

**BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
WASHINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES – Budget Meeting April 7,
2010**

The Budget Meeting of the Borough Council of Washington, Warren County, New Jersey was held in the Council Chambers of Borough Hall at 6:00 P.M.

Roll Call: Cioni, Boyle, Higgins, McDonald, Gleba, Valentine, Housel - Present

Also Present: Rich Phelan, Borough Manager
Kristine Blanchard, Borough Clerk

Mayor McDonald led everyone in the flag salute.

Mayor McDonald read the following Statement into the Record:

“The requirements of the ‘Open Public Meetings Law, 1975, Chapter 231 have been satisfied in that adequate notice of this meeting has been published in the Star Gazette and posted on the Bulletin Board of Borough Hall stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting as required by law.

Departmental Budgets

- Administration

Manager Phelan stated that the administration department budget request has remained flat for 2010. The only increases are in the areas of office supplies and salary and wages. The increase in salaries represents the salaries that were being charged to the sewer budget in previous years.

- Mayor and Council

Mayor and Council budget was reviewed. Council agreed to reduce the meetings and conferences budget by \$2,000.00

- Municipal Clerk

The Borough Clerk reviewed the departmental budget with Council stating that for the most part expenses remained flat. The increase in printing and binding is due to the budgeted amount for updating the Borough Codebook; which has not been done in two years. This budget was reduced by \$1500.00 in the other expenses line item.

- Finance

The CFO reported to Council that the salary and wages line item increased due to an employee being moved from General Administration to Finance. After additional review, the CFO cut \$400.00 from the conference and meetings category. Council also removed the budget amount for the GFOA membership in the amount of \$75.00.

- Tax Collection

The Tax Collector stated that she has been trying to keep expenses down; she was able to reduce the costs of the purchasing of tax bills. There is a \$16,000 budgeted amount to bring the sewer billing in house. This is for the purchase of the Edmunds sewer billing module. Manager Phelan stated that the salary and wage increase in this department also represents salaries that had been charged to the sewer budget previously.

- Tax Assessor

Council noted that the cost for legal services has increased. Manager Phelan stated the assessor anticipates a costly and busy year regarding tax appeals. Council requested the amount of tax appeals filed by April 1, 2010.

- Planning Board

The Vice Chair stated that most costs for the Planning Board have remained the same in 2010. There is a need to budget for the new Planning Board members to attend school. Council asked the Planning Board to reduce their budget by \$2,500.00 in the other expenses line item. The Planning Board has a meeting on Monday and will review.

- Board of Adjustment

The Board of Adjustment budget was reduced by \$1,000.00 after review by Council. \$500.00 reduction in legal and a \$500 in part time salary.

Manager Phelan stated the budget presented to Council represents statutory increases and departmental budgets. He asked what Council would like to consider reducing further. Debt Service is one area that can be looked at; however it will have no impact on the 2010 budget. In order to refinance the Borough's debt we must show the Local Finance Board that we will save 3% or more. Bond Council is unsure that we can show a 3% savings; however the CFO, Auditor, and Bond Attorney are looking into it.

Manager Phelan asked Council for any other suggestions regarding budget reductions. Councilman Cioni stated that he would like to see the net savings the

Borough would receive if Council considered closing the pool for 2010 and closing the library; or at least reducing the library hours further. He also stated he would like to see departmental budgets reduced by 5 to 10%. Council agreed that they would like to see the net savings on the pool and library and also departmental budget cuts. Manager Phelan will present the savings to Council at the April 14 budget meeting as the Recreation Director and the Library Director will be in attendance. No further suggestions were made.

Motion made by Housel, seconded by Gleba to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristine Blanchard, RMC
Borough Clerk