

*The Township Committee of the Township of Raritan met on February 12, 2015
at the Municipal Building, One Municipal Drive, Flemington, New Jersey*

**MEETING
CALLED**

Mayor O'Brien called the regular meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following were present: Mayor Craig O'Brien, Deputy Mayor Karen Gilbert, Comm. Michael Mangin, Comm. Richard Chen and Comm. Louis Reiner. Also present was Adm. Allan Pietrefesa.

**MEETING
ADVERTISED**

Mayor O'Brien announced that the meeting was noticed in the Hunterdon County Democrat, Star Ledger, Courier-News, Trenton Times and Express **Times** in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and posted on the office bulletin board and the Township Website.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor O'Brien asked all to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag and to remain standing for a Moment of Silence to remember our Men and Women serving in the Armed Forces and in Particular Those Serving In Troubled Areas Around the World.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

It is the policy of the Township Committee that all public comments on an issue shall be limited to three minutes per person. Public comment shall be permitted on items of concern regarding the agenda only. In addition, time will be allotted at the end of the meeting for public comment on any issue.

2015 BUDGET UPDATE

Adm. Pietrefesa said that the 2015 Budget must be increased in the amount of \$20,000 because of an emergency appropriation from 2014. An old ordinance was cancelled for office equipment in the amount of \$500.00. The net change is \$15,500. In 2014, there were 150 employees, however, the number will increase in 2015. Employees contribute 7% towards their pensions and the police contribute 8%. In order for an employee to be in the Public Employee Retirement System, the employee must work at least 30 hours per week and earn \$5,000 per year. The Police are all full time and all qualify to be in the pension system.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Adm. Pietrefesa said that there is a 2% - 3% increase in the Public Works salary budget because the Township is paying for 2 assistants and also the Superintendent who is still salaried. Superintendent Don Hutchins said that the Township is paying \$60.03 per ton for salt which is \$9 less per ton than Hunterdon County is charging. The salt was purchased through the Somerset County Cooperative Purchasing. The Township is also part of the Morris and Hunterdon Counties Cooperative Purchasing. The Township chooses which one they want to purchase from. Adm. Pietrefesa said that Don Hutchins suggested that the Foreman and Assistant Superintendent positions be posted. He also suggested that a Foreman could be hired in house. The Township would save money because the Foreman would be hired at a lower rate of pay. The Foreman does not do any manual work, only snow plowing and only if everyone is called in to work. Three foreman are needed to oversee the maintenance for roads, buildings and grounds and parks. It was the consensus of the Committee to post for the Foreman and Assistant Superintendent positions.

Adm. Pietrefesa said that there is an increase for seasonal work employees to \$10. Also with regard to preowned County trucks, the Township cannot bond for preowned trucks. Adm. Pietrefesa suggest that the DPW budget for one truck at \$10,000. Superintendent Hutchins asked if an additional \$2,000 could be added to the \$10,000. This would give him more leeway when he has to bid on the truck. Several line items were discussed including training and certifications. The employee pays up front for their training and certifications, and then, upon completion and passing of each segment, the employee will be reimbursed. Also discussed was the Snow Removal budget. Comm. Mangin agreed with the recommendation from Adm. Pietrefesa to add \$50,000. There was no change in the Vehicle/Equipment Maintenance for Personnel and Wages. Don Hutchins said that repairs will be done on the roof and gutters. Next year, the chairs in the court room will have to be addressed. Adm. Pietrefesa said that Don Hutchins recommended that interior locks be placed on all office doors in the Municipal Building. Currently, one needs a key to lock the door from the inside. In this way a key will not be needed. This is a security issue in case of terrorism. Mr. Hutchins felt that this is important for the safety and protection of the employees. Don Hutchins also recommended that when the office cleaning contract is up for renewal, the Township not go out to bid. Instead a part time custodian could be hired. This person would have no health benefits, only sick and vacation time. In the past, there have always been problems with the cleaning people including not cleaning very good and people not showing up. By hiring a part time custodian, there would always be someone in the building to tend to the cleaning. At this time, the current cleaners are at the Municipal Building Tuesday and Thursday. The Police Department gets cleaned on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Comm. Gilbert said she will ask the Parks and Recreation Committee if they can place \$10,000 into the Township's budget.

Regarding Public Works vehicles, Don Hutchins requested a dump truck, roller, pick up truck, SUV, two (2) preowned County trucks, dump body & spreader and a small dump truck.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Police Chief Glenn Tabasko said that the only staff change he would like to see is the Captain of Police position filled. One of the two Lieutenants could be promoted to Captain. Chief Tabasko is requesting \$25,000 for the overtime budget. Last year, \$15,000 was allocated and over \$25,000 was expended. Chief Tabasko explained that there are times when officers are called out on Jury Duty and have to be replaced by other officers. Chief Tabasko said that he works with the Municipal Court and makes sure the officer's appearance coincides with the days they are on duty so there is no overtime. When the officers have to be present for DWI cases, the officers are paid by a fund from the State. There is no cost to the Township. At present there are 32 officers. The Resource Officer at the high school is paid by the school. Chief Tabasko said that he spends only what he needs to. If money is left over at the end of the year, he turns it back to the Township. He also said that this is the first year that the police salary budget has been reduced. This is a result of a reduction in staff and giving the new officers lower salaries and increasing the steps. This is also because higher cost officers are leaving and lower cost officers being hired. Chief Tabasko said that he budgeted \$18,500 for clothing. The Township purchases two new uniforms and accessories each year for each patrol officer.

Chief Tabasko said that police vehicles are a necessity. There are going to be many vehicles this year that are going to reach a high mileage. He has requested three new vehicles plus one SUV. Even with the purchase of these, there will still be a few vehicles short. Lt. Kevin Donovan said that normally there are two police officers sharing one vehicle. Currently there are ten vehicles. There is one vehicle with 145,000 miles that will be taken out of service. As other patrol cars reach about 150,000, they will be taken out of service as well. However, they can be repainted and given to the detectives. The SUV can be bonded, however, the two other vehicles must be purchased. Chief Tabasko said that it is imperative that the extra car be purchased, otherwise, the Police Department will need several more vehicles next year. There are at least four vehicles this year that will reach the 150,000 mark. The Committee wanted clarification on the exact amount of cars that Chief Tabasko would like to purchase.

Adm. Pietrefesa said that, at one time, the Police Department had three Lieutenants, one Captain and one Chief. When Glenn Tabasko became Chief of Police in 2007, there was no replacement for the Captain's position. At that time, there was a police force of 40. Adm. Pietrefesa said that if Chief Tabasko is not present, under the law, the most senior ranking officer is in charge of the department. If the Township hires a Captain, there would be one less Lieutenant, however, that salary will increase. The Captain of Police has a separate contract as does the Chief of Police.

**ADJOURN-
MENT**

Mayor O'Brien asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting

Motion was made by Comm. Gilbert and seconded by Comm. Mangin.

Vote: 5 – 0 motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at: 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Sollena, RMC/CMC
Township Clerk