

MOUNT LAUREL TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 22, 2010

A Work Session Meeting of the Mount Laurel Township Council was held on Monday, February 22, 2010 in the Municipal Courtroom of the Mount Laurel Municipal Building. The meeting was called to order by Mayor James Keenan.

ROLL CALL

The Members of Council present were Mayor Keenan, Deputy Mayor McCaffrey, Councilwoman Bobo and Councilman Chris Smith. Also present were Patricia Halbe, Township Clerk, Jennifer Blumenthal, Township Manager, and Christopher Norman, Esq., Township Solicitor. Councilwoman Riley was absent.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

The Public Announcement, which is required by the "Open Public Meetings Act" of the State of New Jersey and read at every meeting of the Township Council was read by the Municipal Clerk.

Safety on the Agenda

Ms. Blumenthal indicated that it is a JIF requirement that safety be on the agenda at least once a year. Steve Walsh, our Risk Management Consultant, was present.

Mr. Walsh stated that Mount Laurel joined the Burlington County JIF on January 1, 2006 and our losses were a little higher than expected, with a loss ratio of 157%. Our 2009 summary of claims showed that there were 28 workers comp claims that totaled \$901,811.37, with several of them being severe. In 2008, there were 36 workers comp claims for a total of \$501,396.43. The Burlco JIF is working with Mount Laurel to try to reduce the claims frequency. They meet with Ms. Blumenthal periodically to review the claims. The Township's reporting times are excellent. The Township employees reviewed videos and attended training. Mount Laurel is in compliance with the EPL Risk Management Plan.

Councilwoman Bobo stated that she and Mayor Keenan attended the Elected Officials Training on January 28, 2010.

Mr. Walsh stated that some of the incurred losses are of a concern. Ms. Blumenthal responded that we have a safety committee that is employee-based and an accident committee that is management-based.

Mr. Walsh stated that EJA has been exploring health insurance options for the township employees.

Local Road Program

Ms. Blumenthal stated that there are a few years of local roads projects that need to be addressed. She is working with Mr. Long and Mr. Basim. We have \$800,000 identified for road repairs and have identified the road repair costs as per the Alaimo estimate of 2/19/10. Mr. Basim went out to check on which roads need to be repaired and those roads with upper drains were prioritized over those with underdrains. She believes there is enough funding for those roads identified as numbers 1-7 and the others are listed as alternatives if we have enough funds.

Developers Escrow Proposed Ordinance

Ms. Blumenthal stated that Council had previously received proposed draft ordinances with amended escrow fees as per the recommendations of the professional staff and zoning board secretary. The fees are comparable to other towns. For license agreement fees, a \$200 flat fee will be charged and an additional \$200 for any additional professional needed to approve it.

02-22-10

Flue Extensions at Tricia Meadows

Ms. Blumenthal stated that the short flues have become an issue over the years when it snows. We have had to have evacuations and the fire department had to clean-off roofs. The Township had previously waived the permit fee but only a small number of the residents at Tricia Meadows took advantage of it. Mr. Norman sent a letter to Mitchell Davis asking if we could again waive the permit fees. She has spoken with staff and they recommended waiving the permit fees for the flue repairs through December 31, 2010.

Deputy Mayor McCaffrey felt it is a serious health and safety issue and feels we should take stronger action.

Mayor Keenan stated that he was in favor of waiving the permit fee until December 31, 2010.

Deputy Mayor McCaffrey stated that we could send a letter to the DCA informing them that people had carbon monoxide buildup in their homes.

EMS Chief Pagurek stated that when a property changes hands, disclosure is required. Also when a property changes hands a carbon monoxide detector is required and he feels that there has not been a good job in relaying this. The fire department's procedure is to turn off the heat and PSE&G has to approve it to be turned on again.

Mr. Norman indicated that we could address it by resolution to waive the fees until December 31, 2010.

Mayor Keenan also felt that a letter needed to be sent to the DCA from Ms. Blumenthal.

Public Comments

Gene Bocelli – 131 Elbo Lane – Stated he was here on January 4th and January 25th to address the flooding and the poor design of the dry pond. He has not heard back yet.

Mayor Keenan responded that the Township had agreed to put him in contact with Mr. Procacci. Mr. Norman stated that the attorney for Mr. Procacci is Barbara Reifberg at Baron, Reifberg and Brennan.

Mr. Bocelli stated that the developer has the right-of-way on his property already. Mayor Keenan responded that it is between Mr. Bocelli and the developer and the township is not going to get involved in it.

Mr. Bocelli replied that the flooding ruined his septic system and Mr. Long did not address it. He spoke with Ms. Blumenthal on February 9th and has not heard back. He did not cause the problem. They keep saying that he won't let them on his property. Regarding the developer's escrow proposed, he had a problem with prior escrow bills and had told Ms. Halbe he felt he was overcharged. He was charged \$7000-\$8000 for his escrow fees. He feels something is wrong with the process.

Gary Cogan – 112 Yorktown Drive – Questioned if the budget for roads is also for potholes. Ms. Blumenthal responded that pothole repairs are part of the public works operations.

Closed Session

The Clerk read resolution 10-R-66, authorizing Mount Laurel Township Council to go into closed session for Personnel Matters and Litigation Matters. A motion was made by Councilman Smith and seconded by Councilwoman Bobo to adopt the resolution. All were in favor and Council went into closed session at 8:35

02-22-10

Return to Open Session

A motion was made by Councilman Smith and seconded by Deputy Mayor McCaffrey to return to open session. All were in favor and Council returned to open session at 9:17 p.m.

Councilman Smith questioned the status of the softball fields. Ms. Blumenthal responded that we are in the process of working to fix the fields.

Deputy Mayor McCaffrey commented that Mount Laurel Baseball has put in hundreds of thousands of dollars into our fields.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilman Smith and seconded by Councilwoman Bobo to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Halbe, RMC
Municipal Clerk

Transcribed by
Patricia Halbe