

**MAYOR & COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING  
APRIL 2, 2012  
7:30 p.m.**

The Special Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Rockaway, in the County of Morris, New Jersey, was held in the Community Center, 21-25 Union Street, Rockaway, N.J. with Mayor Russell Greuter presiding. Mayor Greuter called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

Mayor Greuter read the following statement: In accordance with Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, Public Laws, 1975, be advised that notice of this meeting was made by posting on the Bulletin Board, Town Hall, and sending to the officially designated newspapers, a notice indicating that the meeting would take place at the Community Center at 7:30 p.m. on April 2, 2012. Mayor Greuter announced the location of the fire exits.

Councilmembers Present

Thomas Donofrio  
Joyce Kanigel  
Thomas Mulligan  
Joseph Vicente  
John Willer

Councilmembers Absent

Melissa Burnside - Council President

Everyone present participated in the salute to the flag.

2012 BUDGET DISCUSSION

CFO/Treasurer Jack Doherty was in attendance.

Councilwoman Kanigel requested clarification of what could be done at this evening's meeting. Mayor Greuter explained that any recommendations to amend the budget would have to be approved by a majority vote. The amendment and budget would be finally approved on April 26.

Discussion ensued regarding the 2 percent tax levy cap and managing the budget to reduce taxes. Councilman Willer advised that if the budget is close to the 2 percent line, there will be some "wiggle room" for next year.

Upon motion by Councilman Willer, seconded by Councilman Donofrio, to ask if the council would vote to restore \$2,000 to the annual inspection dinner for the Fire Department.

Councilwoman Kanigel wanted the public to understand the budget process and should expect the Council to review the budget line by line. She felt that the Governing Body had looked after the Fire Department and stated that the other departments also had their budgets cut.

Upon call of the roll, the motion to restore \$2,000 to the annual inspection dinner for the Fire Department was approved via majority vote with Councilmen Donofrio, Mulligan and Willer voting affirmatively and Councilwoman Kanigel and Councilman Vicente voting against the motion. The Chief Financial Officer will amend the budget as stated.

Councilman Vicente suggested that the budget be amended to restore the \$13,000 that had been cut for community events which would be the banquet, Celebrate Rockaway Day, and the Rotary's 5K race. Councilman Mulligan noted that the money for the parades was restored by the Recreation Trust Funds which can only be used for recreation activities.

Upon motion by Councilman Vicente, seconded by Councilwoman Kanigel, and carried via majority vote, with Councilman Donofrio voting no, to amend the police overtime budget to include full funding for the Celebrate Rockaway Day and the Rotary 5K race.

Mayor Greuter explained that the budget for the Family Festival sponsored by the Fire Department will include two days' police overtime and \$5,000 for the fireworks.

Upon motion by Councilman Vicente, seconded by Councilman Willer, to increase the budget for the Fire Department banquet by an additional \$2,000, for a total \$13,000. Said motion was carried via majority vote, with Councilman Donofrio and Councilwoman Kanigel voting no.

Upon motion by Councilman Willer, seconded by Councilman Vicente, and carried via majority vote with Councilwoman Kanigel voting no, to authorize the Chief Financial Officer to prepare a budget amendment for an additional \$4,000 for the Fire Department inspection banquet dinner and increased police overtime for the Celebrate Rockaway Day and the Rotary 5K race.

#### PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Greuter opened the meeting to the public.

Mr. Robert Grow, 110 Lakeside Dr., is a member of the Rockaway Borough Business Owners Association and wanted to know if there were other private clubs in the budget.

Mr. James Swanick, 170 Church St., commented on the cost of 40 volunteers in the Fire Department which is less than one Public Works employee.

Mr. Daniel Levine, 11 David Dr., noted that the caterer offers the banquet at a reduced rate as an indication of his support for the Fire Department.

Mr. John Clark, 4 Hillside Ave., stated that the banquet is an opportunity for the Fire Department to recognize the mutual aid departments.

Mr. Steven Mancuso, 45 W. Flagge St., compared the last five years of budgets that were posted on the website, and noted that various departments increased from 14-25 percent while the Fire Department's budget decreased 23.25 percent. The banquet is the one time a year that the Department receives praise.

Ms. Lori Sarappa, 45 Ogden Ave., wanted to know what would happen if the entire Fire Department walked out? Mayor Greuter responded that we would go to mutual aid and then look for a paid department.

Ms. Kathy Haake, 74 Rockaway Ave., doesn't think it is appropriate for the Borough to pay for alcohol to be served at the Fire Department banquet.

Mr. David Bogart, 57 Rockaway Ave., asked for clarification between the Fire Department and the Fire Department Association.

Mr. Mark Howarth, Fire Chief, thanked the Council for listening to their concerns and restoring the funding for their special night; however, he is concerned that they are going to go through this again next year. He suggested that the Council look at other ways to save money. The Department saves approximately \$4,000 by doing some of its own truck maintenance work.

Mrs. Bonnie Hook, president of the Rockaway Borough Business Owners Association, thanked the Council for the reinstatement of the funding of police overtime for the Celebrate Rockaway Day. She questioned why the Association could not pay the town rate. Mr. Doherty explained the billing process for outside organizations who hire off-duty officers.

Mrs. Joyce Freiermuth, 99 E. Flagge St., commented about the attitude of the Fire Department personnel and agreed that the Department deserved the funding for its banquet.

Mr. Andrew Mackey, 26 Mott Pl., thanked the Council for restoring the banquet funding and noted that funding for the fireworks was still cut.

Mr. Swanick suggested that when a company such as Verizon hires off-duty police officers, they should pay an amount set by ordinance; however, perhaps a non-profit organization could be charged the actual amount of the police overtime.

Mayor Greuter closed the meeting to the public.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Approved: As Submitted

Sheila Seifert, Borough Clerk

Date: April 12, 2012