tool and incentive. However, if cuts to the LOSAP were made then it should be such that it still remained at last year's budget. The other Township Committee members indicated they would like to see the total overall budget numbers before deciding on LOSAP's budget for 2012.

Chief Rickey Varga presented and discussed with the Township Committee his proposed Capital and Operating Budget. Chief Varga explained the present staffing and how it works. Mr. Mulligan asked if the Township can use part-time officers to keep the overtime costs down. Chief Varga indicated he has a problem with the instability of doing this if the Township does not replace the two (2) retired officers. Mr. Mulligan requested Chief Varga investigate part-time officers and present his findings to the Township Committee in the middle of 2012. Mr. Taylor asked Chief Varga what his absolute staffing needs are and Chief Varga responded he needs one (1) officer for patrol. He added, if two (2) officers are replaced in 2013 the overtime costs will go down by \$30,000 and that not providing the replacement of one (1) officer increases overtime costs by approximately \$70,000. Chief Varga explained that there is no monetary qualification for the Detective Bureau, but that a detective on duty could fill in for patrol if needed. The Detective Bureau has one (1) officer presently and in 2012 had 131 criminal cases and 46 administrative cases in addition to other work. Mr. Mulligan indicated that while a new officer would cost the Township under \$40,000 this year (including salary, pension and health care) the same officer in just four (4) years (2016) will cost the Township \$120,000. Further, Chief Varga had indicated hiring one (1) officer would cover street shifts while the second officer would be for detective coverage. Chief Varga also indicated, when asked, that he needed the patrol coverage and could get by with one (1) existing detective. Mr. Cook indicated he feels the Township needs one (1) new officer, Mr. Taylor; two (2), Mr. Mulligan; one (1); Mr. Johnson; one (1) and Ms. Goetz; one (1) new officer and discuss the need for one (1) detective in the future.

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Lt. Frank Dillane presented the Police Department's proposed Capital Budget for 2012. Mr. Mulligan requested Lt. Dillane reach out to Westfield Police Department to get information on hybrid vehicles.

The Township Committee then reviewed the Township Departments' proposed 2012 budgets. Ms. Marabello reminded the Township Committee it would take a \$153,000 reduction of the controllable budget to get a one-cent tax increase and cautioned everyone it may not be feasible to find cuts equaling this amount.

The Fire Company's budget is \$90,000 of which \$55,000 is in the Township's Fire Official's account. Mr. Taylor reported donations are down and recommended not cutting the Fire or First Aid as their operating budgets exceed the town contributions. The Township Committee unanimously agreed with Mr. Taylor not to cut either the Fire Company or the First Aid Squad's budgets.

The Township Committee reviewed Public Works and agreed to cut "roads" by \$1,000 and to cut overtime by \$10,000. They suggested doing a one (1)-day cleanup in the spring and fall instead of two (2) days and recommended finding out what the actual savings would be. Mr. Taylor suggested we look to see if there is a possible Town-wide garage sale and hold clean-up weekend the following weekend to reduce tonnage.

Township Committee members unanimously agreed not to cut Shade Tree Commission's budget.

In reviewing the Board of Health, the Township Committee agreed to cut the legal costs to \$1,550 annually and only have the Board's Attorney attend when necessary as opposed to the practice presently of having the attorney attend every meeting.

The Township Committee discussed in what areas the Municipal Alliance's budget can be cut and indicated they would like to have Ms. Jane Holland, Chairperson, attend the next budget meeting on February 4th.

All members agreed to keep the Human Services budget flat, without any increases.

All members of the Township Committee agreed to keep the Environmental Commission's proposed budget as presented with no cuts.

The Township Committee discussed in what areas the Recreation budget can be cut and indicated they would like to have Ms. Beth Vegthe, Chairperson, attend the next budget meeting on February 4th.

Public Comment

The Mayor opened the meeting to public questions and comment. There being no comments, the Mayor closed the public part of the meeting.

On motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Mulligan and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Kathleen R. Cunningham, Clerk

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