

Municipal Clerk

Council Minutes - February 22, 2003

BUDGET MEETING

Mayor Ganz called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. Assistant Municipal Clerk Bojanowski read the statement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

PRESENT: Mayor Ganz, Deputy Mayors Etlar and Weinstein and Councilmember Caan.

Absent: Councilmember Amato

Also present: Acting Manager Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski, Assistant Municipal Clerk Bojanowski, Attorney Lustgarten and CFO Eccleston.

Tax Collector - Tax Collector Alice Lee was present.

515-20-15 Office Equipment Maintenance - This line item was reduced from \$7,000 to \$6,500.

515-20-31 Miscellaneous - This line item was reduced from \$500 to \$300.

Capital:

Overfile Storage Cabinets - There was a unanimous consensus to approve the purchase of five cabinets.

Overtime:

Mayor Ganz stated that because of the snow storms they would have to put back \$100,000 into the budget. Acting Manager / Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski stated the storm was intense and there was no way to clean it up in one day. CFO Eccleston stated that through February 12 the cost of the overtime was \$60,700 which did not include this week.

Deputy Mayor Etlar stated the overtime totaled \$459,000 plus \$82,000 in the Water Department. He would like to see a 20 percent cut in overtime. Mayor Ganz stated he would like to leave it to the Manager's discretion.

There was a unanimous consensus to lower the overtime costs by twenty percent.

Fair Lawn TV Productions

Stuart Pace and Gina Brooks were present. CFO Eccleston explained their line items. Mayor Ganz asked that \$9,700 be shifted to the Capital Budget. Mayor Ganz wondered about getting a scroll to go across the screen in case of emergencies. Stuart Pace is to get prices. Mayor Ganz suggested that for now they have a dedicated line. Deputy Mayor Weinstein questioned the possibility of having an offsite location. Mayor Ganz suggested the new Art Center.

513-20-76 Cable TV Committee - This line item was reduced from \$23,000 to \$12,700.

A discussion followed regarding the Cablevision renewal.

Capital:

Remote Cameras for Council Chambers - Mayor Ganz stated he would like to see all Council meetings televised. There was a unanimous consensus to approve the purchase of the remote cameras for the Council Chambers.

Pool Opening:

Acting Manager / Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski stated the weather has a direct effect on the people going to the pool. The costs are high to operate the pools. Mayor Ganz suggested the pool open on Memorial Day and close right after Labor Day.

There was a unanimous consensus to open the pool early and close the pool early.

Construction Debris:

Mayor Ganz wanted it to be made clear to the residents that this new system is to be implemented. Attorney Lustgarten suggested installing a large sign of what can and cannot be done at the Recycling Center. A discussion took place regarding the procedure for collecting the money. Ron Lottermann and Lauren Patterson volunteered to come in on Saturdays for the first few weeks.

Public Advocates:

Acting Manager / Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski stated that she had received a request from the Public Advocate that instead of a salary they would get benefits. Mayor Ganz replied that if they wanted they could join the Borough's cafeteria plan.

Garbage Collection at the apartments:

CFO Eccleston stated that the tipping fees were \$40,000 and built into the contract. Acting Manager / Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski stated the new law stipulates that the Borough must pay for garbage collection at apartments or pick it up. Attorney Lustgarten stated the Borough was required to do what it does for every other resident which is two garbage cans and one recycling can.

Art Center:

Deputy Mayor Weinstein stated they should give the groups using the Arts Center proper notice of when it will close. Mayor Ganz suggested giving them thirty days notice. Acting Manager / Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski said that she had advised Tax Assessor McCullum to have Paul Beisser give an appraisal of the building. Mayor Ganz suggested they get someone who is familiar with River Road to give an appraisal. He suggested that it could be sold subject to the cooperative parking agreement.

Surplus:

Mayor Ganz stated that CFO Eccleston has put into this years budget a surplus of \$1,867,000, there was \$1,200,000 last year the low was 9.09 million in 1997. He proposed to reduce the surplus by an additional \$523,000 which would leave \$1,150,000 in surplus. Deputy Mayor Weinstein felt the sale of the Arts Center would help next years surplus and that would protect the fact that the surplus is being reduced.

There was a unanimous consensus to reduce the surplus by \$523,000.

Unemployment - Mayor Ganz stated he would like to reduce this item by \$30,000.

Passaic Valley Water Authority- Mayor Ganz stated that on the actual bill there is a difference of \$1,800 so the Borough will be getting this back from Passaic Valley Water.

Water Utility - Mayor Ganz stated on this item they have a surplus of \$325,000. He requested that it be reduced by \$115,487 which would still leave \$200,000 in surplus in the water utility. CFO Eccleston stated it would be moved to capital.

There was a unanimous consensus to approve the reductions as proposed by Mayor Ganz.

Liability Self Insurance Fund - Mayor Ganz stated he would like to reduce the fund by \$100,000 for a total of \$121,000. CFO Eccleston stated there would be a \$47,000 deficit in the fund. He explained the figures and why he felt it should not be reduced.

Workers Compensation - Mayor Ganz stated the Manager requested to fund \$508,000 in Workers Compensation, he proposed it should be funded for \$406,000 which would reduce the amount by \$101,000. If they need to they will revisit it in November.

Uncollected Taxes - Mayor Ganz proposed changing the percentage used to calculate the reserve for uncollected taxes. He continued that this would make it possible to have a zero percent increase in taxes. CFO Eccleston expressed dismay at this proposal because changing the percentage will reduce the amount of surplus raised. He pointed out that the proceeds from the sale of the Arts Center will only replace the surplus the Council used this year. State aid is disappearing. The pension contribution for police and fire is being phased back in by the State. The Borough will be conducting a revaluation. The Borough has no new sources of ratables. He was extremely concerned for the future.

Attorney Lustgarten suggested that CFO Eccleston prepare a run of numbers on the reserve for uncollected taxes with the numbers he used and then going up a half of a percentage to show the Council what he means. CFO Eccleston stated he has to take into consideration all of the other reductions that were made and then they could look at the reserve for uncollected taxes.

After further discussion there was a consensus to wait to see the numbers that CFO Eccleston prepares.

PUBLIC COMMENT -

No one wished to be heard.

CLOSED SESSION RESOLUTION - Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etler and a second by Councilmember Caan the following closed session resolution was adopted at 11:09 a.m.

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings act of the State of New Jersey permits the public to be excluded from certain matters to be discussed by the Governing Body; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fair Lawn desire to discuss pending litigation; and

WHEREAS, these matters are ones which permit the exclusion of the public from such discussions; and

WHEREAS, public disclosure of the results of these discussions shall be made upon the conclusion of

these matters by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fair Lawn.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fair Lawn that the public be excluded since these matters as set forth above are ones which permit the exclusion of the public from such discussions.

ADJOURNMENT - Upon motion of Deputy Mayor Etler and a second by Deputy Mayor Weinstein the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn B. Bojanowski, RMC
Assistant Municipal Clerk

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