

BUDGET MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
HELD AT THE
MUNICIPAL COURT /COUNCIL CHAMBERS
10 LAWLOR DRIVE, OAKLAND, NEW JERSEY
SATURDAY MARCH 28, 2009

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: By Mayor Szabo at 9:18 am.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Szabo called the meeting to order and the Clerk called the roll. Present: Mayor Szabo, Councilmembers Burns, Di Pentima, Marcalus, Pignatelli, Stagg, Visconti. Absent: None. Also Present: Lisa M. Duncan, Borough Clerk; Richard Kunze, Borough Administrator; James Mangin, Chief Financial Officer.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG:

MOMENT OF SILENCE:

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT: Mayor Szabo announced this meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law duly announced and included in the schedule of regular meetings.

Mayor Szabo advised that this is a continuation of the budget discussions. The Police Department and DPW budgets will be discussed. The Governing Body is still scrutinizing the budget.

POLICE

Chief Kasper advised that the Police Department is made up of several divisions: Patrol, Juvenile/Detective, Traffic, Records. There are 25 officers, five full-time civilians and three dispatchers. The Police Department is the first responder to all calls. In 2008, the Police Department answered over 6,000 calls and wrote 3,000 summonses.

Councilman Di Pentima questioned if there were any changes to the budget. Chief Kasper advised that some items were removed and put to a general category. He advised that he requested \$ 1,000 less for Professional Development than the previous year. He doesn't know what training will be available throughout the year. Clothing allowance is the same but Chief Kasper anticipated two promotions and a possible new hire in the figure allocated. Chief Kasper advised he had been considering purchasing a hybrid vehicle. The vehicle price is \$ 27,000 as compared to \$ 19,000 for patrol cars. The BPU currently has a \$ 4,000 rebate. He explained that hybrid cars are not made for primary patrol and pursuit. He stated it wouldn't be cost effective if we only put 10,000 miles on per year. Last year, Chief Kasper purchased a Chevy Impala which gets 20% better fuel mileage than the Crown Victoria. Councilman Di Pentima advised that Westwood is able to use hybrid cars more and get more savings from mileage because of its topography. Councilman Di Pentima does not know if we could use a hybrid because of the topography. Chief Kasper advised that he would use it as a supervisor car to test it first.

Chief Kasper advised that the Equipment line covers first aid supplies, breathalyzer supplies and fingerprint supplies. He explained that he received an email advising that the Departments will be allowed to use DDEF funds for Alco test machine maintenance and upkeep. The data processing line covers computer equipment such as printer cartridges, cables and wires. The radio service line went over the past couple of years so Chief Kasper requested a little additional

in that line. The medical service line covers new hire evaluations. Chief Kasper explained that the officers must qualify two times per year for day and night with their weapons. That is what the guns and ammunition line is used for. Chief Kasper explained that the inhalator line-which is the cost of oxygen-dropped down to \$ 1,000. It used to be \$ 6,000 years ago because the Department was leasing the equipment. The Police Department was able to buy its own equipment and last year spent \$ 130 on oxygen because the First Aid Squad was able to fill the bottles. However, the First Aid Squad will no longer be able to fill the bottles so Chief Kasper found an outside vendor to do it at a discounted rate. The traffic safety line is for signs and supplies for traffic enforcement. The Police Department is trying to get on a program for replacement of signs so a little is done each year.

Councilman Pignatelli questioned placement of a new officer in the Academy. The Borough may be eligible for the COPS grant. If we are going to move forward with hiring a new officer, it takes two months to go through background checks. The Council is going to have to decide in the next month. Chief Kasper advised that the Academy starts at the end of July. The prospective candidate needs to have a psychological examination. Councilman Di Pentima asked when we would know about the Federal funding. Chief Kasper advised that the application must be submitted by April 14th. The funding is for three years for a full entry level position. It includes raises, pension, and health benefits. The Borough would have to keep the officer for a fourth year. Mayor Szabo expressed concern that once the government is done giving money, the Council has to commit to spending the money. However, this could work because the Police Department is down an officer. Councilman Di Pentima commented that a replacement is needed because someone resigned so this is viable whether the Borough were to fund it now or in the fourth year. This is a needed position. The Council will find a way to plan how to fund to mitigate the impact in the future.

Mayor Szabo asked Chief Kasper to explain how the Police Department is functioning with only one Lieutenant and why the Chief has requested a promotion. Chief Kasper advised that the Lieutenant is in charge of the patrol squads. It should work that each Lieutenant should have two patrol squads. There is not enough control over individual squads with only one Lieutenant. Chief Kasper advised he is looking toward 2010 to get accreditation which is a very long process. The extra Lieutenant could help with that process. Getting accredited would mean a savings to the Borough for liability. Chief Kasper advised there are plenty of duties to utilize two Lieutenants. Mayor Szabo commented that he had pressed the prior Chief to get accredited.

Councilman Burns commented that the old COPS program was specifically for new hires and he asked if that has changed. Chief Kasper responded it could be used for new hires, replacements or layoffs. Mr. Kunze advised that the last COPS program was specifically for officers in school. This latest program is a result of the stimulus package to mitigate towns who are feeling the budget crisis so that public safety is not jeopardized. Councilman Burns commented that the Police Department has lost two officers. One was due to retirement and the other was a resignation. The resignation is the vacancy that is going to be filled. If there is a promotion, that would create another vacancy. Chief Kasper explained there has been a change in the organization of the Police Department. There are currently extra personnel on the night shift. The squads are not being staffed the way they used to be. The personnel available during the day-traffic officer, Lieutenant, Chief-can back up squads. Extra personnel were put on at night to help cover those shifts. Councilman Burns questioned if the new hire would replace the vacancy from the promotions or the resignation. Chief Kasper advised that there will be a vacancy created when a Sergeant moves up to Lieutenant and when a Patrolman moves up to Sergeant. However, if the officer didn't resign, there would be no special night shift and there would be four officers on each squad. Councilman Burns commented he is trying to determine if the Chief is going to

need additional personnel. Chief Kasper explained that while he would like more personnel, he has shifted personnel around and can get by with what has been requested. Councilman Burns commented that there used to be four officers per squad. With two new night shift personnel, the Department is down two officers. Chief Kasper responded he will use the new Lieutenant to help cover.

Councilman Di Pentima explained that the Chief has changed the model of how the Department worked previously. The Chief is only asking for a new hire to replace the resignation. Councilman Burns explained that the current staffing is 25 and the Department should have 27. If the Department needs to go to 27, now is the time to do it while the Federal Government will pay for it. The Borough could apply for the funds and if we don't get the funds, we don't have to hire the extra person. Councilman Pignatelli explained that when the Department had 27, there was a resource officer at the school. Councilman Burns commented that what the Chief has done is fine with him. He complimented the Chief on reorganizing the Department so he doesn't need the additional officer. Chief Kasper explained he is trying to reassign personnel to make the Department more efficient with the personnel that is available.

Councilman Burns commented that he thought that putting holiday pay in the salary would bring overtime down. Councilman Di Pentima responded it is lower than last year. Mr. Kunze responded that the Chief didn't expect to see an increase in overtime hours worked. The increase is due to the rise in compensation with the step increase and COLA. Also there was a minute allowance in overtime because the Department is down an officer. Councilman Burns commented there is nothing for reimburseable overtime. Mr. Mangin explained that when there is special detail, the officers are paid out of overtime. When the money is reimbursed, it is put back to reimburseable overtime. The Borough does not appropriate for reimburseable overtime because we are reimbursed for it. The goal for 2009 is to do that through a trust fund so it is not a factor in the budget. Councilman Burns questioned unused vacation. Mr. Mangin responded that 2008 included the final payout for the former Chief. The true payout in 2008 was \$ 106,000. Chief Kasper responded that the figure in the budget is an actual number.

Councilman Burns questioned why the amount in equipment maintenance is less than the request. Chief Kasper responded that there were items charged to Equipment Maintenance that should have been charged to contracted services. The money was moved to the contracted services line. Councilman Burns commented that clothing allowance was moved to salary. He questioned the Electronic Data Processing line. Chief Kasper responded that some of that money was moved to Administration. Councilman Di Pentima explained that Mr. Kunze took what was deemed as centralized services from the Departments and put it into a central account. Mr. Kunze explained that he pulled \$ 4,300 out of Electronic Data Processing and moved it to the General Services line for general computer equipment and supplies. The money that is left in the Police Department budget is solely used for Police. Mr. Kunze did not feel the full \$ 12,000 request was necessary so he put in \$ 10,000.

Councilman Burns commented on the 9-1-1 service. Chief Kasper responded this is the first year that this was put in the Police budget. This is the 9-1-1 handoff fee. Councilman Burns questioned where the reverse 9-1-1 is charged. Mr. Kunze responded there is nothing specifically budgeted. He is anticipating charging this off to the telephone line if needed. If the Borough uses the service more, we can move money out to a special line item. Councilman Burns questioned the cost. Mr. Kunze responded that it costs an estimated \$ 250 to send to the whole town. The cost would be less if sent only to certain people. Mr. Mangin commented that 9-1-1 is on a separate line because it is outside the cap.

Councilman Visconti questioned if there is any research that can be done with the car companies in regards to the hybrid vehicle. Chief Kasper responded that they started using the hybrid vehicles in other government areas and not in police work so there won't be much history. He advised that GM won't let anyone hook up emergency lighting to their vehicle because of the drain to the battery. Councilman Visconti would be in favor of trying a hybrid vehicle but there needs to be more research first. He questioned if there was funding available for this. Mayor Szabo responded that once the Borough becomes certified from Sustainable Jersey, there may be money available for that. There is money available to help green initiatives. Mayor Szabo commented that a lot of towns are moving to hybrid vehicles for code enforcement.

Councilman Visconti is questioning the crossing guard increase. Mr. Kunze responded that last year's calculation was based on total hours. He didn't realize that the crossing guards also get prorated sick and vacation time. The amount will need to be higher than last year. However, he may be able to back off \$ 7,000. Chief Kasper advised that last year there was a change in calculation. Mr. Kunze advised that the salary increase last year was based on if they had received an increase in 2007 which they should have received.

Councilman Burns questioned the salary line. Mr. Kunze advised it consists of contractual raises, holiday pay, longevity and the final retirement payouts for Madonna, Haemmerle and Fitzgerald. There is a prorated amount for the replacement of Fitzgerald. Councilman Burns asked if the prorated amount was for half a year. Mr. Kunze responded it was for seven months. Councilman Burns asked if the equipment charge for the new officer was included. Mr. Kunze will make an adjustment to put it in O.E.

POLICE CAPITAL:

Chief Kasper advised that the Borough budgeted for the purchase of a fingerprint machine in 2008. The items requested in 2009 are accessories that will put the prints directly in the computer database. Chief Kasper advised he has not purchased the machine yet. Through networking, he was able to get a machine that is valued at \$ 25,000 for free. The only cost to the Borough will be maintenance. He advised that he can use the money budgeted for 2008 to buy the accessories and then he won't need the money in 2009. Chief Kasper advised that the radar unit increased in price so that request will have to be changed. Councilman Burns asked if the Chief will be able to use the fingerprint machine for Recreation. Chief Kasper responded that the fingerprint can only be used for law enforcement purposes. Recreation will have to go to a vendor. Councilman Visconti advised that Chief Kasper has gotten a lot of equipment through donations for the Police and other Borough departments.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS:

Assistant Superintendent Anthony Marcucilli advised he has eighteen full-time staff and two administrative personnel. The DPW consists of road maintenance, water, sewer, buildings and grounds, vehicle maintenance and stormwater management. Mr. Kunze advised that two additional budgets were created this year-vehicle maintenance and snow removal. This was done to track costs more easily. All the money for these two budgets are being pulled from streets and roads. The snow removal budget covers overtime, contractors, and snow removal supplies. It does not account for reimbursement from the County. The vehicle maintenance line covers the cost of two mechanics, equipment and supplies. There is a change to stormwater management because we are looking at it as an ongoing maintenance process. That budget covers one employee's salary and O.E. costs for annual cleaning and permitting. The whole budget is outside the cap.

Mr. Marcucilli advised that the price of salt increased from \$ 47 per ton in 2008 to \$ 65 per ton in 2009. The Borough gets some salt from the County but we purchase 1000 tons per year. This new budget for snow removal gives a more accurate way to track storms. Councilman Visconti asked Mr. Marcucilli to explain the brining system he has proposed. Mr. Marcucilli advised this is a salt water system that is one-third less corrosive than salt. It is environmentally friendly and is only a little stronger than seawater. It uses 500 pounds of salt to 3000 gallons of water. The solution can be applied to the road 48 hours before a storm event while the men are on straight time. Municipalities who are using this system do not get called out for light dustings. It will also cut down on salting after a storm because there won't be road freeze. The system costs under \$ 37,000. The potential savings in salt use could pay for the system in a year and a half. Councilman Pignatelli questioned if the brine is less corrosive on the trucks. Mr. Marcucilli responded it was. Councilwoman Stagg asked if it was sodium chloride. Mr. Marcucilli replied it was. Councilwoman Stagg asked if we can change it to calcium. Mr. Marcucilli responded that the Borough does use liquid calcium for below 20 degrees but it is expensive. Mayor Szabo asked if we will be able to use this next year. Mr. Marcucilli responded that the project does not require engineering services and his men will prepare the area. It will be put where the liquid calcium is now. Councilwoman Marcalus asked if this system can be used with the Borough trucks. Mr. Marcucilli responded it can. He advised that in order to have the system up and running next year, it must be ordered in July or August. Councilman Visconti commented that the Borough's material costs would go down since you use 30% less material. It is less corrosive than salt. It is a win-win situation. Councilwoman Stagg commented that even if the roads are sprayed before a storm, there is still a need to put the abrasive down later. She questioned if the same truck can do both. Mr. Marcucilli responded it could. Councilman Burns questioned if this is in the budget for this year. Mr. Marcucilli responded it was a capital request. Mayor Szabo commented that it is about time we gravitated to this approach. Mr. Marcucilli commented that currently, the DPW must wait for a call from the Police and then the trucks still have to be loaded before they can go out. This brining material can be loaded and spread during straight time hours and won't freeze so it can be left loaded in the vehicles.

Councilwoman Marcalus asked if sharing services was built into anything in the budget. She asked about the wash system. Mr. Marcucilli advised that he has looked at a number of items that could be shared with neighboring towns including the recycling coordinator. He spoke with Franklin Lakes about sharing a wash station and they already have it incorporated in their building. It is not practical to share their system because they would have to close down their shop in order for Oakland to use it. It is necessary for us to have the wash system because we won't be able to wash any vehicles in our lot without it. Councilman Visconti commented it is mandated by the DEP. Mayor Szabo responded it is an unfunded mandate. He commented that the Borough should make a list of unfunded mandates to petition Trenton. Mr. Kunze advised that a lot of mandates come from rule making agencies. Councilman Di Pentima advised that it is safe to say that the DPW is most affected by those mandates.

COUNCILWOMAN MARCALUS LEFT THE MEETING AT 11:03 AM.

Mr. Mangin advised that he will be establishing a snow removal trust fund. Any unexpended money in that budget will move to the trust fund. The money could then be used any time we go beyond what was budgeted for in a year. One of the down sides is that the money won't go to surplus. However, it saves money for a "snowy" day. Councilman Di Pentima responded that this will help Mr. Marcucilli because he will have money to draw on. Mr. Kunze advised that he will use a rolling average of usage. It is a great mechanism to control when there is a higher than normal year for snow. Councilman Di Pentima advised that this change and the health insurance change means that the replenishment of surplus is not as great in future years. Councilman

Burns asked if this is a trust fund that is allowable by the State. Mr. Mangin advised it will be done by dedication of rider.

Councilman Burns advised that a number of years ago, the Borough set up a trust fund for purchase of a fire truck. The auditor said that it couldn't be done. Mr. Mangin responded that he would create a capital reserve for fire engine. Councilman Burns responded that the Council was told they couldn't do that so no money has been put away.

Councilman Burns questioned funding for tires. Mr. Marcucilli responded that the funding for tires is included in vehicle maintenance. Councilman Burns asked about the allocation of personnel for water and sewer. Mr. Kunze advised that they are included in the water and sewer budget. Councilman Di Pentima complimented Mr. Marcucilli for his tracking of personnel in order to transfer that money into the utilities budgets. It gives a more accurate picture for the utilities.

Councilman Visconti advised that Mr. Marcucilli is continually reaching out to local DPW departments to coordinate the purchase of equipment. He had reached out to other towns about the wash station and the other towns had already made the arrangements. Councilman Visconti advised that Mr. Marcucilli's budget is pretty much flat. He thanked Mr. Marcucilli. Mr. Kunze advised that he and Mr. Marcucilli worked hard to save nickels and dimes. Councilman Di Pentima commented that Mr. Marcucilli should take credit. If it were not for the increase in price for rock salt, he would have had a decrease in his budget. Mr. Marcucilli commented he has a tremendous support staff who reach out to vendors to reduce costs.

Mr. Marcucilli advised that he checked out the use of cooking oil in the vehicles like Westwood does. He advised that Westwood primarily has a diesel fleet. Our vehicles are not diesel. In winter, the oil tends to gel. Westwood runs the oil during the summer in diesel pickup trucks that are used everyday. Our diesel vehicles are not used everyday. Gasoline vehicles are cheaper to run. Mayor Szabo explained that we are going to look into alternative ways to try to save money and not everything will work.

Councilman Burns commented that the DPW workers are some of the hardest workers. He knows there was money put in for a half year for DPW promotions. These promotions have been pending for a couple of years. He asked if the promotions could be effective for the entire year. Mr. Kunze responded it is a civil service issue of when it is effective. The budget decision is the Mayor and Council's. Mr. Kunze commented that the decision is how to handle promotions in a tight budget year. Councilman Burns commented that it was just a suggestion because these promotions have been pending. Councilman Di Pentima responded that salary and personnel issues should be discussed in Executive session. Mayor Szabo explained that the Council will discuss personnel in Executive session and memorialize what was discussed at a later time.

DPW CAPITAL:

Mr. Marcucilli advised that the DPW has been using a compost turner that was bought in 1984 second-hand. It is broken down and would cost between \$ 15,000 and \$ 20,000 to get functioning. Therefore, Mr. Marcucilli has put in a request for a new compost turner. Mayor Szabo explained there are DEP requirements to maintain the compost. Mr. Marcucilli is asking to replace a 1991 truck. He has been trying to save expenses for capital items. He has another truck that the body was replaced for \$ 1,400 and the truck will last another two years. He advised that the 1991 truck is a wreck and is time to replace.

Councilman Visconti advised that Mr. Marcucilli made recommendations to reduce the scope of the DPW renovation project. There is a proposal from the architect. There is mold throughout the service building and a water leak. The problems are getting worse and have to be addressed.

Mr. Kunze advised that he thought something should be put in capital for the street and sidewalk programs although he did not have a hard proposal. That figure can be revised. Mr. Marcucilli advised that he needs to discuss areas to focus on and then he can give a more accurate number.

Mr. Kunze advised that he will meet with the low bidder for the solid waste contract on Tuesday to go over questions that came up from the Council. He spoke about preliminary discussions about the need for a recycling center.

Councilman Di Pentima asked if the Mayor and Council wanted to meet with the Fire Department. Councilman Burns responded he did. Mayor Szabo asked about holding the meeting on April 1st depending on availability of the Fire Department. He asked if there were any other departments that the Council wished to meet with. Councilman Di Pentima commented that we could bring Recreation in. Councilman Burns agreed and commented that the Recreation budget is major money.

MEETING ADJOURNED:

On motion of Councilman Pignatelli, seconded by Councilman Di Pentima, the meeting be adjourned at 11:37 am.

ROLL CALL: All yeas, Councilmembers Burns, Di Pentima, Marcalus, Pignatelli, Stagg, Visconti.

Lisa M. Duncan, Borough Clerk
May 13, 2009

Mayor John P. Szabo, Jr.

Date Approved