

**NORTH HANOVER TOWNSHIP  
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING  
SPECIAL BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 23, 2019, 9:00 A.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER** Mayor DeBaecke called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**FLAG SALUTE:** Led by Mayor DeBaecke

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor DeBaecke  
Deputy Mayor O'Donnell  
Committeeman DeLorenzo  
Committeeman Doyle  
Committeeman Kocubinski

Absent: None

Also Present: Mary Picariello, Township Clerk and Joseph Greene, Treasurer, Jack Bruno, CFO, Chief Budd Wells and Chief Ben Palombi

**SUNSHINE STATEMENT:** “The provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act have been met. Notice of this meeting has been transmitted by email to the Courier Post, Burlington County Times and The Trenton Times as well as given to those having requested same and posted on the Township bulletin board located in the foyer of the municipal building”.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Members of the public wishing to address the Township Committee must state their name and address for the record.

Mayor DeBaecke opened the meeting to the public. There were no public comments.

**MOTION TO CLOSE PUBLIC COMMENT**

Proposed By: Committeeman Kocubinski

Seconded By: Committeeman DeLorenzo

**BUDGET WORKSHOP** – Mayor DeBaecke began reviewing the revised budget worksheets. Committee Kocubinski inquired about the reserve for uncollected difference. CFO Bruno noted there were cuts made and noted the in original paperwork it was only noted for comparison purposes. He stated it is not finally calculated yet and believes it to be \$267,000 and it is not listed as a budgeted item. He stated to look at page 55 and 56. CFO Bruno gave a summary of what was done subsequent to the last meeting. He noted the difference was the grant items from the County and the NJDOT. Those numbers would not be in this year's budget as it related to last year. He noted the struggle financing the full court operation. He noted it was deficient by \$120,000.00. As a result, CFO Bruno made adjustments to the O/E budget from Chesterfield since we would no longer be operating it. There were cuts made of \$60,000.00. He noted he believes no tax increase is needed due to projected revenues. He stated there needed to be another \$40,000.00 in cuts to other departments and believes this is feasible. He noted court salaries need adjusting to reflect the loss of Chesterfield. Committee DeLorenzo inquired as to the number of Court sessions. It was noted there would be 2. CFO Bruno stated the bond overlap would be covered with deferred school tax. This was discussed during the bridge commission financing which saved the Township. CFO Bruno discussed the positive MOODY's letter as it relates to Township finances. Committee DeLorenzo noted it was a reflection of the finance department. CFO Bruno stated the Township Committee takes guidance well and they should be credited. CFO Bruno noted every year stands alone but this year the budget would be lien. Mayor DeBaecke noted his first inclination is no increase if it is not needed. The excess of last year could be used. CFO Bruno noted the past due monies that will be coming in from Chesterfield. Mayor DeBaecke noted those monies would help with the shortfall. CFO Bruno noted he was comfortable with no tax increase due to the expected but not anticipated revenues. Deputy Mayor O'Donnell noted the court agreement ceased January 14<sup>th</sup>. CFO Bruno noted the surplus with deferred tax was \$1,000,035.00. He stated last year was \$917, 000.00. CFO Bruno noted we were moving in the right direction. There were inquiries concerning the police contract. CFO Bruno noted it was covered in this budget. Joe Greene, Treasurer, noted health insurance would need to be a consideration next year as there are officers who could be looking for coverage. Committeeman Kocubinski noted budgeting is a three year path and CFO Bruno agreed.

Committeeman Doyle noted he reviewed the police budget. He stated there was no increase of necessity other than the required radios that CFO Bruno noted would be covered. CFO Bruno noted the capital fund is not a fund that is replaced every year once it is done it is done. He noted it is used as down payment money for major capital improvements. He also noted there are some old capital ordinances that he will explore canceling so that he can replenish the fund if spent. Deputy Mayor O'Donnell noted there is no anticipation of any new bonding. There was discussion of auctioning off old vehicles after the purchase of the Fire Chief vehicle. The Committee decided they would give JVFC \$20,000 toward the truck and the remaining funds would need to come from the EMS fund. There was also a general consensus to purchase the police radios needed at a cost of \$20,000.00. There was discussion pertaining to farmland preservation and the new law as it relates to the proximity to the base. There would be no need to finance any portion thereof as the federal government will share in that cost.

Mayor DeBaecke suggested reviewing the fire department budget before the police department as it is shorter. Chief Palombi noted he was still awaiting the award of the AFG grant. He noted if it was received that would not be an expense from the budget and it was his third year submitting with the assistance of the Bridge Commission. After review, the Township Committee was fine with the budget as submitted and contributing \$20,000 towards the command vehicle. There was no increase for normal operations. It was also noted there was an increase in answering calls within EMS. Deputy Mayor O'Donnell inquired as to the status of the new stipend program. Chief Palombi noted it was going well. Deputy Mayor O'Donnell also noted the need to do an ambulance refurb. Chief Palombi noted this would be a request within the next few years. Deputy Mayor O'Donnell inquired as to the revenue in the EMS fund. Chief Palombi stated collections were good and if it does not perform the stipend program would be revisited.

Committeeman Kocubinski stated there was substantial savings in the bond financing for the capital improvements made and would like to deliver this great accomplishment in the budget message. Deputy Mayor O'Donnell noted some confusion with the Court's AOC budget. CFO Bruno noted it looks like the Chesterfield Court was being removed. The actual costs are known and reflected in the Finance Departments paperwork.

Committeeman Kocubinski made inquiry in the Police Chief salary line. It was noted there was also a stipend for Deputy EMC. CFO Bruno noted the pensionable salary was \$81,600. Joe Greene noted it would be more beneficial to review the control line in the budget. He also made note of a \$10,000 reduction to the overtime budget. CFO Bruno noted this was part of balancing the loss of Chesterfield Court. Mayor DeBaecke reviewed all the reductions to offset the Court operation. It was also discussed the police salary line was inflated due to retro and the settling of the contract. Chief Wells noted the higher numbers were set at the higher amount for each officer but noted the chances were slim that every officer would take everything in a given year per the contract. He wanted to make the Township Committee aware of the potential. He noted there would be 3 officers per court session as a security feature. CFO Bruno noted the police O/E was slightly more than what was requested. Chief Wells stated there was no increase other than the need for police radios and he believes he can work within the allotment. Committeeman Doyle inquired about the Chief salary. It was decided Committeeman Doyle would discuss with CFO Bruno and then make recommendation. Deputy Mayor O'Donnell noted the budget does not yet reflect any court salary reductions. Committeeman Kocubinski stated no school tax has been deferred the last two years and there was a substantial savings with the bond financing. He was pleased with that.

Mayor DeBaecke asked for a general consensus to move forward with no tax increase. All present were in favor.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Proposed By: Deputy Mayor O'Donnell

Seconded By: Committeeman DeLorenzo

**TIME OF ADJOURNMENT:            11:44 AM**

Respectively submitted,

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***Mary Picariello, RMC/CMR/CTC***  
***Township Clerk***