

# **Borough of Tenafly**

MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
BUDGET MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2011  
7:30 P.M. – 10:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 7:47 P.M. with the reading of the Open Public Meetings Act statement by Mayor Rustin.

Present:	Mayor Peter S. Rustin
Council members:	Anthony Barzelatto, Barry Honig, Martha Kerge, Nadia LaMastra, Jon Warms
Borough Administrator:	Jewel Thompson-Chin
Director of Public Works:	Bob Beutel
Absent:	Councilman Michael Lattif

Mayor Rustin read the following statement:

"Public Comments: A total of 15 minutes has been allocated for this purpose. Citizens are welcome to address the Mayor and Council on any governmental item of concern to them, whether or not it is scheduled on the agenda below. Citizens must give their names and addresses when recognized to speak. Large groups are urged to select someone to represent them. The public is advised that these meetings are recorded and are subject to the Open Public Records Act."

There was no public comment.

## **Schedule Update**

Mrs. Thompson-Chin advised that DPW and Administration would be making their presentations tonight and Youth Services is scheduled in the 8:00 time slot on March 3, 2011. She expressed her opinion that the Police Department may require the balance of time for the March 3<sup>rd</sup> and Council agreed to allot an hour and a half for the Police Department. On March 7, 2011, she advised that the Senior Center is scheduled in the 8:00 p.m. time slot, the 8:30 p.m. time slot is still vacant, and Code Enforcement was allotted the remaining hour. She has scheduled Fire, TVAC, Recreation, and Library into the four time slots on March 10, 2011. She proposed scheduling the Capital budget review and budget wrap-up meeting on March 15, 2011 and Council agreed to this date.

## **Department of Public Works – Bob Beutel, Director**

Mr. Beutel advised that his part-time secretary had resigned a few weeks prior. He expressed his opinion that this position is vital to his department as she covers the phones during the full-time secretary's lunch hour and handles the bookkeeping, OSHA logs, and Fleet Maintenance logs. As there is a hiring freeze, he asked permission to fill this position at a rate of \$16/hour for 20 hours per week. Mrs. Thompson-Chin advised that she is in support of this request. As the money is already included in this budget, Council authorized Mr. Beutel to fill the vacant part-time secretarial position. Mr. Beutel added that he has lost five full-time positions through attrition. Although \$30,000 has been recommended for temporary and seasonal wages, he requested that this number be increased as \$30,000 would only allow for four seasonal workers for 10 weeks and 1 temporary employee for six months; he would like to hire 2 temporary workers as he had last year. He suggested reducing his request for salt by 200 tons, which would result in a \$12,000 savings that could be used towards his temporary and seasonal budget. Council agreed to this request. C. LaMastra questioned whether the salary for

the master gardener was included in this line item and Mr. Beutel advised that it is included in his operating and expense budget, but he did not have a master gardener at this time. Mayor Rustin suggested that Bob Beutel reach out to former Borough Administrator, Joseph DiGiacomo, to inquire about the Bergen Group providing this service.

C. Warms asked about the increase in the overtime budget and Mrs. Thompson-Chin advised that this increase was recommended based on the actual numbers over the past few years. She explained that any funds left in the overtime budget would be moved into the snow trust fund. C. Warms asked about the reduction in the standby salary and wage line item and Mr. Beutel responded that although it is recommended to have one foreman and two driver/laborers on call on the weekend, it is at his discretion to only have one driver/laborer. As such, he decided to eliminate one driver/laborer for a savings of \$10,000.

C. Honig raised the issue of workman's compensation and what changes can be made to the policy reduce the effect on manpower needs. Mr. Beutel stated that he is in favor of having a light duty policy and Mrs. Thompson-Chin stated that she and Mr. Vinci are supportive of this idea, but would need a list of approved jobs. Mr. Beutel remarked that he would need to meet with Carol Byrne to further investigate this idea. C. Honig asked whether it would be more beneficial to have disability versus unlimited sick leave and Mrs. Thompson-Chin responded that she has asked for a proposal from Eifert French for disability.

Mayor Rustin questioned whether Bob Beutel still felt that collecting recycling in-house was working and Mr. Beutel expressed his opinion that it was. Mayor Rustin also confirmed with Mr. Beutel that the change in the recycling center policy to no longer accept construction debris was due to the cost of disposal as opposed to a lack of employees. Mayor Rustin asked that this message be conveyed in the newsletter so residents are better aware of the reason for the policy change. Mr. Beutel noted that by discontinuing the disposal of wood and construction debris and with the purchase of a new compactor, significant savings have been found.

Mr. Beutel advised that there had been a part-time employee in Building Maintenance assigned to cover the Library, but that employee was dismissed. In order to compensate, he added an additional 10 hours to another part-time employee's schedule. He explained that the schedule is still very tight due to the Police Headquarters Expansion Project and asked Council to consider allowing him to hire an additional part-time employee.

Council discussed the amount budgeted for utilities and Mr. Beutel advised that since the gasoline prices have increased significantly since last year and are expected to rise even higher, he feels that the budgeted number should be increased. Council agreed to add an additional \$30,000 to the budgeted amount for gasoline. He explained that the new windows and energy efficient boilers should help to decrease the cost for natural gas and with PSE&G's free installation of solar panels, the street lighting charge should also decrease.

Although he stated that he would be attending the Capital Budget meeting to make his requests, Mr. Beutel advised that his priority is to replace the dump trucks as they are 20 to 22 years old and maintenance costs are rising. Mrs. Thompson-Chin advised that the Riverside Coop has discussed sharing lists of requested capital items to see if costs could be shared.

C. LaMastra raised the issue of the tree trust and asked how this money would be used. Mr. Beutel responded that approximately 65 trees would need to be replaced in the parks. He explained that the newsletter had advised that the DPW would be doing a Spring tree planting and there have been several requests from residents to have a tree to be planted in front of their home. The money in the trust would also be used for this program.

#### **Administration – Jewel Thompson-Chin, Borough Administrator**

Mrs. Thompson-Chin advised that she was able to reduce the overall budget through examining it and reallocating monies. She pointed out that there is a \$5,000 stipend for an administrative intern and although she did not use this money last year, she has included it in this year's budget. She also pointed out that she has reduced the line item for other professional fees by approximately 50%, allotting \$27,000 to this line item. She explained that she has noticed a real shortage of planning assistance and she believes that \$20,000 should be allotted to planning support for studies, \$2,000 for the Performance Measurement Cooperative, and \$5,000 to be available for on-call planning studies. The issue of the cost

for Downey Drive Study was raised and Mrs. Thompson-Chin advised that there is money in reserves from 2010 that can be used for this study.

Mrs. Thompson-Chin noted that the website contract is up for renewal and she would be putting an RFP out for this service. She is looking to enhance and upgrade the Borough website. She pointed out that the contract with the Board of Education for IT services is also up for renewal and the Board of Education will be suggesting a 4% increase. C. Honig commented that the mailbox space allotment is a real issue and asked that there be a discussion on the email storage capacity placed on an agenda.

In terms of Capital requests, Mrs. Thompson-Chin advised that she is requesting the implementation of a geographic information system (GIS) with a total cost of \$120,000 over the next three years. She advised that it would be the communication tool for the Borough and the benefit would offset the cost. Council asked if she had examples of other municipalities who use this system. She responded that she has not brought the issue to the Riverside Coop, but she is aware that communities can share the cost of consulting and digitizing maps. She stated that she would bring it to the table if the Council is serious about implementing the system. Council asked that Mrs. Thompson-Chin provide information on a comparable town that uses this system.

Mrs. Thompson-Chin advised that the budget for Historic Preservation has increased due to the services of a historical architect and the expansion of their pictorial and descriptive information on the historical district. She explained that she is supportive of this request, but asked that the reason for the increase be put in writing. She advised that the Nature Center has traditionally been allocated \$30,000 peryear, but she just received a letter requesting an additional \$5,000. She advised that the cost for the telephone has been reduced from \$76,000 to \$70,000. C. Barzelatto questioned why there is still the need for payphones and Mrs. Thompson-Chin explained that they are used for Court and people do use it. Council asked that she check with Judge Bell as to whether it is a requirement of the Court to have a payphone and to look into the usage.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

As there was no further business to come before the Council, on a motion by C. LaMastra, second by C. Warms, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 9:52 p.m.