

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE, HELD AT THE WANTAGE TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 888 STATE HIGHWAY 23, WANTAGE, N.J. ON THE DATE OF MAY 13, 2010**

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Mayor Clara Nuss called the regular meeting of the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Wantage to order, and requested the Clerk to call the roll. Upon roll call, the following members of the governing body were present: Mayor Nuss, Committee members DeBoer and Gaechter. The following member was absent: None

Also present Township Attorney, Michael Garofalo

Mayor Nuss stated, "This meeting is being held in compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, Public Laws 1975, Chapter 231. It has been properly noticed and posted to the public, and certified by the Clerk."

Mayor Nuss lead the assembly in the Salute to the Flag.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Nuss requested that the members of the Committee Review the Consent Agenda.

There being no Committee member present wishing to comment on the proposed Consent Agenda, Mayor Nuss requested approval of the Consent Agenda.

**APPLICATIONS**

Mr. DeBoer made a motion to approve Raffle License RL10-11, to Rotary Club of Wallkill Valley, to hold an Off-Premise 50/50 Raffle on December 16, 2010.

Mr. Gaechter seconded the motion. Upon roll call,

**Ayes:** DeBoer, Nuss, Gaechter **Nays:** None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

**REPORTS**

Mr. DeBoer made a motion to approve the following for filing:

- Clerks Report for the Month of April 2010
- Construction Department Report for the Month of April 2010
- Board of Health Report for the Month of April 2010
- Registrar's Report for the Month of April 2010
- Tax Collector's Report for the Month of April 2010

Mr. Gaechter seconded the motion. Upon roll call,

**Ayes:** DeBoer, Nuss, Gaechter **Nays:** None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

**RESOLUTIONS**

Mr. DeBoer made a motion to approve Payment of Bills for the meeting of May 13, 2010.

Mr. Gaechter seconded the motion. Upon roll call,

**Ayes:** DeBoer, Nuss, Gaechter **Nays:** None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

Mr. DeBoer made a motion to authorize refund of \$987.82 to Norman Anderson, associated with Block 15.10 Lot 10, 11 and 12, for the refund of an escrow deposit for L-18-2008.

Mr. Gaechter seconded the motion. Upon roll call,

**Ayes:** DeBoer, Nuss, Gaechter **Nays:** None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

Mr. DeBoer made a motion to award contract for 2010 Bulky Waste collection services to Blue Diamond Disposal of Succasunna, NJ in the amount of \$225 per ton, in accordance with their bid submitted on May 12, 2010. Mr. Gaechter seconded the motion. Upon roll call,

**Ayes:** DeBoer, Nuss, Gaechter **Nays:** None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

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**ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

**Negotiations:** Mr. Doherty confirmed settlement agreement with the unions which successfully negotiated a 29% savings on annual cost of the prescription plan, which represents a \$65,148 annual savings; and a change in the health plan for the DPW that achieved a \$27,772 savings annually, for a total savings of \$92,920 annually. In return for these changes, employees were offered a 0.5% salary increase for 2010 and 2011. Health insurance changes should be accomplished by July 1, 2010, and the total savings for the partial year will be include in an amendment to the introduced budget to pass these savings on to the tax payers within this budget year.

Mr. Doherty thanked Mayor Nuss and Bill DeBoer for their participation in the success of the negotiations. Mr. DeBoer thanked Mr. Doherty for identifying the applicable laws that lead to clarifying smoother negotiations for both parties.

**Open Space Trust Fund Status:** Mr. Doherty asked for executive session under attorney client privilege to discuss legal ramifications of adjusting the future status of the local open space tax.

**ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

Mayor Nuss requested Mr. Garofalo present the Attorney's report. Mr. Garofalo advised the Committee of recent legislation related to land use board's authority for zoning ordinances under the "time of the decision rule". Mr. Garofalo explained that it is of utmost importance that the Land Use Boards ensure that Township zoning ordinances are exactly where they wish them to be. Mr. Garofalo will carry this message to Land Use Board Attorney, Glenn Kienz.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS - None**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Review of Defeated Sussex Wantage School Budget**

Mr. Doherty presented the written resolution approved at the May 12, 2010 meeting, which authorized a tax levy reduction in the amount of \$221,883.

**Review of Defeated High School Budget**

Mr. Doherty offered a summary of the status of this issue, to date. Out of five sending districts, Sussex Borough is on record asking for a \$241,000 cut and Lafayette is on record asking for a \$564,618 cut. The remaining three municipalities have taken no position at this time. Mr. Doherty reported that he was asked to calculate what reduction would be accomplished if the teachers were asked to take a one-year pay freeze. Mr. Doherty presented the number of \$460,965 per their request, which primarily represented a reduction in all school budget line items where any salary increase had been indicated, plus concurrent adjustments to the social security line item calculation. Discussion took place regarding the budget review process. Mr. Gaechter stated that this is a good starting point since there still will need to be negotiations to come to a consensus at the May 17, 2010 Joint meeting of all governing bodies involved in the budget defeat review process.

Mr. DeBoer made a motion to recommend a \$460,965 reduction in the High Point Regional High School budget. Mr. Gaechter seconded the motion. Upon roll call,

**Ayes:** DeBoer, Nuss, Gaechter    **Nays:** None    **Absent:** None    **Abstain:** None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. DeBoer made a motion to approve the Regular and executive session minutes of the meeting of the Wantage governing body held on April 29, 2010, and the Minutes of the Special Meeting of May 3, 2010. Mr. Gaechter seconded the motion. Upon roll call,

**Ayes:** DeBoer, Gaechter, Nuss,    **Nays:** None    **Absent:** None    **Abstain:** None

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**OPEN PUBLIC SESSION**

Mayor Nuss opened the meeting to the public for any questions or comments.

Bill Gettler, Gemmer Road, expressed his disappointment in Wantage Township's decision regarding the amount of cut requested in the Sussex/Wantage Regional School budget. Mr. Gettler expressed his concern that Mayor Parrott gave out inaccurate information regarding the increase in Sussex Borough's budget, and expressed disappointment that the Sussex Borough position on budget cuts was endorsed by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Wantage because the Wantage Township portion of the tax levy is so much greater than the Sussex Borough portion. Mr. Gettler distributed an anonymous letter from a concerned senior citizen asking Mr. Gettler to contact other senior citizens to attend the school board meeting this Monday. Mr. Gettler expressed dissatisfaction with any tax increase.

Mayor Nuss expressed her personal opinion that Sussex/Wantage has already cut their budget and the amount requested is a fair amount and any more would have hurt the children.

Mr. Gaechter explained while he understands Mr. Gettler's comment regarding the "tail wagging the dog", it is important to understand that under state law, in a meeting dealing with this defeated school budget, it is not 10% Sussex Borough and 90% Wantage Township, but 1/3 Sussex Borough, 1/3 Wantage Township and 1/3 school board in terms of decision-making power and authority.

Maria Kucinski, commended the Committee on not cutting more from the Sussex Wantage School Budget and expressed the belief that there is no more fat to trim in the school district and any further cuts will affect the quality of education of our children. A brief discussion took place regarding the need for administrative positions and Mr. DeBoer suggested that perhaps some of these mandated positions should be looked at by the State.

Jenny Craig, implored the Committee to look at the number they are asking from Sussex/Wantage. She offered the position that reduction in state aid already has taken enough and any additional cuts will negatively affect the education of our children. Ms. Craig stated that she has been in touch with many of the Sussex/Wantage teachers, some of whom are in the unemployment lines along with everyone else. Mr. Gaechter asked Ms. Craig to contact the teachers at High Point Regional High School who have refused a pay freeze.

Karen Merritt asked for clarification that the FOLN hearing will be held at 1:30 pm in Morristown. This date and time was confirmed. The New Jersey Herald article was incorrect.

Mr. Gaechter made a motion to enter into executive session as follows:

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, P. L. 1975, Chapter 231 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Wantage, that the public shall be excluded from discussion of the following matter: "attorney client privilege, Open Space Trust Fund". BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Minutes will be kept on file in the municipal clerk's office, and once the matter involving the confidentiality of the above no longer requires that confidentiality, then the minutes shall be made public.

Mr. Boer seconded the motion. Upon roll call,

**Ayes:** DeBoer, Nuss, Space **Nays:** None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

After meeting in closed executive session, the members of the governing body returned to open session and continued with the regular order of business. As there was no further business to discuss, Mr. DeBoer moved to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Gaechter seconded the motion. Upon roll call,

**Ayes:** DeBoer, Nuss, Gaechter **Nays:** None **Absent:** None **Abstain:** None

Mayor Nuss declared this meeting to be adjourned.

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James R. Doherty, Administrator/Clerk