

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE BUDGET MEETING
February 7, 2015

The Budget Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranbury was held at 8:00 a.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Answering present to the roll call were: Township Committee members: Susan Goetz, Glenn Johnson, Dan Mulligan, and Mayor Jay Taylor. Mr. Cook arrived at 8:04 a.m. Also present was: Denise Marabello, Township Administrator/Director of Finance and Kathleen R. Cunningham, Municipal Clerk/Assistant Administrator. Mayor Taylor led in the salute to the flag and Ms. Cunningham gave the following Open Public Meetings Act statement:

In accordance with Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, it is hereby announced and shall be entered into the minutes of this meeting that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided:

- (1) Posted on January 22, 2015 on the Bulletin Board of the Municipal Office at 23-A North Main Street, Cranbury, New Jersey and remains posted at that location.
- (2) Communicated to the Cranbury Press, Home News Tribune and Trenton Times on January 22, 2015.
- (3) Was filed on January 22, 2015 at the Cranbury Municipal Office, 23-A North Main Street, Cranbury, New Jersey, posted on the Township's web site and remains on file for public inspection, and
- (4) Sent to those individuals who have requested personal notice.

Mr. Steven Benner, Tax Assessor discussed with the Township Committee, the new vs. previous assessed valuation and urged the Committee "to remain cautiously optimistic" as he referenced some potential ratables coming to fruition in the Township.

Ms. Marabello, Township Administrator/Director of Finance gave a brief summary of both the proposed Operating and Capital Budget books for this year.

The Township Committee reviewed the Police Department's Budgets (both Operating and Capital) with Chief Varga and Lt. Dillane. Chief Varga reported overtime is being utilized as some officers are filling in to do some of the work of those officers out on medical leave.

Members of the Cranbury Library Board; Kirstie Venanzi, President, Mr. David Fletcher, Secretary/Treasurer and Marilynn Mullen, Director presented to the Township Committee a request to increase the Library's Budget this year from \$483,300 up to \$500,000. Of that amount, \$8,800 would be able to give its staff slight increases. Ms. Venanzi indicated the Library Board had approved its budget and at that time discussed salary of its employees both past and present. She also reported the Library has "shovel ready" plans which will be able to be implemented by the end of 2015 and urged the Township Committee to hold discussions on the parking lot, etc. for the proposed new Library. Members of the Township Committee raised their concerns with the Library having surplus (in its proposed Library funds) and then justifying to the residents (should property taxes have to be increased) why the Township gave the money. In addition, when the Township Committee does its budget, it is held accountable to the residents and because the Library has surplus, it is sending a "mixed message" to the residents. Ms. Goetz suggested the Library put the same merit caps on its staff's increases as the Township does. Ms. Venanzi indicated she would like to meet with Ms. Marabello to discuss how she facilitates this plan. The majority of the Township Committee members were not in favor of giving the additional funds to the Library.

Mr. Taylor left the dais and did not participate in the following three (3) discussions due to being conflicted on said discussions:

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Mr. Charles Smith, President and Mr. Jonathan Rosenberg, Treasurer of the Cranbury First Aid, discussed with the Township Committee, the Squad's 2015 Budget. The Township Committee commended the Squad for their dedication and service to the residents and the Township. The Total number of calls answered in 2014 were 774 and the total active members are 21. The total expenses for 2014 were \$301,297.

Mr. Mike Kervan, President, Cranbury Volunteer Fire Company No. 1 discussed with the Township Committee the Fire Company's Budget for 2015. The Township Committee commended the Fire Company for their dedication and service to the residents and the Township. Mr. Kervan reported Vehicle Maintenance was \$28,300.00, Equipment and Supplies were \$12,580.00, Cleaning, Supplies and Services were \$3,600.00, Training and Drills, \$1,000.00 and the total amount expended in 2014 was \$117,855.00. The Township Stipend was \$90,000.00.

The Township Committee discussed the LOSAP Program and funding for this year. Ms. Marabello reported the maximum for this year per member is \$1,613.00 and there are approximately 23 Fire Company members and 13 First Aid. The Township Committee members were in agreement to fund the maximum amount for each member of LOSAP (**with Mr. Taylor recused**).

Mr. Taylor returned to the dais.

The Township Committee discussed the 2015 Salary Pool. Ms. Marabello reported there are approximately 21 employees. If the Township Committee should decide on 1% she would give 1% across the board. However, if the decision is to make it 2%, then she would give no one higher than 2%. The Township Committee members decided to give up to 2% in increases this year to employees.

The Township Committee discussed increases in operating line items. A recommendation was made to have the Township's IT Consultant review the existing phone alarm lines and give his recommendations as this past year there were problems with the carrier who currently provides service to the Township.

The Township Committee were all in agreement to add the "Holiday Decoration" budget by \$1,000.

The Township Committee discussed the need for updating the Master Plan. Mr. Johnson reported there are problems with the Master Plan in its present form and highly recommended making revisions to it. The Township Committee members were in agreement to fund this item with additional monies.

The Capital items requested were discussed. The Township Committee asked Ms. Cunningham to check on leasing a new copier vs. purchasing.

Mr. Taylor mentioned the School is putting on a new roof this year and perhaps the Township can use the same vendor to make repairs to Town Hall's roof.

Mr. Cook indicated he will reach out to the County to see if they would be willing to help out with Petty Road repairs to the bridge.

The Township Committee discussed the tax rate for 2015 and were unanimous with a .01 cent increase.

Public Comment

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There being no comments, the Mayor closed the public part of the meeting.

On motion by Mr. Cook, seconded by Mr. Mulligan and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

Kathleen R. Cunningham, RMC
Municipal Clerk