

REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 26, 2005

Mayor Ganz called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. Assistant to the Municipal Clerk Van Kruiningen read the following statement of compliance:

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, annual notice of all meetings of the Borough of Fair Lawn was published in the Record issues of December 18, 2004. Notices were also posted on the bulletin board located on the first floor of the Municipal Building and the Maurice Pine Free Public Library. Copies were mailed to the North Jersey Herald and News and the Shopper. The annual notice identified the times and locations of the Council meetings and work sessions.

PRESENT: Mayor Ganz ,Deputy Mayors Etler and Weinstein and Councilmembers Caan and McCarthy(late).

ALSO PRESENT: Manager/Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski, Attorney Lustgarten and Assistant to the Municipal Clerk Van Kruiningen.

ABSENT: Assistant Municipal Clerk Bojanowski.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager/Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski stated they are looking for people to march in the Memorial Day Parade. If anyone is interested they should contact the Recreation Department.

Mayor Ganz stated before going to Council comments he wished to make some general comments. He was advised by Commissioner Bass Levin of the Department of Community Affairs that the Borough has received a \$23,000.00 grant for the Livable Local Community Library Program which will be used for educational equipment and furnishings for the Maurice Pine Public Library.

Mayor Ganz was also pleased to announce under the Livable Community Capital Improvement Program a \$20,000.00 grant has been received by the Borough to purchase a riding mower, a Kawaski multi utility vehicle and a pull behind leaf blower. He thanked Senator Coniglio, Assemblyman Gordon and Assemblywomen Voss for their assistance.

Mayor Ganz stated he was pleased to announce the Borough has reached an agreement with their Police Officers on their union contract.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Weinstein attended the Chamber of Commerce installation dinner Thursday night. He added most of the people are very involved in their community. He also attended the Dare Graduation on Friday morning at St. Anne's where the children put on skits with the message of how to say no to drugs.

Councilmember Caan attended the Dare Graduation and stated the children are great and it was a good time. He also stated that under the Fair Lawn Prescription Drug Plan which is still a free plan, people have saved over \$46,000.00 on their prescription drugs during the first quarter of this year and overall \$200,000.00 since this plan started. Applications are still available at Borough Hall. He added for people who do have cards already they should receive a renewal shortly. They need to send the form back in.

**PROCLAMATIONS: CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION - ZACHARY STEIN
 DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE
 ARBOR DAY
 NATIONAL NURSES WEEK 2005**

Assistant to the Municipal Clerk Van Kruiningen read the proclamations.

PUBLIC HEARING ON BUDGET

Mayor Ganz:

Mayor Ganz stated this evening the Council holds a hearing on the budget for 2005. The budget is about \$35.2 million, compared with \$33.2 million last year, a 5.8% increase that is the equivalent of 6.9 tax points. The increase to Borough taxpayers amounts to about \$125.58 for the average homeowner, or a change from last year of about 35 cents per day. This budget contemplates a surplus of \$2,395,000 compared with a surplus last year of \$1,945,000. It anticipates receipts from delinquent taxes of \$568,000 compared with \$655,000 last year. It includes salaries for borough employees of \$13.79 million compared with \$13.69 million last year, and a capital budget – not yet finalized – of no more than \$1.8 million, the same as last year. We are hopeful that the final figures will be lower because of grants we hope to receive as well as our extraordinary aid application.

As I told you in early March, when the Manager originally presented the budget to the Council in early January, the expenditures called for an increase of \$3.9 million. On Saturday mornings, and on early evenings long before the regular Council meetings, the Council went through the budget line-by-line, department -by-department, and made cuts of over \$2.4 million that it thought were appropriate, including reducing overtime across-the-board by about 25 percent.

The smallest line-item cut was \$4 to the Police Department; the largest cut was over \$500,000 for health insurance, as a result of an aggressive program that was presented to the Council after meetings with health care professionals. The cuts and new health plan go into effect in just four days, May 1st, so we will effect a 7 month savings.

Last year, the Office of Emergency Management was created, recognizing the importance of homeland security and emergency preparedness. This obviously increased the

budget, but well worth it. You will also see necessary increases in the Police Department, where we followed Chief Erik Rose's recommendation to add two new police officers in this summer's Academy Class. Public safety will not be compromised!
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This year's budget required all of us on the Council to make difficult choices. We deferred some costly items in our capital budget, because the capital items that the departments hope to replace still has a useful life. I appointed a two member committee, consisting of Councilman Owen McCarthy and Deputy Mayor Marty Etler, to review equipment, and their preliminary report will save the taxpayers of Fair Lawn thousands of dollars. Although departments asked for over \$4 million in capital projects, and the Manager recommended \$2.8 million worth, the Council will reduce those amounts.

We will also save taxpayers money by using the Bergen County Improvement Authority's lower bonding rate through a Municipal Bank program. Two school districts, Wyckoff and Englewood, did a cost comparison and found BCIA substantially less expensive than traditional bonding means, and borrowed substantially through the BCIA. A dozen other towns, including Fair Lawn, have used their lease-purchase program to buy capital items and save taxpayers up-front money, paying only modest interest rates as part of the cost of borrowing.

We will purchase five new police cars this year, all with new carbine safety chests in the trunk, as part of our policy of rotating five cars one year, six years the next, and the Copcars program that I introduced as a Freeholder will be utilized to bond those cars over their useful lifetimes, again saving the taxpayers high up-front costs, but also allowing for payment in a fiscally prudent manner.

Fair Lawn's capital program requires important long-term use items that benefit the

community as a whole. For example, last year, we put three new recycling garbage trucks in operation. Last year, we also added a new ambulance to replace an 18 year old vehicle, and bought a new fire truck that will take the place of an 18 year old truck. We did this at the request of our all-volunteer ambulance corps and fire department.

We continue to pay down capital debt. \$3.8 million will be paid this year for debt service for past capital and current capital improvements vitally needed for the borough infrastructure. State mandated services -- required to be undertaken on a municipal level, but unfunded by the state-- also increased. Our recycling program, for example, will cost over \$1-million in this year's budget. Garbage collection and tipping fees for waste disposal will cost more than \$2-million.

Other fixed cost items that are not very visible, but are very necessary, are also provided for in this budget. For example, the cost of electricity for streetlights and at municipal buildings will cost us nearly \$1-million, also up from last year. We will spend \$190,00 for gasoline up from last year, just as you and I pay more at the pump.

Salaries for the most part are increasing by an average of 4%. We locked in long-term union contract savings several years ago but the added cost of social security contributions is almost \$800,000 in this year's budget. State mandated but unfunded changes for employee pensions cost an additional \$200,000 this year. On going negotiations with our excellent Police Department should be finalized shortly.

Passaic Valley Sewer Authority's rates for removal of sewage increased, too. Our self-
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insurance fund for claims made against the Borough, and worker's compensation, has also increased.

However, we held the line on employee benefits, principally health insurance. The Council's actions in negotiating with our blue and white union contracts for health insurance savings will, over the next decade, save taxpayers over \$1,000,000.00.

Our decision to "shop" health insurance carriers from Blue Cross to Oxford resulted in Blue Cross dropping a proposed 17% increase, and by implementing a P.P.O. plan, an additional \$300,000 will be saved for a total \$700,000 annual savings, spread over two budget cycles.

All of us on the Council pay property taxes directly or indirectly. We spent hundreds of hours of collective time in bringing this budget in on time so that we can seek assistance from Trenton. Last year, I fought for, and we got, almost a half million dollars worth of extraordinary aid. It'll be tougher this year, but we have fighting Senator Joe Coniglio and Assemblyman Bob Gordon on our side, along with a host of state officials that I have met as Mayor and Freeholder.

Governing is about choices. This Council deliberated carefully, but judiciously, eliminated waste, and proposed continued services that maintain strong property values while at the same time recognizing that everything costs more today than it did last year, but is probably cheaper than buying it in the future.

Nevertheless, this will be a tough year. You have probably read how the federal government is now billions of dollars in debt while our state government is struggling to balance its budget. This means that local governments burdened by mandates must foot more of the bill. It is not pleasant, but municipal government must continue to function. We have preserved basic services, safety, health, recreation, roads, trees, and the like, and have made judicious choices on optional programs. It must be working because in the last three years, Fair Lawn's combined property values have increased by \$700 million from

\$3.32 billion to nearly \$4 billion.

You may want to know, department by department, just what your tax dollars are buying. Our Maurice Pines Free Public Library will receive over \$2-million, and as a result of special funding by the Council, will remain open on weekends during June to allow students to study there. We will continue to expend \$100,000 annually on tree replacement, thus maintaining Fair Lawn's status as a "Tree City"

We have expanded our department of buildings and added additional part time and full-time help to deal with more than 3,000 annual inspections and more than 400 certificates of continued occupancy. We also now have Saturday inspections for the convenience of Borough residents.

Our engineering department has a budget of almost \$200,000 and continues to provide exemplary service. Among the major projects that they are working on this year is the traffic light at Chandler Drive and Fair Lawn Avenue. At the Borough Attorney's suggestion,

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instead of taking the land by eminent domain, individual discussions were held with the six landowners and, I am happy to report, acquisition was done for just \$1.00 apiece. As a freeholder, I was able to get the County to absorb most of the rest of the cost of the intersection improvement in a County road.

We will expend \$4,000 to plant American flags on the graves in town of America's true heroes, its veterans. We'll spend \$2.1 million for trash collection and garbage disposal, including once a week pick up twice a week during the warm season. The ambulance corps will be funded with more than \$50,000 to assure top service to our residents. We'll spend over \$600,000 on street lighting and electricity for the Borough's's needs. We have earmarked \$1.8 million for the recreation and parks department including ballfield maintenance, and sports programs, that are used by more than 2,000 children each year. We're going to do all of these things with about the same number of full time employees as the Borough's had 10 years ago. In fact, the rate of increase this year more or less matches the average increase over the last 15 years. As usual, the bulk of your taxes, about 2/3rds of them, cover the Board of Education. That having been said, after the other Council members have their say, we welcome your comments on the 2005 budget.

Deputy Mayor Etler:

Deputy Mayor Etler stated Mayor Ganz had said a lot and he was not one to be redundant so he stated he would support this budget. He added they put a lot of work and time into it and went through it line by line and that it is fairly lean budget and the object of it was to continue the kind of lifestyle that people have become accustomed to in Fair Lawn. He ended by saying all in all he felt it was a good budget and he supported it.

Deputy Mayor Weinstein

Deputy Mayor Weinstein stated we continue to struggle through tough economic times, federal aid is gone and State Aid has been drastically reduced. The challenge is to continue to provide the high quality of service the residents in Fair Lawn expect and so deserve. This budget does just that! We will continue to supply the resources necessary for our Department of Public Works to be effective in every service rendered. Snow plowing in the winter to paving roads in the summer; planting trees in the spring to leaf pick-

ups in the fall; and top notch recycling and sanitation pick-ups all year long.

Our parks are not only being maintained on a very high level but the uses are being expanded as the number of boys and girls, men and women are using the fields continues to grow. This spring All Sports has claimed there were more boys and girls registered for baseball and softball than ever before, the number being 1200. Lighting the fields a proactive and innovative approach by this Council has facilitated that growth. In this budget we also continue to support the hundreds of children who play basketball, soccer, football, flag football, street hockey, ice hockey etc.

This budget keeps our Senior Citizen Center open seven days a week all year round. This
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is a facility where senior can congregate and socialize. We have kept the cost down for membership at Memorial and Walsh Pools; open from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Residents and guests continue to gather, sit, stroll and swim throughout the summer. We have re-instituted "Goose Busters" in this budget which was an enormous success last year in finally keeping Memorial Park clean.

This budget provides our Emergency Services with the resources necessary to maintain the high quality services which has earned them Nationwide Acclaim and gives our residents the necessary security for them to sleep comfortably every night.

This budget also provides for our future. In Economic Revitalization of our Business Districts this budget provides the seed money for the formation of the Broadway Special Improvement District and an Economic Development Corporation for the entire Borough.

In the near future we will see the beautification of Broadway, increased ratables, safer pedestrian crossing and additional jobs for our residents, something we have already seen on River Road.

We have also allocated funds in this budget for the construction of the new community center. This is a necessary facility for our future. We out grew the Old Library Theatre, a facility that could no longer be efficiently maintained and out lived the Kipp Street Recreation Center. The facility became over crowded due to the number of our children who frequented the building.

A number of years ago when the Senior Citizen Center was being built there were questions as to the need for such a facility. As I stated earlier it is now used seven days a week and not only by our senior, but also by various non profit and many Governmental functions. The state of the art Community Center will be the heart of Fair Lawn. It will have something for every resident. Card rooms, lounges for the teens, walking track for all and game rooms for our teens. We will have 170 seat new Library Theatre with the intimacy of the Old Library Theatre, but with state of the art amenities. There will be rooms set aside for our Radio Club, Art Association; and a High School level regulation basketball court and gymnasium. The building will be available for Borough camps and students during the school year.

Throughout the budgetary process we maintained high quality services, planned for our future and cut where necessary. We cut roughly 2.4 million dollars from the budget originally submitted by the Manager. The most significant cut was \$700,000.00 in healthcare costs something people said could never be done.

This Council did that and more. I am proud of the time and effort that went into the budgetary process and the results achieved.

Councilmember Caan:

Councilmember Caan stated when I start the budget process there are certain goals I have
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as a starting point. First is to maintain services to our residents at the current levels, but to improve services wherever we can. Second, to make cuts wherever we can and that is why we work with each department and go over every line item in each department's budget. Wherever we are able, we cut out duplication of services and made sure we continue to share equipment, information and services to reduce our costs even more.

If we look at Bergen County and all 70 of its municipalities, Fair Lawn falls into the third quarter in property taxes.

With the cooperation of the Manager, department heads and all the employees of the Borough, we continue to do our best to provide the value for your tax dollars that you expect as residents of Fair Lawn. I want to compliment our employees, all of whom work hard each day, yet know we need to be careful with every expenditure we make.

Acknowledging the skyrocketing costs of healthcare, we were able to agree to a new medical health insurance package with new contracts we negotiated and completed, that will save the Borough well over a million dollars over the next few years.

When the Manager's budget was presented to the Council, it called for an increase to the average taxpayer of \$313.04. We have already been able to cut that increase by 60% to \$125.58 with additional cuts to come. That \$125.58 includes increases we cannot control. Things like an additional 9.33% we are required to pay for Social Security, a 14.33% increase in trash removal, a 14.10% increase to the Passaic Valley Sewage Commission, and 91/2% increase in utilities.

In the things we do control, we were able to cut the employee benefits increase request by 47.62%. This was a combination of our negotiations with our employees and the work we did in researching alternatives for healthcare. We were able to cut the Department Budget

Donal Meyers, 8-22 Mayfair Terrace commended the Council for negotiating a savings in healthcare cost. He added they did a great service to the residents of Fair Lawn. He also congratulated the bargaining units for placing the good of Fair Lawn ahead of their own possible personal preferences.

Mr. Meyers asked what the single largest increase in the Fair Lawn budget this year. The salaries and benefits were the largest increase prior to the Council making their cuts. Mr. Meyers stated in Sunday's Bergen Record the Mayor was quoted as saying the salaries and benefits were the largest and made no mention of the debt service increase.

Mr. Meyers asked if this years budget the spending exceeds the revenue by \$2,395,000.00. CFO Eccleston stated the Council has used \$2,375,000.00 to offset taxes and that is done on a regular basis every year. Mr. Meyers stated the surplus is the rainy day fund for the borough, like the savings account so when the towns expenses exceed the revenue they go to the bank and withdraw money. CFO Eccleston stated that was somewhat correct. Mayor Ganz advised Mr. Meyers it would be easier if he asked his questions to the chair and he would direct them accordingly.

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Mr. Meyers stated the Mayor mentioned a figure for the surplus remaining at the end of 2005. CFO Eccleston stated the amount of surplus at the end of \$3,171,000.000.00 at the end of 2004 and they are starting the year at \$776,000.00. He did not have a projection for 2005 but believed it would be as much as at the end of 2004. Mr. Meyers stated the budget he saw that was certified to the State showed a projected budget surplus at the end of 2005 as \$776,157,000. CFO Eccleston stated that was the beginning balance that they are starting with not the end of 2005. Mr. Meyers stated don't they start the year 2005 with the same amount that they ended with in 2004. CFO explained that was incorrect because the Council has used that amount of surplus in their budget to offset taxes.

Mr. Meyers stated they are taking money out of the bank and applying it to the budget. CFO stated that was correct and was done on a regular basis. Mr. Meyers stated if that is not made up in some way at the end of 2005 they will only have \$776,000,000 in surplus left. Mayor Ganz stated that was not what the CFO said but what he did say was they would have approximately the same amount at the end of 2005 that they had at the end of 2004. Mr. Meyers stated that is not what they certified to the State of New Jersey. Mayor Ganz stated they certify the beginning balance.

Deputy Mayor Weinstein stated in order to understand surplus first you need to understand the budgetary process. The budget process at the beginning of the year is to estimate what the cost are going to be that year. It is based on strong estimates, bids and historical information. As the year proceeds, usually, and the records shows that they end up with the greatest surplus at the end of that year because income seems to exceed the expenditures. Then they take that surplus, go over it and determine what they can return to the taxpayers by reducing the costs in essence, their taxes. The rest of the money is kept on hand for various reserves and emergency circumstances that may occur. The record has shown that many Councils including the current Council has used it to reduce taxes which they believe is a prudent procedure. It is not to keep as a rainy day fund and

then make sure they have enough. This is not a game or magic. It is a surplus which is based on a beginning year estimate.

Mr. Meyers wished to direct everyone's attention to the bottom of sheet 39 of the 2005 budget that was certified to the State of New Jersey. He read from the budget regarding the surplus. He asked the Council if what they were telling him was the document that was sent to the State signed by the CFO is not true and the amount is different. CFO Eccleston stated that was not correct but explained to Mr. Meyers exactly what the figures were. Mr. Meyers asked if nothing further is done, there are no further cuts and no further income then the \$776,000.00 is what they can expect to end 2005. CFO Eccleston stated that was not correct. The amount usually generated is between \$1,500,000.00 and \$3,000,000.00 worth of surplus every year. The average is about \$2,000,000.00. Mr. Meyers asked why it did not appear in the budget. CFO Eccleston stated there is no line for it and they do not really have the ability to project numbers based upon what they feel is the right number. The actual number will not appear until the books are closed out on December 31st.

Mr. Meyers asked 54 lengthy questions regarding the new Fair Lawn Recreation Center. The Mayor and Council, the CFO, Borough Attorney and Borough Manager answered all questioned to the best of their ability.

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David Mercur, 13-11 Fair Haven Place, a new resident of Fair Lawn concurred with Borough Attorney Lustgarten's description of the budget process. He was a Councilmember in Fort Lee and they did the budget the same way. Mr. Mercur stated in Fort Lee they had a five minute limitation on how long someone could speak and then if they wanted to come back up they could.

Mr. Mercur asked if they could repeat the PPO plan that was offered to the Borough employees. Councilmember Caan explained they had a Medallion Plan through Blue Cross, Blue Shield which was a top of the line plan which they do not offer anymore but if someone has it they can continue it. He added with the PPO if they put them side by side to the Medallion Plan the benefits were at least equal to what was offered by the Medallion Plan at a much lower rate.

Don Oliver, 8-32 Mitchell Place asked if the estimate on the Recreation Center was \$9,750,000.00. Mayor Ganz stated there was a contract for that amount. Mr. Oliver asked yet they are budgeting \$12,800,000.00 so they could put lights, fixtures in the building. He asked if this building was \$9,750,000.00 with nothing in it. Borough Attorney Lustgarten explained that amount was the construction costs. There are collateral costs including engineering and architectural fees, permit fees and the furnishings. When everything is complete there will be a full and complete accounting which will be public record and probably be put on the website.

Mr. Oliver asked Mayor Ganz about the price of gasoline and how he stated it has gone up and wanted to know if he meant the cost of gasoline to the Borough and what are they paying per gallon now. Mayor Ganz stated \$1.60 a gallon which is a lot less then everyone pays at a regular pump because the Borough does not pay the taxes. Mr. Oliver asked what the consumption was for last year. Mayor Ganz believed it was about the same.

Mr. Oliver asked about the five new police vehicles they were buying and wanted to know if they would be SUVs. Mayor Ganz stated they were not. Mr. Oliver asked what the cost of the cars would be. Mayor Ganz stated when the police package is added in they are around \$24,000.00 to \$26,000.00.

Mr. Oliver asked how much the SID money for Broadway would be. Deputy Mayor Weinstein stated they have not come before the Council yet but in a budget meeting he asked for \$30,000.00 to be match with the investment on Broadway. Mr. Oliver's felt Broadway was a pigsty and did not think this town and its taxpayers should invest a dime in businesses on Broadway until they clean up their own act. Deputy Mayor Weinstein stated he felt a lot of work has to be done there and it is not fair to deprive the other business owners and property owners on Broadway who want to make a change from getting together to do that. He added there about 13 to 14 property owners on Broadway that have been meeting who are going to take a seat on that Board and put up their own money in addition to the Improvement District assessment. He believed it was important for the residents and the Borough to be involved in this partnership. Mr. Oliver stated they have heard that about River Road and does not see any benefits. Deputy Mayor Weinstein disagreed and felt in the next year they would see a completely different River Road.

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Councilmember Caan stated Deputy Mayor Weinstein has done a great job with the Broadway SID and felt they have had other committees and other functions and people made recommendations in the past on Broadway. This is the first time they have the business owners who are taking an active part including putting in their own money to make sure this works.

Deputy Mayor Etlar disagreed about Mr. Oliver's opinion on River Road Improvement. The Lamring Dairy property is now being developed, Commerce Bank was developed, a new store and apartment building are going up and stores where the old Library Theatre was. They also have a new building going where the old Pittsburgh Glass Place was. He felt it was exciting and there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Mr. Oliver still does not see anything that has benefitted the town. He felt before they start spending a lot of money on Broadway the owners there should start cleaning up there act first.

Mr. Oliver asked CFO Eccleston if he believe there was enough surplus that they can feel comfortable enough with until it builds up again. Mayor Ganz stated the CFO stated he anticipates that the surplus that is going to be there is going to be roughly the same as it was last year. CFO Eccleston stated he takes an overly conservative approach on budgeting and he would feel more comfortable if they had more surplus only so that they would be able to handle some unexpected expenses that may pop up. They are not in anyway in trouble and they have more than most other towns have. Mr. Oliver expressed concern about the total debt for the Borough of Fair Lawn.

Craig Miller, 5 Ramapo Terrace asked if there was any line item for paving of roads. Mayor Ganz stated there was and it was part of the Capital Budget which they are not actually adopting or have worked on fully this evening. Mr. Miller asked about Plaza Road where Broadway is. Mayor Ganz stated that is a State highway. He added he received an email from someone else this week concerning this issue about pothole and he sent it on to Commissioner Lettiere at the Department of Transportation, Senator Coniglio,

Police Chief Rose.

Mrs. Brandis stated there was problem last year with garbage pick up and the residents had to pay a great deal more and asked if they opened it up. Mayor Ganz explained they are paying a lot this year also. The problem with last year was they had a trash hauler who filed for bankruptcy protection on a Friday afternoon. They had to act with speed to make sure they were replaced so residents would have their garbage picked up on Monday morning. He explained Manager/Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski was able to get somebody between Friday night and Monday morning and trash collection happened on Monday just as it normally would and the Council ratified that issue and the contract. Mayor Ganz stated that contract was about \$160,000.00 more than the other one. Mrs. Brandis asked if they are re negotiating. Manager/Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski stated that is a five year contract. They felt under the circumstances a longer contract was warranted in order to protect borough residents.

Mrs. Brandis stated money was set aside for costly emergencies including water main breaks. Mayor Ganz stated that is done every year in the capital budget because a break can be very costly to be repair. He added even with all of that they have managed to reduce the water rate by a penny per one hundred gallons.

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Mrs. Brandis asked if they expect extraordinary aid this year. Mayor Ganz stated he is hopeful that their legislators will recognize that Fair Lawn needs extraordinary aid and will grant it. Mayor Ganz explained there is a State deficit that is pretty substantial and they may look at Fair Lawn's needs and say they are far more needy than Fair Lawn.

There being no further comments by the public, upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etler and a second by Councilmember McCarthy, it was unanimously agreed to close the time for public hearing

PUBLIC HEARING ON SID BUDGET

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Weinstein a second by Councilmember Caan, it was unanimously agreed to open the time for a public hearing on the budget.

Don Oliver, 8-32 Mitchell Place asked about the tax assessed to SID. CFO Eccleston explained the figures to Mr. Oliver.

Bob Landzettel, Chairman of the River Road Improvement Corporation, pointed out there is no increase in the SID proposed assessment against the property owners in the district. He explained that amount is \$120,000.00 and that money is used to fund the programs of the district. He added they do get some private contributions from the directors and they have some sponsors that back a number of the programs listed. He stated Shop Rite, Commerce Bank, Columbia Bank, Valley Bank have all contributed to various programs.

Mr. Landzettel explained for clarification there are things happening on River Road. There is a grant program for improvement of the signs of the businesses. River Road includes \$5,000.00 in that and that is to encourage property owners to put up better looking signs and there is a design review process that the River Road Committee uses when the signs are approved. He added they spent money for a street sweeper and planter maintenance

where people come in on the weekend to make sure the district is clean and that is in addition to what the street sweeper of the Borough does. He stated no taxpayers money goes to fund this effort.

There being no further comments by the public, upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etler and a second by Councilmember McCarthy, it was unanimously agreed to close the time for public hearing.

RESOLUTIONS BY CONSENT #14-2005

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etler and a second by Deputy Mayor Weinstein, Consent Agenda 14-2005 containing the following items was unanimously adopted.

- a. Resol. #156-2005 - Refund of Overpayment of Taxes
- b. Resol. #157-2005 - Approval of Minutes:
 - Budget Meeting 2/5/05
 - Budget Meeting 2/8/05
 - Regular Meeting 2/8/05
 - Closed Session 2/8/05

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- Budget Meeting 2/15/05
 - Work Session 2/15/05
 - Special Meeting 2/15/05
 - Closed Session 2/15/05
- c. Resol. #158-2005 - Extend Uniform Bid - Fire Department & Fire Prevention Uniforms
- d. Resol. #159-2005 - Award of Contract: Uniforms Public Works
- e. Resol. #160-2005 - Award of Bid: Cleaning and Painting Cadmus Tank #2
- f. Resol. #161-2005 - Professional Services Architectural/Engineering Services

MISCELLANEOUS PUBLIC COMMENTS

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etler and a second by Deputy Mayor Weinstein, it was unanimously agreed to open the time for public comments.

Howard Marks, 12-23 Ferry Heights asked about the defeated School Budget. Mayor Ganz explained the Council has until May 19th to make its recommendations to the Board of Education as to what it chooses to do with the budget. He stated the Council has the ability to go through the budget on a line by line basis and make recommendations as to no change, change up or change down and to give the Board of Education an amount. Mayor Ganz felt the School Budget needs to be cut and cut substantially. Mr. Marks felt they needed to cut because there was a lot of waste in it.

Don Oliver, 8-32 Mitchell Place asked if the budget was adopted yet. Mayor Ganz stated the budget was introduced on March 9th and is not yet ready for adoption because they do not have the grants or the extraordinary aid requested. Mr. Oliver stated they always hear the word grants as if it is a big bonus to the town but basically a grant is nothing more than another taxing agency giving us back our own money.

Mr. Oliver asked about the Senior Center rental agreement and asked what the fee would be. Mayor Ganz explained if it is a non profit group they require a security deposit but other than that they are not charging for the use of the space. Mr. Oliver asked if they would be doing an Art Center rental fee. Mayor Ganz stated they will consider it.

Mr. Oliver stated they mentioned that they lowered the water rates but unfortunately three years ago they raised it \$.70 and then they gave back some and then took some again. Mayor Ganz stated it is a self liquidating utility. Mr. Oliver was concerned because they have not raised the pool passes. Councilmember McCarthy stated he will be meeting with the Supervisor of Recreation along with Deputy Mayor Weinstein after this season to consider raising the fee for the pool passes. Mr. Oliver stated other towns charge higher fees. Mayor Ganz stated they are aware of that and agrees with Councilmember McCarthy view that the proper time to consider this is after the season. Mr. Oliver asked how many Borough residents use the pool. Mayor Ganz stated that was difficult number to come up with because of guest passes that are used on a regular basis. Mr. Oliver believed it was a big expense in water and the people using it should be paying more. He asked if they raised the permit fees. Manager/Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski stated they did not raise the permit fees, they are at the level on the construction permit fees that were permitted to and as well

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as our liquor license fees are at the top. She added a number of their fees are capped by the State so they cannot raise them.

Mr. Oliver asked the people who do the recycling from Monday to Friday if they work on a Saturday is that considered time and half. Manager/Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski stated that was correct. Mr. Oliver asked if they have a holiday on a Friday and work Saturday is that time and half. Manager/Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski stated that was correct also. Mr. Oliver suggested skipping the pick up. Manager/Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski stated they could look into it, however, the Council will get many complaints. It is a balancing call and policy decision. Mayor Ganz stated they will look into it.

Mr. Oliver expressed concern that Mayor Ganz and Councilmember Caan have health benefits through the County and the Borough. He stated if they are all covered that costs the town \$50,000.00. Deputy Mayor Etlar and Councilmember McCarthy stated they were not covered by the municipality.

Mr. Oliver stated they should adopt a policy against Pay to Play. He also urged them to make significant cuts in the defeated school budget.

Harriet Meyers, 8-22 Mayfair Terrace asked if there was anything that could be done about the children riding the motorized scooters. Mayor Ganz stated he introduced an ordinance on the County level. She could call the Police desk and complain and if she was not satisfied with that response she should call the Manager or send him an email and he will get it to Chief Rose. Deputy Mayor Etlar stated Senate Bill 1510 was introduced by Senator Coniglio regulating scooters and once that bill becomes law, they can enforce it.

Craig Miller, 5 Ramapo Terrace asked what is considered a commercial vehicle at the Recycling Center. Manager/Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski stated if they have commercial plates or if the vehicle that has a business painted on the side. Mr. Miller stated he saw a commercial vehicle on

Friday dropping off recyclables. When he went there with his construction material he had to go looking for someone to hand the piece of paper. He stated there was no one there and he could have dropped off the construction material without even getting a ticket. He added there is sign there that states I.D. will be checked and asked how many employees did they have working there especially on the weekends. Ron Lottermann, Recycling Coordinator stated if they have a commercial plate or are marked as commercial they prohibited. There are some that come in that look like commercial but are not marked or have the regular plates. There are some commercial vehicles that come in with cardboard or paper and the town earns money for those things. He explained if they are coming in with construction or yard waste or anything the town has to pay to get rid of they are not allowed to dump it there. Mr. Miller stated there is no one checking the I.D.'s and wanted to know why. Mr. Lottermann stated they used to do spot checks a number of years ago and very few people were rejected maybe one per day. They have three employees on Saturday and Sunday.

There being no further comments, upon motion by Councilmember Caan and a second by Deputy Mayor Etler, it was unanimously agreed to close the time for public comments.

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Regular Meeting

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ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etler and a second by Councilmember McCarthy, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Kwasniewski, RMC/CMC/AE
Manager/Municipal Clerk

The undersigned have read and approve the foregoing minutes.

Mayor David L. Ganz

Councilmember Allan Caan

Deputy Mayor Martin Etler

Councilmember Owen McCarthy

Deputy Mayor Steven Weinstein

