

The Special Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Washington was called to order by Mayor Tobin at 7:36 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Comm. Short, Cullen, *Nedd, Walsh, Mayor Tobin,
Administrator/Clerk Gallets, Sr. Deputy Clerk Madden

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

*Comm. Nedd participated via speakerphone.

Adequate notice of this meeting was sent to the Observer Tribune and the Morristown Daily Record on April 21, 2006 and was posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building on the same date. This meeting is being held at the Washington Township Municipal Building, 43 Schooley's Mountain Road, Long Valley, New Jersey. Notices of this meeting were sent as there were requests.

DISCUSSION

**Comm. Cullen recused himself from the 2006 School Budget discussion as he is an employee of the Washington Township K-8 Board of Education.*

2006 SCHOOL BUDGET REVIEW PROCESS - K-8

RESOLUTION #R-81-06 - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT – AUDITING SERVICES – DR. ANTHONY TORIELLO, A AND S ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES L.L.C.

Mayor Tobin explained the review process for a defeated budget. Mayor Tobin stated that the Township Committee has appointed two members of the Committee to sit and discuss the budget with a subcommittee from the Board of Education to try to reach a mutually agreeable proposal for handling the budget. Comm. Kevin Nedd is to be the liaison from the Township Committee to the K-8 school district for the year 2006 and Comm. Kevin Walsh will join Comm. Nedd in these discussions regarding the budget. A recommendation has been made that an outside auditor with professional experience in reviewing school budgets be appointed to participate in the process this year. The purpose of the meeting this morning is to discuss that proposal and to vote on a resolution that would appoint such an auditor. That does not exclude the subcommittee of Comm. Nedd and Walsh from participating in the discussion of the budget with the K-8 Board of Education budget subcommittee nor does it imply that the recommendation coming from the auditor selected would be automatically accepted and implemented.

Comm. Nedd stated that hiring an auditor at this time would be premature.

Comm. Short stated that it is his understanding that this resolution is to give Comm. Nedd and Walsh a one week period to try to come to some reasonable cuts or to say that the budget is fine the way it stands.

Mayor Tobin stated that his difficulty is that there is a time frame that we have to work under by law and he is sure that because of the number of budgets that were defeated, the number of auditors that have experience with reviewing Board of Education budgets is limited and the demand can be higher than the number of auditors. If we do nothing at this point and then decide to go forward in ten days, there may be no auditor available.

Mayor Tobin stated that he doesn't think that the community has the confidence in the Township Committee to know whether they are covering all the bases or not. An impartial auditor coming in and giving recommendations clears the air of any implication that some Committee Members are determined to cut the budget in dollar amounts that are not reasonable; and it also clears the air that some Committee Members are so favorably disposed to the Board of Education that they are not going to make an honest effort to cut the total amount.

Comm. Walsh stated that we are elected to take a good hard look at the budget and recommend cuts. We do the best job we can and then we move forward. This budget doesn't require an auditor.

Comm. Short stated that he would like to see Resolution R-81-06 move forward with the stipulation that we give Comm. Nedd and Walsh one week to negotiate with the Board of Education and if by May 8th they do not have a comfortable feeling that they made the proper cuts, then we move forward with the auditor.

Motion was made by Comm. Short, seconded by Comm. Walsh to have a Special Meeting on May 8, 2006 at 7:30 a.m. at the Washington Township Municipal Building to determine if it is necessary to appoint an outside auditor to review the defeated budget. Motion was carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Comm. Short, Walsh, Nedd, Mayor Tobin

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Comm. Cullen

ABSENT: None

Motion was made by Comm. Short, seconded by Comm. Walsh to table R-81-06 until May 8, 2006. Motion was carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Comm. Short, Walsh, Nedd, Mayor Tobin

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Comm. Cullen

ABSENT: None

Mayor Tobin opened the meeting to the public.

Mr. Walt Cullen, stated that a letter should be written to the editor of the local paper by either the Mayor or Comm. Short concerning recent quotes and clarifying who said what.

Comm. Short stated he will be happy to write the letter since he was misquoted, but it will not be this week.

Ms. Michelle Skurchuk, 8 Salisbury Lane, stated that the first meeting with the Board of Education will be on Monday, May 1, 2006

Mr. Richard Reilly, stated he is unclear why a letter cannot be written immediately.

Comm. Short stated that he will be traveling.

Mayor Tobin stated that he will write a letter and hand deliver it on Monday.

There being no further comments or questions, Mayor Tobin closed the meeting to the public.

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 a.m.