

The Special Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Washington was called to order by Mayor Tobin at 7:40 a.m.

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Comm. Cullen

Adequate notice of this meeting was sent to the Observer Tribune and the Morristown Daily Record on May 1, 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

### 2006 SCHOOL BUDGET REVIEW PROCESS - K-8

Comm. Nedd explained that he and Comm. Walsh evaluated the existing Board of Education 2006/2007 budget and have come back with a list of recommended changes. Comm. Nedd stated that at this point we feel very comfortable with where we stand right now.

Comm. Walsh stated that the number they have come up with is just shy of \$300,447. We are suggesting to cut \$300,000 from the lowest tax increase of a K-8 school district in Morris County. He stated that he is confident that it is a very workable number.

Comm. Nedd stated that he and Comm. Walsh came up with guiding principles, and one of the main things was that we were going to protect the core programs.

**Mayor Tobin opened the meeting to the public.**

**Mr. Michael Rec, 15 Acorn Drive**, stated he believes the budget was defeated by a small percentage of registered voters. He recommends that more voter participation be encouraged.

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

### **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.**

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**Comm. Nedd** stated that if we had a situation where we were facing a significant budget increase and there were a number of questions on the table and the Committee felt that it did not have the expertise to do a fair, thorough and comprehensive analysis of the situation, we would need to reach out to an external resource to provide that expertise. He stated that he doesn't think that those conditions exist in this situation and that he thinks we have people on the Committee who are qualified to take a hard look and do the right analysis to come to some conclusions. Comm. Nedd also stated that we have enough rapport with the Board of Education to sit down and communicate and debate those ideas. He personally does not feel that an auditor is warranted at this time.

**Comm. Walsh** stated that he has struggled with this and recommends that we do not accept this resolution at this time. He stated that it is a great resource to have available, but he thinks the Board of Education did a good job putting this budget together.

**Comm. Short** stated that he thinks the voters have lost confidence in the School Board and the Township Committee. He doesn't feel that we as a Committee have the knowledge to review this budget. We elect a School Board with the knowledge that they are going to put together a tight budget. The public is fed up with taxes and with increases. He stated that he hopes that if we do get an auditor, he finds this budget to be so perfect that he comes back and says that this is the best budget he has seen in the last 200 he has reviewed. Comm. Short stated that he is concerned about spending the money for an auditor, but he thinks we have to get the voter confidence back so that we don't have a failed budget next year and the year after. If we do not agree on an auditor this year, he would ask that next year we do budget for an auditor and have that auditor online should the budget be defeated.

**Mayor Tobin** stated that there is a lack of confidence and mistrust in the Township Committee. This is an opportunity to have an outside professional come in. He believes it would diffuse a lot of the anger at the schools.

Motion was made by Comm. Short, seconded by Comm. Tobin that the Resolution #R82-06 be adopted. Motion was defeated by virtue of a tie by the following roll call vote:

**AYES:** Comm. Short, Mayor Tobin

**NAYS:** Comm. Nedd, Walsh

**ABSTENTIONS:** None

**ABSENT:** Comm. Cullen

#### **2006/2007 WEST MORRIS REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL BUDGET REVIEW**

Mayor Tobin stated that the West Morris Regional High School Board of Education came back with \$100,000 in cuts, very evenly divided between Mendham High School and West Morris Center High School.

**The meeting recessed at 8:35 a.m. to give the Committee Members an opportunity to review information being handed out concerning the Regional High School Budget.**

**The meeting reconvened at 6:00 p.m.**

The Washington Township Committee reached a consensus to support West Morris Regional Board of Education's proposed budget. No resolution was introduced, pending action by the other four towns in the Regional High School District.

**The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.**