

**MINUTES
BOROUGH OF NEW MILFORD
6:30 PM WORK SESSION
7:45 PM PUBLIC MEETING
Monday, December 12, 2011**



WORK SESSION:

Mayor Subrizi read the Open Public Meeting and Mission Statements.

Council President Howard Berner	Present
Councilwoman Randi Duffie	Present
Councilman Diego Robalino	Present
Councilman Austin Ashley	Present
Councilwoman Celeste Scavetta	Present
Councilman Dominic Colucci	Present
Mayor Ann Subrizi	Present

Also Present: Hedy Grant, Councilwoman Elect, Mark Madaio, Borough Attorney; Christine Demiris, Administrator/ Clerk

CLOSED SESSION:

Council President Berner made a motion to go into closed session. Councilman Colucci seconded the motion. All present in favor, none opposed.

1. Potential Acquisition – FEMA/Blue Acres/Green Acres

At the conclusion of the closed session Council President Berner made a motion to return to open session. Councilwoman Duffie seconded the motion. All present in favor, none opposed.

OPEN SESSION:

1. Health Benefits

The Administrator explained the reason behind changing insurance companies; most significantly a 10% increase if we were to stay with Oxford vs. a 3% increase by switching to CIGNA. A resolution is on tonight's agenda for the Mayor and Council's consideration.

Councilman Ashley asked the total cost for health benefits; Mayor Subrizi advised approximately \$2.3 million. The Administrator noted that amount includes dental, medical and the self-funded HRA. Councilman Ashley asked if State Health Benefits were considered; Mr. Caughlan advised the level of coverage is not even close, and contracts require equal to or better.

2. Senior Citizen Center Staffing

Mary Beth Hubbard, Director explained the agreement the Borough had with Easter Seals for the past ten years. She noted \$125 million dollars have been cut from the Easter Seals budget;

the Borough has one Easter Seals employee, Joan Russo, and her contract will expire at the end of December. Ms. Hubbard made a recommendation to Joan Russo part-time for twenty hours per week at \$8.50/hour.

Councilwoman Scavetta made a motion to create the part-time program staff position at the Senior Center for twenty hours per week with a salary of \$8.50/hour. Councilman Robalino seconded the motion. All present in favor, none opposed. The Administrator will prepare a letter of employment and amend the salary ordinance; the appointing resolution will be on the agenda for the reorganization meeting.

3. Police Department – Proposed Promotion Figures

Mayor Subrizi explained the current situation in the Police Department and reviewed the reasoning for the proposed promotions. She explained the department had two retirements in 2011; the savings (less the payout for accumulated time) will be \$55,000 in 2012. The retired Lieutenant is willing to receive his payout over three years; therefore the savings would be \$76,481. If the promotions went into effect on March 1st, it would cost the Borough an additional \$76,484 in 2012. Currently the department does not have enough ranking officers. After discussion, the Council proposed the following table: one Chief, five Lieutenants, one Detective Lieutenant, four Sergeants, one Detective Sergeant, eighteen Patrol Officers, and one Detective Patrol Officer for a total of 31 officers. The Administrator will advise Chief Papapietro to prepare for the Lieutenant and Sergeant exams.

Councilwoman Duffie expressed concern about what the Council is setting themselves up for in 2013. Mayor Subrizi noted the department is in need of restructuring.

4. Police Chief Request – Ordinance Amendment

Mr. Madaio explained Chief Papapietro's request to amend the current ordinance to include the Detective Bureau.

The Administrator will prepare the ordinance for introduction.

Councilman Robalino made a motion to reconvene in the Council Chambers. Council President Berner seconded the motion. All present in favor, none opposed.

PUBLIC SESSION:

(Actual Start 8:12 PM)

Mayor Subrizi called the meeting to order, asked for a moment of silent prayer and/or reflection, and led the flag salute. Mayor Subrizi read the Open Public Meeting Law and Mission Statements and pointed out the fire exits in the Council Chambers.

Council President Howard Berner	Present
Councilwoman Randi Duffie	Present
Councilman Diego Robalino	Present
Councilman Austin Ashley	Present
Councilwoman Celeste Scavetta	Present
Councilman Dominic Colucci	Present
Mayor Ann Subrizi	Present

Also Present: Hedy Grant, Councilwoman Elect, Mark Madaio, Borough Attorney; Christine Demiris, Administrator/ Clerk

APPOINTMENTS: **MARIAN MAHARAJ – BOARD OF HEALTH**
 MARY DIEDRICH – BOARD OF HEALTH
 MARY MCNICHOLAS – BOARD OF HEALTH

Councilwoman Duffie made a motion to appoint Marian Maharaj, Mary Diedrich and Mary McNicholas to the Board of Health. Councilman Robalino seconded the motion. All present in favor, none opposed.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Council President Howard Berner

Planning Board, Chamber of Commerce, Environmental & Energy Commission, Historic Preservation, Historic New Bridge Landing

Council President Berner noted the Planning Board, Chamber of Commerce and Historic Preservation have not yet met this month.

Council President Berner reported the Planning Board will meet on December 20th to hear the Gospel Fellowship Church application.

Council President Berner reported the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission met on December 1st; they plan to continue their discussion with the DEP regarding the land lease of the parking lot to bring in revenue. He outlined the commission's upcoming events.

Council President Berner reported the Environmental and Energy Commission met on December 6th and discussed possible causes of recent flooding. The Commission suggested homeowners may water their lawns too frequently; they are planning to ask people to cut back to twice per week.

Councilwoman Randi Duffie

Health & Human Services, Shade Tree, Rent Leveling/Tenants Association

Councilwoman Duffie reported the Board of Health met last week at which they discussed the current ordinance prohibiting the keeping of poultry in the Borough; as it was brought to their attention by a resident currently keeping chickens on his property. The Board will collect and review feedback from other towns and revisit the matter on January 4th. The Health Officer noted the flu activity is low in the state; however he still recommends the flu shot. Councilwoman Duffie reminded those present that in January 2012 it is again time to license cats and dogs.

Councilwoman Duffie reported the Shade Tree Commission discussed the damage to the Borough's younger trees during the October snowstorm. The commission wishes to proceed with the dangerous tree inventory; it was removed from their 2011 budget request. Residents continue to request their trees be removed based on their danger factor.

Councilwoman Duffie was unable to attend the Rent Leveling Board meeting; she was advised they met and continue to move forward with multi-family unit compliance.

Councilman Diego Robalino
Garbage & Recycling, Board of Education

Councilman Robalino reported the recycling tonnage statistics through December 12th.

Councilman Robalino reported the Board of Education met on November 21st in the new Global Leadership room. The room number is 336 and was established for the academies. The Board of Education is working on a five year master plan; to begin renovating all the schools in the district, beginning with the High School. At the recent work session the Board discussed the recent bill introduced taking the hiring capability away from the Board and Superintendent. The Board discussed possibly replacing the NJ ASK test with a tablet based assessment test.

Mayor Subrizi took a moment to welcome Councilwoman Elect Hedy Grant to the table.

Councilman Austin Ashley
Ambulance Corps, Recreation

Councilman Ashley reported the Ambulance Corps has not met yet.

Councilman Ashley reported the Recreation Commission met on December 7th at which they discussed the 2012 budget. The commission is planning for all coaches to be concussion certified. The commission appointed John Bigger as the Recreation Director. The next Recreation meeting will be January 4th.

Councilwoman Celeste Scavetta
Senior Citizens Advisory Board, Public Events

Councilwoman Scavetta highlighted the many activities for the Senior Center in November and December.

Councilwoman Scavetta noted the Veteran's Day service and Tree Lighting were very well attended; she acknowledged one of the tree lighters in attendance, Donna Colucci.

Councilwoman Scavetta thanked everyone for her time on the Council; she noted it was a wonderful experience and was happy to have filled in when needed.

Councilman Dominic Colucci
Department of Public Works, Buildings & Grounds, Fire Department, Drug & Alcohol Municipal Alliance

Councilman Colucci attended the Fire Department meeting on November 21st; they discussed possible grant opportunities and asked that he look into them. He asked the department to come up with a small committee of computer literate firefighters to assist with the grant applications. The adopt-a-hydrant program is still in effect.

Councilman Colucci reported the Drug Alliance met on November 17th where they discussed securing a date in August for a carnival fundraiser. He noted the most recent middle school dance had approximately 155 children in attendance. The Alliance is looking into a movie night fundraiser for the winter months.

Councilman Colucci reported the DPW is hard at work picking up leaves, branches and trees; he advised the branches currently being held in the swim club parking lot will be mulched and removed shortly.

Councilman Colucci advised the Buildings and Grounds Supervisor is overseeing a heating system issue at Fire Company #2.

Mayor Ann Subrizi

Police/Police Aux., Library Board, Community Development, Joint Insurance Fund, Bergen County Open Space

Mayor Subrizi advised at the Bergen County Open Space meeting on December 5th, the Borough was awarded \$50,000 for the Van Eck property on Steuben Avenue. Any additional costs will come from the Borough's open space fund.

Mayor Subrizi noted the departments are currently submitting their budget requests for 2012; the deadline to introduce the budget is the end of February, she wants the budget committee to begin working on January 5th.

Mayor Subrizi reviewed and explained the agenda items the Council discussed earlier.

5. RFQ Committee

Mayor Subrizi requested two Council members to be on the committee with her; Council President Berner and Councilwoman Duffie volunteered. The committee will meet on December 27th.

Mayor Subrizi mentioned the resolution on the agenda to fund the note for emergency hurricane expenses. The Administrator clarified that the Council already approved the emergency appropriation; this is simply approving the note with which to fund the emergency.

Mayor Subrizi advised Bergen County was added to the Governor's snow emergency declaration; which will assist in the newest FEMA application.

Mayor Subrizi asked Councilwoman Elect Grant to report on the Library Board. Councilwoman Elect Grant reported the negotiating committee had its initial meeting. The Library will have a holiday fair on December 17th and the last meeting of the year will be December 15th.

Mayor Subrizi attended the Police Auxiliary dinner; she thanked them for all their hard work.

ADMINISTRATOR

The Administrator asked if the Council wished to replace the Washington Parkway pillar recently damaged in an accident. The Council unanimously agreed to replace the pillar.

The Administrator asked if the Council had any objection to the Library posting signs to advertise their holiday shopping boutique; no objections noted.

The Administrator referenced a letter written by a resident, Mr. Nick D'Amelio, and asked if she can put it on the agenda for discussion at the January work session. The Council agreed to list it for discussion in January.

COUNCIL

Councilwoman Duffie asked if the global leadership room referenced in Councilman Robalino's report is open to all students. Councilman Robalino and Councilwoman Scavetta advised it is strictly for academy students. Councilwoman Duffie asked how many students are in the academies; Councilwoman Scavetta advised approximately 100 students. Councilwoman Duffie said she felt a large amount of money was spent on a room that only a limited number of students will benefit from.

Councilwoman Duffie questioned if the Library received a new flag; Councilwoman Elect Grant advised they did receive a new flag. Councilwoman Duffie noted the poor condition of the flags on the Mechrod Bridge; the Administrator advised the Girl Scouts take care of that, she will reach out to one of the leaders and advise.

Councilwoman Duffie asked if the Recreation Commission keeps minutes; if so may the Council see them regularly. The Administrator advised the minutes are on the commission's website and filed in the Clerk's Office.

Councilwoman Duffie referenced the United Water property; she was advised by the Grants Consultant that if New Milford filed a non-binding letter of intent by year end, it may keep the door open for grant opportunities.

Mayor Subrizi stated she thought the clock had run out on the option for purchase; she did not want to obligate the Borough to something it cannot afford.

Councilwoman Duffie suggested sending the letter of intent to allow the Borough to be proactive and explore opportunities. She noted to let the December deadline die is shortsighted; Mayor Subrizi advised she thought the deadline was April.

Councilwoman Duffie stated the letter will keep the door open to see if the Borough should pursue. Mayor Subrizi advised a grant would not be a lump sum; it would be multi-year and possibly a decade.

Councilwoman Scavetta noted earlier in the year the Grants Consultant stated the most the Borough could receive is \$2 million from Green Acres in one year and \$600,000 from BCOS; that discussion concluded it would not be enough to offer for the property.

Council President Berner said an appraisal is based on fair market value; the Borough appraised the property at \$3 million. He noted also, grants are not guaranteed on a yearly basis.

Councilman Ashley stated the Borough would only be asking for the opportunity to explore further. Councilwoman Duffie advised things continue to change i.e. weather, economy, etc.

Councilwoman Duffie made a motion to allow the Administrator to have a conversation with the Grants Consultant to confirm the December deadline for exploratory grant opportunities relating to the 13 acres at the United Water property north of the High School. Councilman Ashley seconded the motion.

Mr. Madaio clarified the motion; in the event the option still exists, the letter shall be sent before December 31st and said letter will not result in a fee to the grants consultant.

The motion passed on a roll call vote. All present in favor, none opposed.

NEW BUSINESS:

RESOLUTIONS:

- 2011:259 Closed Session
- 2011:260 Payment of Bills and Vouchers
- 2011:261 Authorize Agreement with CIGNA for Employee Medical Benefits
- 2011:262 Support A4287
- 2011:263 Approve 2011 Appropriation Budget Transfers
- 2011:264 Authorize Refund of Duplicate Tax Payments – Various Blocks and Lots
- 2011:265 Approve cancellations of credit balances under \$10.00 at various locations
- 2011:266 Approve cancellations of uncollectible balances under \$10.00 at various locations
- 2011:267 Authorize the sale of \$127,400 Emergency Notes – Hurricane Irene
- 2011:268 Appoint Officer Derek Mattessich – Patrolman 2
- 2011:269 Appoint Officer Brian Carlino – Patrolman 2
- 2011:270 Authorize implementation of Flexible Spending Account with Paychex

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Council President Berner made a motion to open the meeting to the public. Councilman Robalino seconded the motion. All present in favor, none opposed.

Scott Petrie, PBA representative came forward to address the Council. Mr. Petrie confirmed the CIGNA health insurance was vetted by Art Caughlan; the Administrator confirmed it was. Mr. Petrie asked if the Choice Care program will remain; the Administrator confirmed it will.

As there were no other members of the public wishing to comment Councilman Colucci made a motion to close the meeting to the public. Council President Berner seconded the motion. All present in favor, none opposed.

VOTE ON RESOLUTIONS

Councilman Colucci made a motion to approve the consent agenda resolutions 2011:259 through 2011:270. Councilwoman Scavetta seconded the motion. All present in favor, none opposed.

ADJOURNMENT

Council President Berner made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Robalino seconded the motion. All present in favor, none opposed. Time 9:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Colleen Naumov
Deputy Borough Clerk

