

## **BUDGET MEETING OF MARCH 11, 2008**

Deputy Mayor Tedeschi called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Weinstein (late), Deputy Mayors Swain and Tedeschi, Councilmembers Baratta and Trawinski (late)

**ALSO PRESENT:** Manager Metzler, Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski and Attorney Rosenberg:

### **Economic Development Corporation:**

Stu Herrmann, President of EDC, introduced Steven Kiel, Treasurer and Robert Landzettel, a member of the EDC Executive Committee and president of the RRIC. He stated that the Route 208 Corridor Plan was currently being reviewed by the Planning Board. The report can become part of the master plan and be used to guide development on Route 208. This will save the Borough \$43,000 of the approximate \$49,000 cost of the report as it was paid for with grants. They are currently administering three town wide grant programs: the low interest and no interest loan programs for business improvements, and the sign and awning grant used in the Radburn shopping center development. They have applied for a grant to study Fair Lawn Avenue and Route 208 east to Abbott Road. Their staff attends Council, Planning and Zoning Board meetings to monitor development in the business community. They have a joint design and review committee with the RRIC and BIC to help speed and clarify applications.

Mr. Herrmann stated that the Trustees of the EDC, in collaboration with the RRIC and BIC, have concluded their review on how best to ensure the ongoing benefits of the presence, advocacy and work of the EDC. He made the following recommendations:

Structure – The Borough and business community are best served by continuing the public/private partnership model of a private, non-profit corporation, which has seen success on River Road and Broadway.

Funding – Borough funding through general tax revenues of all properties was the overall conclusion reached by the leadership of the RRIC, BIC and EDC and confirmed by the EDC Board. The RRIC and BIC would continue to commit additional funding. With regards to the 2008 budget presented, \$41,875 would be needed out of general taxation. This amount takes into account more that \$31,000 of grants and contributions from RRIC, BIC, EDC Trustees and private donations.

Staff – Both the leadership group and FLEDC believe that the interests of the Borough and business community are best served if the FLEDC continues its independent engagement of staffing configuration that meets its needs the best. Borough input and resources for some staffing assistance would be welcomed.

Mr. Herrmann reported that the two alternative funding plans highlighted in the report to Council were tabled after lengthy discussions.

Councilmember Baratta inquired if the EDC would be proactive in bringing in new business into Fair Lawn. Mr. Herrmann explained that money for business recruitment was allotted in the budget, as well as funds for marketing to keep businesses in town.

Deputy Mayor Swain wondered if the high administrative costs were justified. Mr. Landzettel explained that the \$50,000 was for Don Smartt's program as community advocate. There was talk of the Borough hiring an Economic Development Director to manage the project, but he was not aware of the cost. The \$50,000 covers not only Don Smartt's fees but those of his staff, who attend meetings and makes arrangements. If the Borough wanted to fund this on this own it would be an alternative.

Councilmember Trawinski arrived at 6:45 p.m.

Deputy Mayor Swain inquired if the grant administrating and accounting was handled by Don Smartt. Mr. Landzettel stated that it was part of Mr. Smartt's program. The loans programs are in place, the accounting services are an independent firm, the insurance bond is separate and printing and supplies are separate items. Mr. Kiel noted that the organization purchases them and invoices them for the actual cost of copies, minutes, etc.

Mr. Herrmann stated that over the past six months to a year they have made inquiries about personnel in other areas to see what is out there. He felt \$50,000 was not a high number for what is required. They have looked at other salary positions. Deputy Mayor Swain inquired about the tax cost. Mr. Herrmann clarified that the cost would be \$4.06 per \$10,000 in property taxes paid.

Mayor Weinstein arrived at 6:50 p.m.

Councilmember Trawinski inquired if there would be a problem with the Cap if they appropriated this fund. CFO Eccleston stated they would need to cut something in the budget in order to replace the request. Councilmember Trawinski wondered if special assessments in the other funding alternatives were subject to the Cap. CFO Eccleston stated there would be no impact on the budget if a SID was formed and it was collected through taxes.

Councilmember Trawinski asked if the EDC was still opposed to alternatives. Mr. Herrmann stated that the EDC reviewed each alternative but could not agree on a suitable substitute. Councilmember Trawinski inquired if the EDC would walk away from the table if they wanted to look into the possibility of keeping the EDC functioning through one of the two SIDs alternatives. Mr. Herrmann stated they would go back to the table for more discussions.

Councilmember Trawinski stated that the BIC and RRIC have agreed to make a \$10,000 contribution towards the EDC. He envisioned that if they went the SIDS route it would eventually become one SID. The BIC and RRIC are at different stages of development, with the BIC five to seven years behind. He felt it would be three to seven years before the RRIC morphs into the new SID and seven to ten years or ten or twelve years as the

BIC catches up and morphs into the SID. Ideally there would be one town wide SID. Deputy Mayor Tedeschi inquired if that idea had been discussed by the SIDs. He noted that River Road was going to contribute \$10,000 to the EDC because the EDC will benefit them. Mr. Landzettel stated that was true. Business recruitment and marketing would be town wide efforts. Some of the planning issues would affect all districts. BIC and RRIC supported the funding as proposed in the budget.

Deputy Mayor Tedeschi thought the SIDs might not like having their tax used somewhere else. Mr. Landzettel clarified that if RRIC was part of a townwide SID the economies would be such that the River Road assessment wouldn't be greater because the efficiencies and benefits provided by being part of a townwide EDC would enable River Road to reduce its assessment for the property owners. There would be no increase in the SID assessment for River Road and the same might work out for the BIC. Excess revenue would come from other businesses and the industrial park.

Mayor Weinstein stated that with the RRIC and BIC a consensus was formed among property owners with similar concerns. With a third SID a consensus would need to be built with businesses that had different concerns. He wondered if the EDC was structured to handle these varying concerns in a proper fashion. He felt it was important that the EDC continue to exist. He inquired if it was possible to bring in some administration items, such as the grant process, into the Borough.

Deputy Mayor Tedeschi clarified that Mr. Smartt was the administrator for RRIC, BIC and will do the grant applications for the EDC. He noted that Mr. Smartt receives \$150,000 for administration fees. He felt it was important to look at the total cost. Mr. Herrmann noted that part of the EDC's restriction was that they can only review their \$50,000 cost.

Councilmember Trawinski inquired if the vision of the EDC was that eventually it would be weaned off the general revenues of taxes. Mayor Weinstein stated it was. Although the direction of a SID is a good direction and the EDC has done a lot with the Route 208 study, interest free loans, and signs and façade program, there are still businesses that need to come on board. Deputy Mayor Tedeschi stated that the EDC, BIC and RRIC had to take into account the economic reality. They have to reduce their expenses or offset with surplus. Mr. Landzettel stated if there were no increases in ratables, which is the game plan that the EDC would do to keep the industrial commercial properties vibrant and on the tax rolls, the problem of collecting taxes will be tougher. Give the EDC or RRIC and BIC a bonus for creating additional ratable and apply some of that revenue to the cost of doing that job. It is an investment for the town.

Deputy Mayor Swain would like to see a very specific list of the EDC's goals and objectives in the next year or two. She wanted to know how they would involve the other businesses on Morlot and Saddle River Road. Mayor Weinstein suggested that Mr. Herrmann come to an upcoming work session so that there would be more time for discussion, as Council needed to make a decision as to how they wanted to proceed.

**Ambulance Corps.:**

Dan Furphy, president of the Ambulance Corps. and Gail Cebulor were present. Deputy Mayor Swain inquired if they had obtained more volunteers as she noted that the clothing budget had increased. Mr. Furphy confirmed that 25 new members had been added in the past year and a half.

**CAPITAL**

Amb 4.01 Ambulance Replacement - Deputy Mayor Tedeschi inquired if the ambulances were offset by the revenues from the cell towers. Mr. Furphy stated it was not. CFO Eccleston explained that the first ambulance was paid off with revenues from the cell tower, but the Council never made a decision about the second and subsequent ambulances.

Amb 4.02 Radios/Pagers - President Furphy explained that new pagers were needed for the new volunteers.

Deputy Mayor Swain asked how many people go out on a call in one ambulance. President Furphy explained that that at a bare minimum they have one EMT and one driver. They have capped the number going out at four, with the exception of snow conditions when five are allowed. Deputy Mayor Swain confirmed that if all three ambulances were needed they could have 15 volunteers out at once. President Furphy stated that they frequently have three ambulances running.

Councilmember Baratta asked Manager Metzler if the generator was something they were contemplating for the future. Manager Metzler explained that it was budgeted years out. Councilmember Baratta thought it was a good idea to have that building as a medical shelter. Manager Metzler stated there was considerable discussion years ago about fire houses, but the Community Center came along with a backup generator.

**OEM:**

Mayor Weinstein complimented the OEM for a great job on communicating with the residents this past weekend. He visited the command center on Sunday and phone calls were being made.

OEM Coordinator Marks stated that his salary increase was taken out because of budget caps. Although he understood why it was removed, he wanted to present information to the Council to support the request.

OEM Coordinator Marks stated that in order to hold his position he had to be a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM), as mandated by Borough ordinance. He is one of less than 1,000 CEMs in the United States. He stated that when he and Manager Metzler were working together in OEM, Fair Lawn became one of the premier offices in New Jersey due to their diligent work. He stated that he did more work than a fulltime employee on a part time salary. He is required by the State to do the Emergency Plan for the Borough,

attends four County coordinator meetings each year, and runs the LEPC. He noted that the State Police have recognized Fair Lawn as one of the most active planning committees in the State. He is responsible for coordinating all the emergency services, and is required by the Borough to run the Rescue Squad, Auxiliary Police, the Fair Lawn Emergency Radio Services and the CERT Team. He is also in charge of the AED Program, which he started in 1993 when he convinced the Borough to put two defibrillators in ambulances. There are now two dozens defibrillators in emergency vehicles throughout the Borough. This program involves training all the emergency personnel in CPR. He is in charge of the Right to Know information and a member of the Critical Incident Task Force.

OEM Marks stated that he is required by the Borough to apply for grants and FEMA reimbursements. In 2007, the Borough received \$32,800 in grant money and \$88,575 in FEMA reimbursement. In 2008, they have already received \$22,625 from FEMA and a \$5,000 grant in the pipeline. He prints the Borough ID cards for employees, volunteers and veterans, and prepares the evacuation plans for schools and businesses. He has now started working with Houses of Worship. He also coordinates the special needs list. He noted that he has part time status with fulltime hours. He is no longer financially able to devote the amount of time needed to maintain this agency's premier status. He stated that if the Manager's recommendation is accepted, he will have part time status with part time hours.

Councilmember Trawinski noted that OEM Marks had requested \$4,000 in equipment maintenance and that amount was increased to \$9,000 by Manager Metzler. Manager Metzler explained that the battery systems had to be overhauled for the siren system. He noted that the special line went from \$20,500 to zero. Emergency Services, in cooperation with the respective chiefs, used the money from the dinner and distributed it through the remainder of the budget.

Councilmember Trawinski inquired why the medical services line was increased to \$39,800 from \$14,800. Manager Metzler stated that OEM Coordinator Marks recommended that they require physicals for all of the emergency responders. The Hazmat Techs are required by law to have physicals every other year. Deputy Mayor Swain wondered if this was something that could be done by the volunteers' own physician. She inquired if this was in addition to a yearly physical. OEM Marks stated that if someone has insurance they would reimburse any out of pocket co-payments. If there is no insurance, the volunteer is sent to the Borough physician.

Deputy Mayor Tedeschi wondered about a volunteer who did not pass his physical. OEM Coordinator Marks stated that the purpose was to ensure their volunteers were medically fit. Manager Metzler stated there were cases where volunteers were restricted to other duties. OEM Marks stated if the funds were available he would open this up to the Fire Department. Councilmember Trawinski thanked OEM Coordinator Marks for being proactive. He asked if there were any plans to obtain grant funding to do a simulated drill. OEM Coordinator Marks stated he will apply for grants, although there is very little State funding available. He is going to try to put together a hazmat drill once the Water

Department has worked out the details with the vendor. There will be training classes by the vendor for all emergency personnel.

Councilmember Trawinski inquired what the salary would be if the \$25,000 was found and restored. OEM Coordinator Marks stated it would \$50,000.

### **Capital**

Res 5.02 Pagers - OEM Coordinator Marks stated that they received grant money for this.

Res 5.03 Turnout Gear - Chief Van Kruiningen stated they have passed the 50 member mark, including their junior members who are also outfitted with full turnout gear. There is a cap of 50 members and ten juniors for a total of 60.

Res 5.04 Extrication Tools - Chief Van Kruiningen stated that they have always used the Hurst system. Technology has produced streamline disconnect which is used for motor vehicle accidents and allows them to disconnect their tools under full power and reconnect to a different tool. They need to comply with both vehicles for a cost of \$5,000.

Res 5.09 Hazmat Material Suits – There were no questions on this line.

Manager Metzler asked to schedule a budget wrap up for next Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. CFO Eccleston stated they had to finish on Tuesday as they were five days late. Mayor Weinstein suggested they start the work session at 7:00 p.m.

### **Public Comments:**

Harvey Rubenstein, 28 Rutgers Terrace inquired as to the correct cost of the ambulance and if the entire cost was paid for by the Borough. Manger Metzler clarified that the \$162,000 fee was paid by the Borough.

Mr. Rubenstein felt they should increase OEM Coordinator Marks salary. He reminded them that they once received an \$85,000 from FEMA and wondered if the Grant Consultant could find the additional funds.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Upon motion by Councilmember Baratta and second by Councilmember Trawinski the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Kwasniewski, RMC/CMC/MMC  
Municipal Clerk

The undersigned have read and approve the foregoing minutes.

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Mayor Steven Weinstein

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Councilmember Jeanne Baratta

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Deputy Mayor Lisa Swain

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Deputy Mayor Joseph Tedeschi

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Councilmember Ed Trawinski