

**BOROUGH OF NORWOOD  
BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING  
OF MARCH 18, 2009**

**CALL TO ORDER AT 7:10 PM**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE**

**MAYOR BARSА STATED:**

Adequate notice of this meeting was given to the press and posted as required. Date and time of this meeting was legally given as required by the "Open Public Meetings Act". This notice is on file with the Municipal Clerk and posted on the bulletin board. Minutes of this meeting will be made available to the public upon completion of typing and proofreading by the Municipal Clerk.

**PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:**

Mayor	James Barsa
Councilman	Tom Brizzolara
Councilwoman	Marianne Orecchio
Councilman	Barry Scott
Council President	Anthony Guercio
Councilman	Allen Rapaport
Councilman	Ed Condoleo

**ALSO PRESENT:**

CFO/Treasurer	Maureen Neville
Auditor	Steve Wielkotsz

**2009 Municipal Budget:**

Mr. Wielkotsz informed that due to the economy the interest on investments is down, the tax collection rate has declined as well as construction fees. The net to surplus for 2007 was \$62,000. To compound these tough economic times, State Aid has been cut an additional \$30,000 from last year.

Based on the current appropriation and revenue numbers the 2009 municipal budget is \$835,000 over the tax levy cap. The Borough can reduce this to \$634,000 by deferring \$191,000 in pension obligations and using an additional \$200,000 in surplus (total \$400,000). The Borough should apply for Extraordinary Aid to help offset some of this tax increase. If the Borough does not defer the pension obligation, the average homeowner will see a \$583 increase in their tax bill, with the deferral it will be \$448. There was some discussion on employee furloughs and possible layoff and benefit reductions. Councilman Brizzolara suggested that the employees be invited to a meeting to hear the state of the Borough in this economy. In order to meet the deadlines imposed by the state for making application for Extraordinary Aid, the Borough will have to introduce the budget on March 31, 2009 and the Aid application will have to be sent to the State prior to April 15, 2009. The following will need approval at the March 31 meeting:

- Cap Rate Ordinance
- Resolution authorizing an application to the Local Finance Board for a Levy Cap Waiver
- Resolution authorizing an application to the Local Finance Board for a Reduced Pension Contribution

Other suggestions for correcting this problem were to explore with the County Board of Taxation doing a "Blanket Re-Assessment".

Mayor Barsa said he would entertain a motion to open the meeting to the public for comment. It was moved by Mrs. Orecchio, seconded by Mr. Brizzolara to open the meeting to the public. The motion was carried upon the affirmative vote of the members present.

Mr. Mitchell Rosenthal, 50 Adams Street said that he felt deferring the pension payments was a bad idea and suggested that the Council consider selling assets. Regarding furloughs, Mr. Rosenthal informed that in order for the Borough to carry out the furloughs they must file a plan with the Department of Labor.

Mr. Joseph Ascolese, 400 High Street feels that the public wants to hear that the Mayor and Council are doing something about the economic condition of the Borough. He suggested that the governing body reach out to former council members to help with the budget cuts. Councilman Brizzolara invited Mr. Ascolese and the public to the April 15, 2009 work session to listen to a

presentation by Rockland Electric regarding cost saving measures and ways to reduce electric bills.

Mr. George Hertzberg, 24 Carter Street urged the Mayor and Council to sit down with their employees and inform them of the Borough's budget problems, but reassures them that they are not in jeopardy of losing their jobs.

No one else wishing to be heard, a motion to close the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Rapaport and seconded by Mr. Scott. The motion was carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present.

Mayor Barsa declared a five minute recess at 9:15 PM.

Mayor Barsa reconvened the meeting at 9:20 PM.

The Council discussed the following areas to increase revenue for the upcoming year:

- Tobar Excavating, the company that the Borough has an Agreement with for the compost facility has agreed to give the Borough \$4 for every cubic yard of topsoil they sell. The estimate is that the Borough should net \$30,000.
- It is expected that the Library will increase their rent payment to the Borough to help offset their increase.
- Explore 3<sup>rd</sup> party billing for Ambulance Service. See if there is an impact to the LOSAP program.
- To save on the cost of the field lighting, no more night games and all activities that are not recreation sponsored need to apply for and pay for a permit. The Police Department is to receive a list of the field permits issued. A discussion took place regarding the fees charged for the fields and amending the ordinance to increase the fees. It was moved by Mr. Guercio and seconded by Mr. Rapaport to place a freeze on all field permits until the fees have been adjusted. The motion was amended to explore a different permit fee for night games. On the roll call vote all council members present voted for the motion.
- The Borough Clerk was instructed to send letters to the Nursery Schools regarding the use of the fields and playgrounds and they were instructed to submit their requests in writing as well as a certificate of insurance and hold harmless agreement.

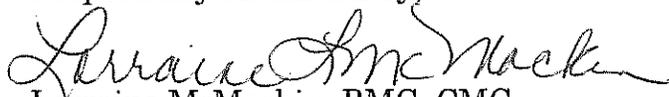
- Look into calculating sewer charges for all commercial and school buildings. The Borough Engineer will be asked to look into this.
- Send out an RFQ for banking looking for lower fees and higher interest rates on our investments. Stop the scanning of checks and courier pick-up of deposits and go back to having the police take the bank bags.
- Speak with the JIF on the procedures to be followed for removing crossing guards from certain posts.

Mr. DiRese, Superintendent DPW was invited to speak to the Council regarding his department's budget. Mr. DiRese informed that he would be willing to cut \$15,000 from his overtime budget as well as the \$20,000 for summer help. Streets and Roads O/E was cut \$5,500. Mr. DiRese reviewed the increases in the Building and Grounds O/E and explained that the additional costs are for the replacement of the red lights on top of the field light. The Council discussed cutting the \$6,500 for the Haring Cemetery fence. This will be discussed further at a later date. The DPW will begin to dump the grass at the Borough's compost facility saving the fee paid to Orangeburg Recycling Center. An additional \$40,000 was cut for this expense as well as storm water management. The Mayor and Council thanked Mr. DiRese for his efforts in helping to trim the budget.

Chief Krapels was invited to review his budget with the governing body. The Police S/W was reviewed and additional cuts were made to that line item. The requested amount was \$2,010,560.81 and the final budget figure agreed upon was \$1,965,221.24. The Police O/E line item was cut from \$116,300 to \$95,800. The Mayor and Council thanked Chief Krapels and his men for their hard work and dedication to the Borough.

There being no additional business, it was moved by Mrs. Orecchio and seconded by Mr. Condoleo to adjourn the meeting. All Council Members present were in favor of the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

  
Lorraine McMackin, RMC, CMC  
Municipal Clerk