

FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
REGULAR ACTION MEETING
MARCH 16, 2016

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Byrd called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT

Mayor Byrd read the following OPMA Statement into the record:

This meeting of the Fairfield Township Committee shall come to order. The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advanced notice of and to attend the meeting of the public bodies at which any business affecting their interests are discussed or acted upon. This meeting held on this 16th day of March 2016 at the Fairfield Municipal Building in Fairton New Jersey is held pursuant to notice of date, time and place of same having been submitted to South Jersey Times, The Daily Journal, and The Press of Atlantic City and also duly posted on the bulletin board in the lobby of the Township Hall.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG / MOMENT OF PRAYER

Mayor Byrd led the flag salute followed by a moment of prayer given by Committeeman Clark.

OATH OF OFFICE / UNEXPIRED TERM

DAVID GONZALEZ

Township Clerk Gonzales gave the Oath of Office to David Gonzalez as Township Committeeman to fill the unexpired term vacated by Committeeman Troy L. Pitts, Sr. Mr. Gonzalez was accompanied with his family members.

ROLL CALL

The following roll call was recorded as follows:

Committeeman Clark, present; Committeeman Gonzalez, present; Deputy Mayor Pierce, present; and Mayor Byrd, present.

MEMBER ABSENT:

Committeeman Bernard A. Manson.

ALSO PRESENT:

Township Administrator Surrency, Township Administrative Assistant Wymbs, Township Solicitor Carr and Township Clerk Gonzales.

Mayor Byrd read the following into the record:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

WORK SESSION ACTION MEETING MARCH 2, 2016

CLOSED SESSION MEETING MARCH 2, 2016

At this time, Mayor Byrd entertained a motion to table the minutes to the next scheduled meeting. Committeeman Clark moved to table the minutes seconded by Mayor Byrd. Roll Call Vote: Clark, yes; Gonzalez, yes; Pierce, yes and Mayor Byrd, yes.

REVIEW OF BILL LIST PROVIDED BY THE CFO

Mayor Byrd asked the Township Committee if they had any questions on the bill list. There were no questions.

ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION (FIRST READING)

ORDINANCE NO. 6 - 2016

AN ORDINANCE TO EXTEND THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)

Deputy Mayor Pierce moved to introduce Ordinance No. 6 - 2016 on first reading seconded by Committeeman Clark. Roll Call Vote: Clark, yes; Pierce, yes; Gonzalez, abstain, and Mayor Byrd, yes.

ORDINANCES FOR PUBLIC HEARING (SECOND READING)

There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Mayor Byrd read the following into the record:

In order for the Committee to conduct the business of the Township in the most productive manner possible, meeting

Attendees will be given five (5) minutes, all inclusive to comment on any agenda item(s) without comment or question from the Committee, but only on items specified on the agenda listed for the current meeting. Please step up to the microphone at the appropriate time, and state your name and address for the record.

Mayor Byrd asked for a motion to open the meeting for public comment on agenda items only. Committeeman Clark moved to open the meeting seconded by Deputy Mayor Pierce. Roll Call Vote: Clark, yes; Pierce, yes;

Gonzalez, yes and Mayor Byrd, yes.

Virginia LeMatty, 9 LeMatty Way, appeared and indicated that since the Township Committee has appointed a new member on the committee, the audience would like if the new member could introduce himself into the record as there are several residents who are not acquainted with the new member.

Mr. Gonzalez apologized and indicated that it was his intent to introduce he was going to introduce himself tonight.

Mr. Gonzalez went into the record and introduced himself as Township resident at 441 Fairton-Gouldtown Road. He has been a Fairfield Township for 30 years and his wife is a lifelong resident of Fairfield Township.

Mr. Gonzalez indicated that he just retried from the Federal Prison. He was the union president at the prison for twenty years and has experience with organization and that he feels that he could help the Township and its residents with his experience in budgets and negotiation contracts and did a lot national negotiations. He is also an active volunteer assistant coach in the community at Bridgeton High School. He coached in the Bridgeton City League which kids from Fairfield Township has played for him Mr. Gonzalez coached advised that he looks forward to working for the Township and the public and that he hopes that the public will allow him the opportunity to serve the public because he believes he is serving the public. He indicated that he is not here for himself that he is here for the public to try to improve the Township where we all reside and our kids. He advised as you can see tonight, I have 3 daughters, a lovely wife and 5 grandkids.

Ms. LeMatty asked if she could ask Mr. Gonzalez another question. He stated yes. Ms. LeMatty asked if he would be swayed in his vote on anything just because you worked at the Prison as some of the members did.

Mr. Gonzalez indicated that he is his own man and a free thinker. He advised that he has always been that way and everything he does that he is a very opinionated person as well. Mr. Gonzalez stated with that being said, he knows there are going to be things that he may make a decision on behalf of the residents. Mr. Gonzalez advised that one thing he has learned in politics is that you cannot please everybody. He advised that he will always listen to the communities input because he is here to serve the public, however, he may make a decision that they may not agree with it and that his decision will be based on after listening to all opinions and what is best for the Township.

Mayor Byrd asked if anyone else had any questions.

Nancy Ridgway, 582 Irving Avenue appeared and welcomed Mr. Gonzalez. Ms. Ridgway questioned Resolution No. 83 - 2016

A RESOLUTION OF FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP, COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF STREET OPENING PERMIT(S) TO SOUTH JERSEY GAS COMPANY

Ms. Ridgway's question was if the Township has an ordinance on street opening permits. Mayor Byrd advised that we do have an ordinance regulating such. The recommendation to approve or and the recommendations are issued by the Township Engineer.

Ms. Ridgway stated that at the last meeting, it was indicated that the Township was going to have a meeting on the budget and that she noticed that tonight's agendas indicates the introduction of the 2016 Municipal Budget.

Mayor Byrd advised that the budget will be introduced tonight. He advised that the Chief Financial Officer is present tonight to go over the 2016 Municipal Budget.

Nancy Ridgway asked if copies of the budget are going to be available. Mayor Byrd advised that copies of the introduced budget can be obtained through the Township Clerk's Office.

Nancy Ridgway inquired about the vote that was taken last night at the Special Meeting if it was done by resolution.

Mayor Byrd advised that process was made by a motion and according to our Solicitor they were in balance in what they did.

Nancy Ridgway indicated that there were 4 committeemen at the dais and that you evidently abstained.

Mayor Byrd advised that he did not vote that he had abstained. Ms. Ridgway stated there were a no vote and a two (2) yes votes. Ms. Ridgway indicated that this is a spilt vote meaning the motion did not carry as far as she is aware of.

Geneva Griffin, Fairfield Township appeared and indicated that she also has a concern about the vote that was taken at last night's Special Meeting. Ms. Griffin indicated that with 4 members present last night, the majority did not have the vote to pay \$75,000.00 for a name calling lawsuit.

Ms. Griffin indicated that when members of the committee come up and at this time, Mayor Byrd interjected and advised Ms. Griffin that at the moment, the floor is open to the public for their comments on Agenda Items Only and that she would have the opportunity to make her comments on any subject matter towards the end as usual of the agenda and requested that she stay on the agenda.

Ms. Griffin stated that the motion needs to be put on the record. She advised that the motion passed by the majority

of votes. She said the resolution did not pass by the majority of the votes. She indicated that two (2) members out of four (4) voted in the affirmative. One member voted no and the Mayor abstained, the four (4) members that were present were a temporary majority. She indicated that it was so temporary that today... she asked the Township Clerk when was the last meeting held prior to tonight's meeting. The Clerk indicated into the record as March 2, 2016. Ms. Griffin stated at the March 2, 2016 meeting you passed a resolution to appoint the new member. She indicated the resolution passed and named the member. She stated that you did not have your next meeting which would have been the meeting that was held last night which is causing the questions that you want to avoid at this time. Ms. Griffin stated that you had him present at the meeting but you did not swear him in to office. She advised that you had a resolution to appoint him to the Board but you did not have him on this committee yesterday which she states proves in her mind and gives a clear example of the collusion and the attempt to defraud the Township that you took yesterday.

Mayor Byrd asked Ms. Griffin if she had asked Mr. Gonzalez when he would like to be sworn in to office.

Ms. Griffin stated it was not about when he wants to get sworn in. Mayor Byrd stated that it is Ms. Gonzalez opportunity to choose when he wants to be sworn into office and he picked tonight.

Ms. Griffin indicated that if that is the case, then you had thirty (30) days to declare and fill the unexpired term or leave it void, that he chose to do it on March 2, 2016 immediately after and not only that in between the time that Troy Pitts resigned after not living in the Township for two (2) years.

Mayor Byrd interjected and reminded Ms. Griffin that she is not staying on cue with the Agenda items. Ms. Griffin stated it is because it is the way you have the agenda set up. Mayor Byrd reminded Ms. Griffin that she will have the opportunity to speak later on tonight during the second comment portion.

Ms. Griffin indicated that yesterday you voted to approve a \$75,000.00 payment to your friends and family and that she does not know how much of a cut or what his percentage is but that he did not allow the Township residents to speak prior to the vote. Ms. Griffin stated that is why is she is going to come back at the next opportunity to speak at the microphone and speak about what you thought you were doing on preventing the public from doing so we do not have to necessarily wait until the end of this meeting.

Mayor Byrd asked if there were any other comments to be received on Agenda Items Only. There were none. At this time, Mayor Byrd asked for a motion to close the public comment on Agenda Items Only.

Committeeman Clark moved to close the public comment on Agenda Items Only seconded by Deputy Mayor Pierce. Roll Call Vote: Clark, yes; Gonzalez, yes; Pierce, yes and Mayor Byrd, yes.

RESOLUTION NO. 80 - 2016

INTRODUCTION OF THE 2016 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Deputy Mayor Pierce moved to introduce the 2016 Municipal Budget seconded by Committeeman Clark.

Roll Call Vote: Clark, yes; Gonzalez, abstain; Pierce, yes and Mayor Byrd, yes.

RESOLUTION NO. 81 - 2016

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING WINCHESTER & WESTERN RAILROAD COMPANY FOR A RAIL FREIGHT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PROJECT IN THE TOWNSHIP OF FAIRFIELD, CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Committeeman Clark moved to adopt Resolution No. 81 - 2016 seconded by Deputy Mayor Pierce. Roll Call Vote: Clark, yes; Pierce, yes; Gonzalez, abstain and Mayor Byrd, yes.

RESOLUTION NO. 82 - 2016

A RESOLUTION OF FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP, CUMBERLAND COUNTY AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF DISCHARGE OF MORTGAGE / ARTHUR & HANNAH JACKSON

Committeeman Clark moved to adopt Resolution No. 82 - 2016 seconded by Deputy Mayor Pierce. Roll Call Vote: Clark, yes; Pierce, yes; Gonzalez, abstain and Mayor Byrd, yes.

RESOLUTION NO. 83 - 2016

A RESOLUTION OF FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP, COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF STREET OPENING PERMIT(S) TO SOUTH JERSEY GAS COMPANY PERMIT NO. 1 - 2016 - EMERGENCY REPAIR - 20 WAYMAN ROAD PERMIT NO. 2 - 2016 - RENEWAL OF GAS SERVICE - 20 WAYMAN ROAD

Committeeman Clark moved to adopt Resolution No. 83 - 2016 seconded by Deputy Mayor Pierce. Roll Call Vote: Clark, yes; Pierce, yes; Gonzalez, abstain and Mayor Byrd, yes.

Committeeman Clark indicated to ensure that we do have a Township Ordinance on Street Opening and that the ordinance is adhered to.

NEW BUSINESS

A. TWO (2) CLEAN COMMUNITY 30 YARD DUMPSTERS

A proposal was received for the purchase of two (2) Clean Community 30 Yard Dumpsters. The 30 cubic yard open top containers will be utilized for property clean ups whereby a tax lien will be levied on such properties. Mayor Byrd asked if the Township Committee had any questions. There were none indicated.

The following resolution was entered into the record as follows:

RESOLUTION NO. 84 - 2016

A RESOLUTION OF FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP, CUMBERLAND COUNTY ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL FROM RUDCO PRODUCTS, INC. FOR TWO (2) 30 CUBIC YARD DUMPSTERS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$7,140.00

Committeeman Clark moved to adopt Resolution No. 84 - 2016 seconded by Deputy Mayor Pierce. Roll Call Vote: Clark, yes; Pierce, yes; Gonzalez, abstain and Mayor Byrd, yes.

OLD BUSINESS

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE

Mayor Byrd announced that a list of items have been submitted to the governing body for their review and approval from the Emergency Management Coordinator. The Office of the Emergency Management Coordinator is in need of repairs. Mayor Byrd also announced that the motor engine for the Emergency Management Coordinator is in need of repairs and or replacement.

CONVENIENCE CENTER

Mayor Byrd also announced on the sheds for the Convenience Center.

Mayor Byrd asked the governing body if they had any questions on the Office of Emergency Management Coordinator and the Convenience Center. The consensus of the governing body was to have the Township Administrator to move forward with obtaining some quotes for the shed and the items of need for the Office of the Emergency Management Coordinator.

Deputy Mayor Pierce recommended that Committeeman Gonzalez receive a copy of the estimates on the motor be provided to him for his review and information.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Byrd read the following into the record:

The Committee welcomes participation of interested organizations and individuals during work session/action, regular/action and special meetings. However, in order to conduct the business of the Township in the most productive manner possible, attendees will be given five (5) minutes, all inclusive, including all dialogue, questions, and responses from both the speaker and the Committee for the designated public portion of the meeting. There may be no transference of a speaker's time to other attendees. Please step up to the microphone at the appropriate time, and state your name and address for the record.

Mayor Byrd asked for a motion to open the meeting to the public. Deputy Mayor Pierce moved to open the meeting to the public seconded by Committeeman Gonzalez. Roll Call Vote: Clark, yes; Pierce, yes; Gonzalez, yes and Mayor Byrd, yes.

Nancy Ridgway, 582 Irving Avenue appeared and indicated that she has asked during tonight's first public comment portion about the budget. She advised that the resolution for the budget was introduced. She indicated that you said you would be having a discussion on this and therefore there was no discussion held and she asked if any of the committee members have seen the budget. Mayor Byrd advised that he sat down with the Chief Financial Officer and the committee members have the opportunity to individually visit with the Chief Financial Officer and that Ms. Ridgway has the opportunity to talk about it right now. Ms. Ridgway indicated that she has only five (5) minutes and that she has other things that she wants to bring up tonight. She indicated that she thought that the Mayor was going to have the Chief Financial Officer to come up and give an explanation.

Ms. Ridgway made referenced to Committeeman Clark's statement made during last night's Special Meeting. She indicated that Committeeman Clark had stated that anybody can run for Township Office. She recommended that he conduct his research because only residents that live inside the Township can run for office.

Ms. Ridgway also made referenced Committeeman Clark's statement made at the last meeting after the Executive Session meeting that he had indicated that the lawsuit between Griner vs Fairfield Township was settle and that the Township was going to allow Grinner's payment be off of his taxes and if she understood this correctly? She indicated that what she wanted to know she would like to know how much the payment is going to be, who is going to keep track of how much of his taxes are taking off each year. She advised that each year we change Township Committee members often and who is going to keep track of the records and are these going to be just the taxes that are just due to the Township or is it going to include the school and county taxes. She advised that these are all important questions that the citizens need answered.

Township Solicitor Carr interjected and advised Ms. Ridgway that the settlement has been discussed but has not yet been accepted and therefore it is still active litigation in which it will not be discussed tonight and advised her that her inquiries are all important points.

Ms. Costin, 322 Shoemaker Lane appeared and reported a complaint with regard to property flooding along the north side of the above referenced County roadway. Ms. Costin reported that her property is affected specifically located on the north side approximately 200' west of the intersection of CR-706 and CR-553. Mayor Byrd advised that he will have the Code Enforcement Officer to investigate the matter.

Russell Pierce, 376 Fairton-Gouldtown Road appeared and indicated that last night a question was directed to the Conflict Township Solicitor whereby his response to the question was that he did not have to answer his question. Mr. Pierce advised that the taxpayers pay for him to represent the Township and the citizens.

Mayor Byrd indicated that he was not sure what the question was, however even though a vote was taken last night to settle the situation it is still under litigation and perhaps that is why he did not answer the question.

Mr. Russell made referenced to Ms. Costin's complaint. He indicated that he believes that when the roads are designed they are to be designed to where no rain water does not collect in anybody's driveway and therefore he believes that the Township Engineer needs to look into rather than the Code Enforcement Officer.

Mr. Russell indicated that when the Township hires these professionals to represent the Township that they need to be respectful to the citizens and not respond to them as they were responded to.

Mr. Rucker, 26 Coombs Drive appeared and inquired on the introduction of the budget. He asked if a presentation was going to be given so that the public can review and issue their comments. Mayor Byrd explained the process of introduction and final passage of the 2016 Municipal Budget. The public will be able to issue their comments at a Public Hearing scheduled for April 20, 2016.

JoAnne Servais appeared and indicated that she was going to ask the same thing that Mr. Rucker just inquired. Ms. Servais asked if and when the public comes in to obtain a copy are they going to have to put in an OPRA Request. Mayor Byrd advised Ms. Servais that she can obtain a copy once it is introduced up to the Public Hearing date scheduled for April 20, 2016. Ms. Servais indicated last year she had to put in an OPRA Request just to obtain copies of the bill list. Mayor Byrd advised Ms. Servais that the Clerk was just doing her job. Ms. Servais advised that the introduction of the budget should be introduced with a presentation prior to introduction.

Patrick Conahey, P.O. Box 61 appeared and advised that on the bill list there is a payable in the amount of \$525.00 for Clean Communities training and would like to know what kind of training was this for. Mayor Byrd advised that the training is for rules and regulations.

Township Administrator advised the \$500.00 derived from the Clean Communities Grant. This grant money has not been used for training and is available for training in E-waste, upcoming new rules and regulations.

Mr. Conahey stated that two (2) years ago the Township purchased a fire truck for half a million dollars and it had to go before a public vote because the Township said it had to go on the ballot because of the amount of money and last year we placed on the ballot the purchase of an ambulance for \$125,000.00 and he asked why did the \$75,000.00 name calling lawsuit not go on the ballot because that too is a lot of money as well.

Mayor Byrd stated that the purchase of a fire truck and the purchase of an ambulance fire truck was a different situation.

Mr. Conahey stated yes lifesaving equipment but paying someone off for name calling names. Mayor Byrd advised it was more in detail than just the name calling and that he had recused himself and that matter is still under litigation.

Mr. Conahey indicated that the vote was not legal either because it was not a majority vote. He advised when you have an abstention goes to the negative.

Geneva Griffin, Fairfield Township resident appeared and indicated that on the agenda there is Item No. 14 and Items No. 15 which are Department Reports and Committee Reports and Remarks and that for years what we always had was a committee not having any some fill unless they are the Mayor that is the only function of the Township Committee and that your responsibility to the Mayor is to just affirm what he requests you to affirm to basically be his second yes without knowing any information about what you vote yes for. Ms. Griffin indicated that if they have not yet seen the 2016 Municipal Budget that has been introduced to please review the budget. Ms. Griffin indicated that the budget should of today since it is being introduced to the public should have been here available for the public to inspect and not after you have already put in motion for it to be a burden to the residents.

Ms. Griffin advised that at the beginning of each year they name different committee people that are on the committee. She advised there are different assignment and functions that you may have an interest in that you would be selected for or requested to be a part of a subcommittee. Ms. Griffin said the different subcommittees that cover different areas of this Township. She advised that if you are named to the subcommittees and that you should already know whether or not you are named in the subcommittees. She indicated the there is a list of subcommittees that deal with Recreation, Public Safety, Public Health and so forth. Ms. Griffin stated that it is not all conquered up on one individual committee person that no one has the authority. She indicated what they needed to do as a five member committee is to branch that subcommittee out and actually do work and have reports here as it pertains to

those particular subject matters that you will you will report to back to the same people that later on you will be asking them to vote for you that way you will have more involvement in the daily operations of the Township having something positive to do other than sit here listening to what you know to be whatever you know it to be.

Ms. Griffin referenced Committeeman Clark specifically as a public servant. She indicated that he is beholding to the residents of the Township, the residents of the Township are not beholding to him because he has all their possession in his grasp and control just like the \$75,000.00 that was given away last night or you believe it was but it wasn't. She indicated the intent was to give away \$75,000.00. Ms. Griffin stated what you have is the public's trust because you have control of the public's money.

Ms. Griffin stated that as Committeeman Clark stated yesterday, he basically has been dealing with everything that has to be dealt with, but that it is not really dealing with the public or the public's trust that has been placed in you, it's been dealing with someone else's issues and that is what she told him would be a problem for him if you let a charge on other people's issues instead of leading a charge in what is best for Fairfield Township residents.

Ms. Griffin indicated that last year and the year before there was no tax increase and that Committeeman Clark had stated earlier on that he joined the Township Committee because you wanted to know where your tax dollars are located or how they are being spent. Ms. Griffin stated there is a way to educate and inform yourself if you want to know where tax dollars go and tax dollars spent and distributed in more than just Fairfield. She indicated you have a national campaign and county level where your tax dollars are being spent and that is going to come from you trying to seek knowledge as opposed to relying on what she saw done yesterday almost like he was quoting back his 5th Amendment Rights that you are relying on the advice of the professionals to make your decision. She stated the professionals will not be here after you make your decision. She stated the Committee changes each year and you are going to rely this year and try to hold tight to what a professional and indicated that she has not received an expressed person of who you consider to be professionals.

Ms. Griffin stated that the Township did not give Mr. Sharp \$75,000.00 from a collection out of your own money, that they gave the money out of Township residents and insurance policy funds. She indicated that she will be challenging the resolution within the 45 days so the Township can get the Chief Financial Officer to write the check and hand carry it to Michael Sharp and stated that each one of the Township Committee will be responsible for returning that money back to the residents whether you voted in the affirmation or abstain. She indicated that Mayor Byrd to her knowledge did not recuse himself that what he did was abstain from the vote. She stated there is a difference because he called for the Special Meeting, directed and chaired the Special Meeting which made it four (4) members present. She stated that Mayor Byrd should of not been there then it would have been the majority of the people present, it would of passed with the majority of the members present, but with Mayor Byrd being present actually showed the vote of his actual presence being present.

Viola Thomas-Hughes, 493 Fairton-Gouldtown Road appeared and welcomed new Committee member David Gonzalez.

Ms. Thomas-Hughes made referenced to the concern raised by Ms. Costin that was heard earlier on and that when she was in office she recalls speaking to Ms. Costin several times last year and the prior Code Enforcement Officer, Robert Hulitt did go out to Ms. Costin's property on more than one occasion and that he had reported to her exactly what he thought was the problem and that it was only going to get worse due to the mining operations. Ms. Thomas-Hughes stated just Ms. Costin stated earlier that she feels the vibration and digging at her home that the foundation will be completely destroyed after a while and that was just common sense and this is what happens when we do not keep abreast of mining companies mining in our area, what they are doing, how far they are digging and that environmental impact studies must be done.

Ms. Thomas-Hughes next concern was that she had put in an application for a volunteer and also to be on the Environmental Commission and that she still has not heard a word from anyone excluding Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Pierce as they were not on the Township Committee at the time on whether you are going to accept me or not. Ms. Thomas-Hughes indicated that she just learned that an appointments were made to the Environmental Commission and that sadly enough the person that was appointed to the Environmental Commission that she had a negative email on her possession and that she will share with Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Pierce that the person claims that "blacks do not have the capability of governing in this area". Ms. Thomas-Hughes stated that she does not think anyone who makes that type of statement since that all of you are African Americans and then appoint that person.

Ms. Thomas-Hughes next concern was the budget. She indicated that she was confused about the budget and the budget process that we are going over. She explained that each Township Committee should have in front of them a copy of the budget, your CFO and Auditor should be present and go over each item line by line to see what was spent, if there is a reserve where you can cut the budget so that there is no tax increase and that is how it should be done and that it should be opened to the public so that if the public has any questions, they are able to ask.. She indicated that she is quite sure this is probably the only Township that is doing something like this. Ms. Thomas-Hughes asked the Chief Financial Officer if that is the way they do their budget in Cape May. The Chief Financial Officer advised that their form of government is different than Township Committee.

The Chief Financial Officer indicated that he did sit with Committeeman Manson, Committeeman Clark, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and we went line by line over the budget with the exception of Committeeman Gonzalez.

He advised that tonight he will be going over the budget with the public and at that point, the document will be available to public and you have up to April 20th to review the budget and bring your questions at the Public Hearing whereby he will be present to answer any questions that the public may have. Ms. Thomas-Hughes indicated that her other concern was that the Auditor was not present tonight. She advised the budget should have been an open forum not meeting with each one individually.

Ms. Thomas-Hughes stated her other concern was last night, some of the members of the Township Committee voted to pay \$75,000.00 lawsuit when the week before that you sent \$90,000.00 back to the State to pave a road that would not of cost the Township anything. She indicated that the road now is real bumpy. She indicated that she needs to know what the Township is going to do because what we have now is a bumpy road whereby daily a van or bus comes in to pick up handicap persons at their personal drive.

Ms. Thomas-Hughes indicated that last year she inquired what line item was the tax increase and she never got an answer from the Township Committee with the exception of Deputy Mayor Pierce and Committeeman Gonzalez was not present.

Ed Kimley, 84 Seabreeze Road appeared and indicated last night there was a Special Meeting held and he wanted to know why it was held last night and the urgency for it. He asked was it because Committeeman Gonzalez has integrity and would not vote for the scam. Mr. Kimley indicated that now we have two (2) people on the Committee that has integrity and three (3) without integrity. Mr. Kimley referenced Committeeman Clark that you heard the Mayor say last night that he never told the lawyer to settle, so it must have been himself (Mr. Clark) or Mr. Pitts. Mr. Kimley stated that when the Official Corruptions Unit comes down, it wasn't him, it was you and Manson and that he had told him that from the very beginning to not let him get you caught up with him.

Mr. Kimley stated that Committeeman Clark had stated earlier on that he does not get any credit for anything you do. Committee Clark stated that he said the Township Committee does not get any credit for anything. Mr. Kimley asked what you have done to get credit for. Committeeman Clark stated that apparently they can't do anything according to him.

Mr. Kimley stated that he can explain something that Ben Byrd kicked out the insurance agent because she had indicated that Geneva Griffin should have the line and now hired an insurance agent that did not do its job and now the Township has a \$100,000 deductible because of it.

Mayor Byrd asked Mr. Kimley what he was talking about. Mr. Kimley stated when you told Ms. Sungennis was not going to be appointed because she said Geneva Griffin should get the line. Mayor Byrd stated that it is not true and that he Mr. Kimley comes to every meeting make all kinds of allegations and tell lies. Mr. Kimley stated it is true that you told the lawyers to settle that he heard it with his own ears. Mr. Kimley stated that when Mr. Byrd was mad at Ms. Gonzales and he wrote her up for taking your grandmother's tax money that he (Clark) voted to punish her for helping your grandmother and your own grandmother sat here and said all three (3) of you need to go.

Ernest Zirkle, 24 Back Neck Road appeared and advised that a few months ago, the Township Committee appointed him to the Bay Shore Counsel that he promised the Township Committee that he would attend the meetings and bring back the reports.

He advised the group meets by monthly and they had their last meeting this past Wednesday. He indicated there was 25 members present and several Salem County representation and advised that it is progressing. He advised the bulk of the conversation of the meeting was sitting around draft a constitution & bylaws. The discussion ensued for about an hour and it was the first view of it. Mr. Zirkle stated that those discussions are going to be encapsulated and a document made from those discussions and be discussed in the next few months and hopeful by then they will have a constitution and bylaws.

Mr. Zirkle indicated the other discussion of major concern was raised a few months previously regarding Pilot Funding. He advised the story is indeed that the Pilot Funding has expired. He advised that when it was first instituted that it was instituted to last for 13 years and that the 13 years have expired and even though a lot of us have been complaining and complaining legitimately that we are losing out and we are certainly losing out here because of all the properties we have now that are owned by the other entities such as the State and so forth which are tax exempt. He advised the discussion then following that was in deed Senator Van Drew was going to be going to the Finance Committee perhaps this week and have the discussion to say these townships and that there are 20 other states that are really are suffering because of the disappearance of tax funds.

There being no further comments to be received, Mayor Byrd asked for a motion to close the meeting to the public. Committeeman Clark moved seconded by Mayor Byrd. Roll Call Vote: Clark, yes; Pierce, yes; Gonzalez yes and Mayor Byrd, yes.

At this time, Mayor Byrd asked Neil Young, Chief Financial Officer to come forth to present the 2016 Municipal Budget.

Neil Young gave a brief overview of the budget itself that was introduced by the Township Committee. Mr. Young indicated that the 2016 budget comes in with a balance budget revenues equals appropriations \$3, 163, 799.27.

He advised this is a \$116,000 increase over the prior year. He indicated the local purpose tax however has increased by \$64,896.00 and he stated what this does is it causes a 2.3 cent tax increase over the prior year. He explained that last year's budget did have a tax increase, however that our operations are fund balance had decreased so the tax increase was needed and that it was not something that was over and above.

Mr. Young stated they held spending and that there is still \$200,000 left which will help this year's budget and that sometimes increases are needed he explained.

Mr. Young explained statutorily you have to introduce the budget by March 18. He advised that there are statutes that tell you when you can introduce and adopt the budget and we are introducing by the statutory date and the public hearing will be held on April 20th.

Mr. Young advised that last year's fund balance was \$1,056,000 and we needed the 2.4 tax increase but our fund balance went down meaning that we needed the increase and we lost \$7,000.00 which is pretty good in a 3 million dollar budget and that it was a good financial budget.

Mr. Young stated that this budget being introduced is within the appropriation caps and a 2% levy cap.

Mr. Young went over the line items that are increasing and decreasing that are causing this tax increase. He stated salaries and wages and contractual obligations always affect a tax increase. He advised that Other Expenses also went up from the different departments. He indicated Engineering and OE went up due to issues with the landfill. The Court Interlocal which he believes him and Mr. Thomas -Hughes worked last year in the budget which was not a full year and this year is a full year so there is an increase in the budget.

Mr. Young stated our JIF Insurance did increase; workers comp, health benefits, LOSAP and legals were all increased.

Mr. Young indicated that in order to offset some of these, some deferred charges came off the books. Mr. Hill advised on the revenue side, he is recommending in the introduce budget that we use less anticipated surplus by \$25,000.00 based off operations because we lost \$7,000.00. Mr. Young indicated that just for operations as well, in 2015 we had ambulance payments coming in for 2014 and 2015. Also to assist in offsetting the increase in taxation, we are using \$87, 00.00 that we have on hand reserved for debt service.

Mr. Young stated with 2.3 tax increase, with a \$100,000 home would be \$22.88 for the year and for \$150,000 assessment would be \$31 or \$34.00 per year or 2.86 per month.

There being no further questions, Mayor Byrd asked for a motion to open the meeting to the public to allow the CFO to answer any questions you may have.

Committeeman Clark moved to open the meeting to public for questions to the Chief Financial Officer seconded by Deputy Mayor Pierce. Roll Call Vote: Clark, yes; Pierce, yes; Gonzalez, yes and Mayor Byrd, yes.

Patrick Conahey appeared to inquire what the reserve is for Uncollected Taxes for 2016. The CFO advised that it is \$653,427.27.

Viola Thomas-Hughes appeared and inquired if the Township Committee is going to go back and look at all the items to see if there are any areas where money was not spent and cut. Ms. Thomas-Hughes indicated that you have to look at the fact that we have a vocational school getting ready to open at the college. She attended a meeting and indicated that Fairfield received the highest rating for the technical school. Ms. Thomas-Hughes also indicated that we also have a lot of senior citizens who are living on low incomes.

Ms. Thomas-Hughes indicated that when she and the Chief Financial Officer worked on the budget it was back in 2014 when we decided to enter into an agreement with the City of Bridgeton Municipal Court and that the Township did save money by entering into a Shared Services Agreement with Bridgeton.

The Chief Financial Officer indicated that we thought we were going to save. He indicated it went into place in 2015 and the 2015 results did not come back as he and Ms. Thomas-Hughes had projected.

JoAnne Servais appeared and asked if there were no line items for prosecutor and prosecutor like it was last year. The Chief Financial Officer advised that there is no line item for those positions only the interlocal agreement.

There being no further questions for the Chief Financial Officer, Mayor Byrd asked for a motion to close the meeting to the public.

Deputy Mayor Pierce moved to close the meeting to the public seconded by Committeeman Clark. Roll Call Vote: Clark, yes; Pierce, yes; Gonzalez, yes and Mayor Byrd, yes.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS / REMARKS

Committeeman Clark gave thanks for everyone coming out tonight and especially having our Chief Financial Officer for being present tonight to explain to our residents with their questions that they had tonight and was very instrumental and a better understanding.

Committeeman Clark indicated to always try to stay professional and positive as much as possible as he will do the same thing.

Committeeman Gonzalez thanked the community again in closing for allowing him to serve the community. He advised that he is going to try his best. Committeeman Gonzalez stated that he is a person of integrity and if anyone has a question and would like to ask him a question respectfully he will respect the same and listen to your question and give you the best answer he can and if he does not have the answer that he would advise you that he does not have answer but will try to get the answer for you.

Deputy Mayor Pierce gave thanks for everyone coming out tonight and for those that came out last night's meeting that made it back tonight. Deputy Mayor Pierce thanked everyone for their comments and their advice in helping us. He indicated that for those that have not been on the Township Committee for long that they take it all in and that it is a learning process and thanked them for bringing matters to their attention. Deputy Mayor Pierce also gave thanks to Committeeman Gonzalez for stepping up to this position and welcomed him on board.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS / REMARKS

Mayor Byrd stated that he is thankful for all the committee members present tonight for having the courage to try to do the best they can do. He indicated that Committeeman Manson is absent tonight and is thankful to him as well. He stated that as Committeeman Gonzalez stated earlier on that you are not going to please everyone but you can try to do the best you can and that is what he will continue to do and that he hopes that everybody does as well.

Mayor Byrd indicated that as far as the budget that he had spoken with the Chief Financial Officer along with the Auditor and advised that budget is a sound budget. He indicated that he was not going to play with the numbers as this is an election year for him. He advised that he was not going to try to do anything to the budget to try to make it appear to look like we should have a zero budget when we shouldn't. He indicated that you may get away with it, but it is going to affect you in the future. He indicated that when you make decisions for the budget and for our Township to do the best for our residents in town. Mayor Byrd advised that he pays some of the highest taxes in the Township and he surely does not want to increase taxes at all.

Mayor Byrd stated that we have to do what is the right thing to do because the residents in the Township expect you to do it. He advised that they just don't expect you to vote on what someone says in this room that they expect you to vote on what are in their best interest and that is what they are going to continue to do.

Mayor Byrd thanked everyone for coming out tonight and to have a safe trip home.

At this time, Mayor Byrd asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Committeeman Clark moved to adjourn seconded by Deputy Mayor Pierce. All members voted in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Linda M. Gonzales, RMC

Linda M. Gonzales, Township Clerk