

HUNTERDON COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

Main Street County Complex, 2nd Floor

Flemington, New Jersey 08822

May 19, 2009

The regular meeting of the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders convened at 3:10 p.m. in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

PRESENT: MR. MENNEN, MR. HOLT, MR. MELICK, MR. SWOREN.

ABSENT: MR. PETERSON.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

Director Mennen announced: "This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice has been given by posting throughout the year a copy of the notice on Bulletin Boards on the First and Second Floor of the Main Street County Complex, Building #1, Flemington, New Jersey, a public place reserved for such announcements. A copy was mailed on or before January 02, 2009, to the Hunterdon County Democrat, Lambertville Beacon, The Express, Courier News, Trenton Times, Hunterdon Review and The Star Ledger, newspapers designated to receive such notices and by filing a copy with the Hunterdon County Clerk."

EXECUTIVE SESSION REQUESTS

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded these:

See Page 05/19/09-1A RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Executive session to discuss a legal issue which has arisen with Kingwood Township concerning property on Horseshoe Bend Road/Equestrian Village.

See Page 05/19/09-1B RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Executive session to discuss negotiations with the Prosecutor's Bargaining Unit/Detectives and the issue of a Supervisory and Non-Supervisory Unit.

See Page 05/19/09-1C RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Executive session to review various executive session minutes to be redacted and released.

See Page 05/19/09-1D RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Executive session to discuss a personnel issue regarding an appointment to the Senior Services Advisory Council.

See Page 05/19/09-1E RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Executive session to discuss a request that the Freeholders renew negotiations for the acquisition of property in Lebanon Township, known as Pelio.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. MELICK, MR. MENNEN.
(ABSENT) MR. PETERSON.**

The Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders went into executive session at 3:12 p.m. and reconvened in Open Session at 4:38 p.m., in the Historic Court House.

PRESENT: MR. MENNEN, MR. HOLT, MR. MELICK, MR. PETERSON, MR. SWOREN.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SURROGATE

Director Mennen explained that the County Surrogate was provided the opportunity to come before the Board concerning a personnel issue.

Susan J. Hoffman, County Surrogate came before the Board to request the replacement of an employee who resigned in her office last week. Mrs. Hoffman confirmed to the Board that this is a replacement, not a request for an additional person. Mrs. Hoffman explained when she was hired in the Surrogate's Court she became the 7th person in the office. Over the years the staff has been reduced to four. There are times when she only has a few employees and it gets hard to run the office. The office can be run with three employees but she feels it will be hard to run the office with only two. While there has been a decrease in some of the work there has been no decrease in deaths over the year. Mrs. Hoffman asked if the Board had any questions for her.

Mr. Peterson questioned when this employee resigned. Mrs. Hoffman stated that officially it was last Wednesday.

Mrs. Hoffman informed the Board of the duties of this person, including managing a sizeable account, processing all incapacitated persons through the hearing process and monitoring that program, plus provided backup to the Deputy Surrogate for the computer system and providing backup for the receptionist.

Director Mennen explained to Mrs. Hoffman that the Board of Freeholders have guidelines and are currently in a hiring freeze. This Board needs to follow those guidelines.

Mrs. Yard reported the Board will be having a special meeting on Thursday, May 21, 2009, and this issue could be addressed at that time.

Mr. Melick said it may be a problem financially, as the County is in a hiring freeze.

Director Mennen stated unless there is something else, this matter will be placed on the May 21, 2009 agenda and someone will report to the Surrogate on the Board's decision.

CULTURAL & HERITAGE COMMISSION – 2009 Mini-Historian

Stephanie Stevens, Cultural & Heritage Commission Chairperson introduced the Board of Chosen Freeholders to the students and parents present for the awards of Mini-Historian and explained, what a Freeholder is and does and that Hunterdon County was founded in 1714. Hunterdon County is 295 years old. It is older than the United States of America.

Mrs. Stevens thanked the parents for encouraging their children to learn about Hunterdon County and the teachers for instilling an interest in history in their students.

Mrs. Stevens provided a small history lesson covering the Hunterdon County historic Court House. The first Court House for Hunterdon County was built on this foundation in 1793 but it burned down, and was replaced in 1848. At that time there were only two freeholders on the Board of Chosen Freeholders and it took only one month to build the building and while the court house was being built, meetings were held in the Methodist Church.

She asked if anyone knew when the County was founded and stated that it was March 12, 1714. She continued by saying that the state was so big that in 1714 they began to make the areas. As it increased to the NY state border, five Counties made up the original counties of Hunterdon. The Counties that came out of it were Morris County, Mercer County, Sussex County, Warren County and Hunterdon County. The last one to be formed was Mercer County and that County is important because that is where the Capital is. Back in those days that was called the County Seat of Hunterdon County. Right now we are sitting in a very special place, which is the County Courthouse and it is the County Seat of Hunterdon County.

Director Mennen and Mrs. Stevens presented ribbons to the Honorable Mentions: Franklin Township School: Tyler Marcantuono - "The Pittstown Branch Railroad" and Grace French - "Colonel Charles Stewart House"; Frenchtown Borough School: Nicole Maher Davison - "Schaible's Barber Shop", Julia Silva - "The Prevost House", and Abbigail Sullivan - "The Belvidere Delaware Railroad"; High Bridge Elementary School: Christine Benson - "The High Bridge Railroad", Ryan Cahill - "My House – 56 Mine Road, High Bridge, NJ", Justin Howell - "The Railroad and the High Bridge Station", Adam Murdock - "Cregar Road Lime Kiln" and Nick Markarian - "Lake Solitude Dam"; Tewksbury Elementary School: Nicholas Fernicola - "Hell Mountain", Andrew Garison - "Melick's Town Farm", Carleigh A. Matthews - "The Fairmount Lime Kiln", Victoria Bigdelle - "Hollow Brook Road", Claire Furino - "The Tewksbury Inn", Paige Nazzaro - "The Magic Shop", Anna Gelson - "Fairmount Presbyterian Church", Jessica Memoli - "The Taggart House" and Charlotte Stafford - "Pottersville Reformed Church".

Second Place Winners: Delaware Township School: Emma Webb - "My House"; Franklin Township School: Sean Swider - "The Pittstown Train Station"; Frenchtown Borough Elementary School: Sean A. Hanczaryk - "Frenchtown's Most (Pre) Historic Site"; High Bridge Elementary School: Caitlin Reilly - "Taylor Wharton Iron and Steel Company"; Kingwood Township School: Richard Bergacs - "Devil's Tea Table"; Readington Township: Ryan Wyckoff - "The Eversole-Hall House"; Tewksbury Elementary School: Eleanor Palmer - "My House – 13 Old Turnpike Road".

First Place Winners: Alexandria Middle School: Emily Stacy - "St. Thomas Episcopal Church"; Bloomsbury Elementary School: Faith Swierat - "Bloomsbury School"; Califon Public School: Grace C. Gilbert - "Rambo's Country Store"; Clinton Public School: Allie Best - "The NJ Central"; Delaware Township School: Ryan Bernasky - "The Town of Sergeantsville"; Flemington – Raritan School District: Alex Monteferrante - "Fleming Castle" and Joseph Metcalf - "Fleming Castle"; Franklin Township School: Haley Wright - "My Old House"; Frenchtown Elementary School: Nicholas Pearson - "Frenchtown's Spirit of the American Doughboy"; High Bridge Elementary School: Rachael Silberman - "The High Bridge Library"; Kingwood Township School: Rebecca Wolven - "Oak Summit Cemetery"; Lebanon Twp.: Kyra Hollenbach - "General Daniel Morgan's Birthplace"; Readington Twp. School: Alyssa J. Gottlieb - "The Stanton Settlement"; Stockton Borough Elementary School: Rachyl Rackin - "The Stockton Fire House"; Tewksbury Elementary School: Avery Gavornik - "If This Old Farm Could Talk"; Union Township Elementary School: Clayton Jensen - "The Old Pattenburg Schoolhouse".

Second Place: Califon Public School: Grace C. Gilbert for "Rambo's Country Store"

2009 HUNTERDON COUNTY MINI-HISTORIAN - Tewksbury Elementary School: "If This Old Farm Could Talk".

The Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders recessed at 5:24 p.m. in order to take pictures at the parents' request.

The Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders reconvened in Open Session at 5:38 p.m.

PRESENT: MR. MENNEN, MR. HOLT, MR. PETERSON, MR. SWOREN.
ABSENT: MR. MELICK.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 05/19/09-3A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the Deed of Easement and Grant Agreement with Readington Township (Little), on Block 65, Lots 12 and 12.01, consisting of 31.676 acres, (SADC - \$344,435.21, County - \$89,182.83, Township -\$133,774.08), total amount of \$557,392.12.

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. PETERSON, MR. MENNEN.
(ABSENT) MR. MELICK.

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 05/19/09-3B

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the Deed of Easement and Grant Agreement with Alexandria Township (Dowling), on Block 10, Lot 76, consisting of 49.426 acres, (SADC - \$219,327.88, County - \$58,584.24, Township - \$71,776.83), total amount of \$349,688.95.

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. PETERSON, MR. MENNEN.
(ABSENT) MR. MELICK.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 05/19/09-3C

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the acquisition of a right of way and/or easement from Glashoff, Delaware Township, Block 36, Lot 17, in connection with County Bridge D-408 in the amount of \$60 and Bridge D-409, in the amount of \$330 and from Skeuse/Steinhardt, Delaware Township, Block 39, Lot 1, in connection with the Right of Way for County Route 604, in the amount of \$6,880.00.

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON, MR. MENNEN.
(ABSENT) MR. MELICK.

Mr. Melick returned to the meeting at 5:41 p.m.

PURCHASING

Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 05/19/09-3D

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving Requisition #40021452, using NJ State Contract #A-70290, with Modern Equipment, for snow plow parts, for the Department of Roads, Bridges and Engineering, in the amount of \$18,184.56.

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. MELICK, MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON,
MR. MENNEN.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 05/19/09-3E

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the award of County Quote #0032-2009, for professional surveying services for Serenity Hills Farm, LLC (a/k/a Crimi Farm), in connection with the Farmland Preservation Program, to Harris Surveying, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$15,750.

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON, MR. MELICK.
(ABSTAIN) MR. MENNEN.

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Melick seconded this:

See Page 05/19/09-3F

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the award of an agreement for Architectural and Engineering Services to USA Architects, in connection with the Records Retention Center, in an amount not to exceed \$120,000. Subject to County Counsel's Review.

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. MELICK, MR. PETERSON, MR. HOLT,
MR. MENNEN.

COUNTY UPDATE

Cynthia J. Yard, County Administrator informed the Board that a request has been received from the Flemington Borough Police Chief for a shared service to have a cage installed in one of the Borough's police vehicles. The request was forwarded to John P. Glynn, Director of Roads, Bridges and Engineering to see if the County could install the cage. Mrs. Yard reported the County can install the cage in the Borough's police vehicle provided Flemington Borough assumes the cost. Mrs. Yard informed the Board that with any in-kind service, in accordance with County Policy dated May 26, 2006, management is asked to determine if the request would cause overtime and if it is possible to accomplish the request.

After further consideration, Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion to approve the request by the Flemington Borough Police Chief to have a cage installed in a Borough police vehicle, provided this is coordinated through the County's Department of Roads, Bridges and Engineering and that the County be reimbursed for any and all expenses.

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. MELICK, MR. PETERSON, MR. MENNEN.

CONSENT AGENDA

Director Mennen announce: "All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Hunterdon and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately."

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to approve the claims in accordance with the Claims Register dated May 19, 2009.

See Page 05/19/09-4A CLAIMS REGISTER

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON, MR. MELICK, MR. MENNEN.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to approve the Social Services Funds Report for April, 2009.

See Page 05/19/09-4B SOCIAL SERVICES FUNDS REPORT

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON, MR. MELICK, MR. MENNEN.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to approve the regular session minutes of April 21, 2009.

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON, MR. MELICK, MR. MENNEN

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded these:

See Page 05/19/09-4C RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Donald Sutton appointed unclassified, full time Superintendent of Bridges, Roads, Bridges and Engineering Department.

See Page 05/19/09-4DA RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Jeffrey Quick appointed unclassified, full time Road Supervisor, Roads, Bridges and Engineering Department.

See Page 05/19/09-4E RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Earl Ray Eichlin appointed unclassified, full time Assistant Road Supervisor, Roads, Bridges and Engineering Department.

See Page 05/19/09-4F RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Pia Rey Doklan appointed permanent, full time Field Representative Senior Citizens Program, Division of Senior Services, Human Services Department.

See Page 05/19/09-4G RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Sarah Pierro appointed permanent, full time GIS Trainee, Division of GIS of the Information Technology Department.

See Page 05/19/09-4H RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Hugo Marin appointed permanent, full time Family Service Worker Bilingual Spanish/English, Division of Social Services, Human Services Department.

See Page 05/19/09-5A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Christine Hammerstone appointed permanent, full time Social Work Supervisor, Division of Social Services, Human Services Department.

See Page 05/19/09-5B

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Breann Liebermann appointed temporary, as needed Student Assistant, Library.

See Page 05/19/09-5C

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Deborah Carvajal, Library Assistant, Library, granted a leave of absence without pay.

See Page 05/19/09-5D

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving an agreement with Holland Township, for the acceptance of closed drainage systems (formerly County Culvert H-56), on Spring Garden Road.

See Page 05/19/09-5E

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving an Intrastate Mutual Aid Agreement for the County Emergency Response Program, for CBRNE (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive)/Hazardous Materials Incidents, with the State Department of Environmental Protection.

See Page 05/19/09-5F

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving final payment on County Bid #2006-31, for Alterations to the Deer Path Park Restrooms, with Hahr Construction, in the amount of \$8,890.

See Page 05/19/09-5G

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the entire Freeholder Board to execute a New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission Sticker Identification Card, in order to obtain diesel inspection stickers for vehicles.

See Page 05/19/09-5H

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving, upon the recommendation of the Cultural and Heritage Commission, the Local Arts Program grant awards, in the amount of \$74,134.

See Page 05/19/09-5I

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the appointment of Robert McGeary to the Social Services Advisory Board.

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON, MR. MELICK, MR. MENNEN.

PROCLAMATION

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 05/19/09-5J

PROCLAMATION

RESOLVED, Recognizing Christopher Wozniak for attaining the designation of Eagle Scout.

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. PETERSON, MR. MELICK, MR. MENNEN.

OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Yard informed the Board that additional information was received concerning the request for the placement of a Peace Pole at the Route 12 County Library Headquarters.

Director Mennen explained that at the last meeting, the Board discussed the placement of a Peace Pole at the Route 12 County Library Headquarters but additional information was asked to be provided by the Board.

Mark Titus, Director of the Library informed the Board that the requested police is 8' tall and would be placed in the friendship garden.

Mr. Peterson asked if there was a specific policy covering this type of request.

Mrs. Yard explained the County has a memorial policy that is used by the Parks and Recreation Department for memorial benches and trees but the County does not have anything specific to this type of request on County property. The research provided by Mr. Titus shows this is an international memorial.

Mr. Peterson wanted to make sure that there was nothing that could be taken as derogatory towards our troops. He does not have a problem with the request and advised he just wanted to see if the County had a policy in place before further action was taken.

Mrs. Yard recommended the County take a look at the memorial policy, which is in place, and determine if another section should be added to the policy that would address this type of request or items such as a statue that someone may want to erect on County property.

County Counsel DeSapio informed the Board there is nothing wrong with this particular request but the question would be for future Boards of Freeholders to consider approving or disapproving these types of requests without a policy in place. Mr. DeSapio recommended the Board put a policy in place for these types of request in the future.

After a brief discussion, the Board directed Mrs. Yard and County Counsel review the policy to determine if the County's policy covers these requests; and if not; then provide language to be added to the policy for the Board to consider at the next meeting. County Counsel DeSapio recommended seeing how other counties handle these types of requests and what they have in place concerning policies and procedures for these requests. Mr. DeSapio and Mrs. Yard will do some research, rough out some language and report back to the Board.

CORRESPONDENCE

A letter was received from Harry Kazman, Famous Trials Theater, Inc., for permission to use the Historic Court House, on various dates for practices and shows for the re-enactment of The Trial of the Century.

Mrs. Yard informed the Board that before the Board provides access to Mr. Kazman to the historic Court House, she needs to speak with him concerning when he will need the building and inform him of the charges associated with using the building. Mr. Kazman needs to provide specifics as to when he will be using the building for rehearsals. Mrs. Yard assured the Board that her office has already reserved the building for Mr. Kazman but he needs to contact the County's Buildings and Maintenance Director with the dates the building will be needed by him.

Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion granting approval to Harry Kazman of Famous Trials Theater, Inc., for use of the historic Court House, provided this is coordinated through the Office of Buildings and Maintenance and the County Administrator.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. MELICK, MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. PETERSON,
MR. MENNEN.**

A request was received from the Garden State Underwater Recovery Unit, for requesting permission to hold a coin toss on Saturday, May 30, 2009, from 8 am until 3 pm, at the Route 519 and Bridge Street Intersection, in Milford, New Jersey. Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Melick seconded a motion granting approval provided this event is coordinated through the County's Department of Roads, Bridges and Engineering.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. MELICK, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON,
MR. MENNEN.**

FREEHOLDERS COMMENTS and REPORTS

Auction

Mr. Sworen reported to the Board that the County Auction was held on Saturday, May 16, 2009 and it went very well. He noted that Somerset County had their auction as well. A good amount of items were sold and he recommended that for next year Hunterdon invite its municipalities to participate in order to have of a bigger sale or County-wide sale.

Mrs. Yard stated if municipalities were to participate they would need to provide some manpower to assist during the auction.

Stimulus meeting

Mr. Sworen attended the stimulus meeting yesterday and information was provided that lists all of the programs. The stimulus packages are sent to everyone and Hunterdon needs to look and see if there is anything we maybe eligible for. .

Justice Center/Courts/Furlough day

Mr. Melick advised it has been advertised in the newspapers that several state offices, including the courts, will be closed on Friday for a furlough day. He stated the County has personnel that works in the Justice Center such as individuals from the Sheriff's Office, and he would be willing to make a resolution to have the Sheriff change her staffing because if the Courts are not going to be there then they do not need to be guarded. He said he will offer a resolution that asks her to take appropriate action.

Mr. Melick moved and Director Mennen seconded a motion asking the Hunterdon County Sheriff to be cognitive of the fact that the State of New Jersey is having a mandatory furlough of all State personnel on Friday, May 22, 2009 and is asking her to take action in not having staff at the Justice Center that does not need to be there.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. MELICK, MR. MENNEN, MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN,
MR. PETERSON.**

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Director Mennen opened the meeting to the public.

2 Lane Bridge/Whitebridge Road/Franklin Township

Dan Campanelli from Quakertown, came before the Board concerning the proposed two lane bridge on White Bridge Road, in Franklin Township. He stated some people in the Township have brought up a petition to not have a two lane bridge built in the township, to replace the one lane bridge. So far, they have collected over 275 signatures so far, and the petition is still continuing to receive signatures. The residents want the County to turn down any federal funds that would be received to build the two lane bridge as the residents want the one lane bridge restored. Mr. Campanelli stated the residents want the County to find their own resources to restore the bridge as is or just replace the one lane bridge and not make it a two lane bridge. He then gave County Counsel DeSapio the petition to review and County Counsel gave the petition to the Clerk of the Board, Denise Doolan.

Richard Cavallaro, also from Quakertown in Franklin Township, stated he agreed Mr. Campanelli stated. He explained he moved to Pittstown from Basking Ridge and finds Pittstown to be a terrific place because of the rural nature. He realizes some people may look at a two lane bridge as progress but he does not. Hundreds of the residents in Franklin Township do not feel this is the progress they are looking for. Mr. Cavallaro advised he spoke to an engineer and was told that the bridge does need to be repaired. He stated this is still the United States and the government is by and for the people. Certainly with hundreds of people being against the bridge becoming two lanes, the governing body would not force that bridge onto the residents of Pittstown and Franklin as it is not by and for the people.

Mr. Cavallaro said he does not know exactly what the next step is so he turns to the Board to see if there is anything else that can be done to make everyone happy.

Director Mennen informed those present that the County had a similar situation in East Amwell Township concerning a bridge, and he and the Director of Roads, Bridges and Engineering, John Glynn, and the County's Engineer met to work on this with the Township and the residents of East Amwell. They met a few times and had the opportunity to come to a better understanding of each side's feelings and concerns and the end result was the direction that everyone agreed on. Director Mennen advised he has toured the area in question and is aware of the concerns; he has also spoken with Mr. Glynn earlier this afternoon and suggested the concept of everyone sitting down and discussing the concerns before anything further happens. This way there can be a discussion on the concerns of both sides.

Director Mennen thanked Mr. Cavallaro and Mr. Campanelli for coming forward to share their concerns with the Board of Chosen Freeholders. He is sure that they have great ideas and that something can be worked on and accomplished.

John, a four year resident of Pittstown stated that at a Franklin Township committee meeting, Mr. Peterson suggested the same thing as Director Mennen had just suggested. The concern is that in 1999 when this bridge was closed there was a public outcry and many residents stated it was okay to replace the bridge. In the last four years he was not aware that this was going on until April 2, 2009 at a County meeting to discuss not whether or not to put in a two lane bridge; the question is the design of the two lane bridge. He feels a huge amount of steps had been missed so now there is a public outcry at the public meeting. There was another meeting when the public came out and supported that the community did not want the two lane bridge and at a meeting last week that same voice was present again as you are hearing today regarding not wanting this two lane bridge which is why members of the community are going out to get signatures for the petition. This resident said if the Freeholders are not going to support the public that has the public outcry, and then who are the Freeholders' representing for the two lane bridge. He feels there could be more problems with a two lane bridge regarding traffic control. He stated he grew up in Middlesex County, was married in Middlesex County and when he grew up there were three farms behind his house and before they developed property there they built the roads wider and before the farmers sold their buildings they had already built up strip malls and other buildings. The area he lives in is a rural area and it is one of the last places in New Jersey where you can go for this type of atmosphere. The growth may not be immediate, it could happen in 5 to 10 years but it will happen. We have all seen it happen and it is ugly. The public is pouring their hearts out because they only want a one lane bridge so if the public is not being represented; then who is being represented on this perspective. He understands federal money is great but if the public outcry is there then why can't you vote and put the money in a piggy bank and use the money the following year and act on what the public is asking for and only put in a one lane bridge.

Mr. Sworen explained this Board has looked at a lot of plans and moved through the process; this Board has reviewed what is recommended and the plans have been changed many times. At certain times what has to be done needs to be done. If it comes down to needing to have a meeting then we will have a meeting. This Board is trying to listen to what everybody has to say and to try to do a better job of reaching everyone's needs and concerns. The first step would be to hold a meeting.

Director Mennen advised this is a work in progress and it worked well in East Amwell with their project. It is good when the two groups sit down together and discuss all the concerns. In East Amwell items were changed based on that meeting. He asked everyone to bare in mind the County is looking to the Township to be involved in a meeting and for members of the Township to be involved. It is not for the Freeholders to decide who attends the meeting, but for the Township to decide who they want to represent their municipality.

Mr. Campanelli stated he spoke with Mr. Glynn this he was told that two lane bridges would be put in whether they like it or not. Why attend a meeting if this isn't going to be discussed.

Mr. Holt explained the reason a subcommittee is important, so that research can be done. The point of a subcommittee is to gather information and then bring it back to this Board so that all the options can be heard before making a decision. There is no movement on the project until this Board is provided with all of the information.

Mr. Cavallaro stated that Franklin Township's Mayor and the people had put together a group and he is unaware of the people who were picked to be a part of it. He does not know if people who had concerns were on the Mayor's group.

Mr. Holt stated he believes when Director Mennen sent out a letter recommending Franklin Township form a committee, the Township was asked to get members that supported as well as do not support the action being taken.

Mr. Peterson stated we will have a discussion of what our options are and then to see what can be done. He had suggested this about a month ago, the same exact idea. To get a group of people who were at the meeting that night in Franklin Township and two freeholders. He thought that if everyone sat and went through the project that everyone would have an opportunity to voice all their concerns and then the Board could move forward with a decision. Mr. Peterson said he would like to find an option that works for everybody.

It was said that the Mayor of Franklin Township stated the public needs to be involved because there are very strong feelings on this issue and they need to be heard. One of the biggest concerns he heard from the towns' people was the traffic issue with children that are playing in the area. There are safety concerns for the children. The County called a meeting for the residents to speak about the traffic issues that were taking place on the road. As long as the bridge is restored the Township would like to see that done to make the residents of the area happy. The Township is actively working on getting a 5 ton weight restriction on the bridge. They are drafting an ordinance to have that taken care of. He stated that regarding the letter that was sent to the Township from the Board, they would like to work directly with the residents of the area to make sure their concerns are handled and things are done that will please them.

Freeholder Candidate/Bonding

Jennifer McClurg, Freeholder Candidate came before the Board to ask about bonds and if there was a County policy regarding bonding.

Director Mennen informed Ms. McClurg that the County has a Bond Counsel and while the County does not utilize Bond Counsel often, they do more than just board issues.

Ms. McClurg stated she does not want the County to bond anything.

Mr. Melick stated that it has been a long time since the County has bonded for anything. The County pays as it goes for projects.

Mr. Holt thinks there may be some miscommunication and confirmed the County of Hunterdon has entered into but has not bonded. This Board is very conservative, and saves money when it can. This Board may put up for a bond ordinance but then pays for the project and cancels the ordinance. Projects are done and items are paid for.

Mr. Melick stated he has lived in the County a number of years and recalls one time the County was in debt, in the 1930's when the depression was, and it was troublesome. For a very long time now, every Freeholder that has come into this office, has not had any debt and did not create debt. The Freeholder Board has worked hard not to create debt and this Board is continuing to do a prudent job.

Mr. Melick informed Ms. McClurg that the Justice Center cost \$17 million dollars, and he believes it was a very worthwhile expenditure and he thanked County Counsel DeSapio because he assisted in getting things done right and keeping the project on track, along with the County's professionals. Ultimately the Freeholders are responsible, and have to sell the argument to the voters whether a project is necessary or not. In addition, this Board tries to accommodate the voters by holding its public hearings at an appropriate time when it is easier for them to attend the meetings. This Board is not trying to pass anything through; this Board is forthright in trying to do what is best for the County and its residents. He explained that sometimes things do wear out and there is a process to determine if and why it will be replaced.

Ms. McClurg brought up a resolution by Mike Dougherty, who is running for a spot in the New Jersey Senate. Mr. Melick does not feel that Mr. Dougherty's resolution goes far enough in his own home County and this Board chose not to support it. He stated there are two sides to everything as he sees it and this Board in Hunterdon has to be accountable for what it does, and it has to be responsible.

There being no further comments from the public, Director Mennen recessed the meeting at 6:54 p.m. and reconvened in Open session at 7:05 p.m.

FINANCE

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 05/19/09-9A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the Budget be read by title only.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON, MR. MELICK,
MR. MENNEN.**

Director Mennen opened the public hearing on the County Budget for 2000.

There being no comments or questions from the press or public, Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Holt seconded to close the Public Hearing.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. MELICK, MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON,
MR. MENNEN.**

Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 05/19/09-9B

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the adoption of the County Budget for 2009.

Director Mennen advised this year's budget was a very long process and he wanted to formally thank the County's Finance Director, Kim Browne; the County Treasurer, Margaret Pasqua; the County Administrator, Cynthia J. Yard and the Human Resources Director, Cheryl A. Wieder for all their hard work. This has been a long effort that is represented by more than just the five members of the Board of Chosen Freeholders. Director Mennen stated it has been reported that there is some tension on this Board because of the budget and he wanted to make it clear that this was a long process and he is going to choose to focus on the fact that there is unity among this Board.

Mr. Sworen added that the Freeholders have an obligation to the County's taxpayers and the Freeholders have a responsibility to support what is necessary in the County. He noted that while he does not agree with the tax increase it is necessary. The Freeholders are here to here to make a difference that will close the gap.

Mr. Sworen stated this Board is going to make the budget better at the beginning of the year and throughout the year. This Board has a responsibility to move forward and make sure that the County's managers reduce this budgets and that they keep moving in that direction.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. MELICK, MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN.
(NAYS) MR. PETERSON, MR. MENNEN.**

Mr. Melick explained to those present, that the reason he voted for the budget is because of the whole process which took place and stated he appreciates everybody's help in getting this accomplished. It has been his experience when the Board goes through this process that it has the best intentions to cut items from the budget; however, there are things the County wants to save on which turns out to be very hard to achieve those savings during the year.

Mr. Melick continued by saying he expect this Board to hold things in place. The County's surplus has gone down a little bit, even though the Freeholder's put money back into the surplus. Last year the County probably had the same with the tax rate, but it is going to be hard in looking forward to next year with the ratable base the way it is. The question is where the ratable base going; it appears to be shrinking, so the County is going to have even less to work with next year.

Mr. Melick advised he has been involved in putting budgets together since 1964; the surplus is like a household savings account, you need to have money in order for it to work. The County has surplus, so it doesn't need to go and sell bonds for projects; the surplus can be used as a tool. He understands it is necessary for all of the County's departments to have tools to work with; such as the courts need to have the Court House; the Road Department needs snow plows; and the Finance Department needs to have wiggle room in order to have a smooth transition from one year to the next. The County's surplus has gone down and the Freeholders are only putting back a small amount. Mr. Melick stated he hopes that this Board can make things works with this budget and that a surplus can be created for next year.

Mr. Melick stated he voted for this budget so the County can have a surplus and a little wiggle room because he predicts the County's ratable will shrink even more than it did this past year. He thanked those that voted for it this budget this year, saying the County has a lot of people in departments that depend on our services and he certainly does not want to model Hunterdon after Morris County. He feels that Hunterdon is ahead of them.

Mr. Peterson also thanked those that worked so hard on the budget; saying he had purposed cuts in certain areas instead of raising taxes. If it weren't for all the hard work from these individuals, the budget would not be at this stage. This Board can't predict what the surplus will be for next year, maybe \$29 million, which is not high. The budget is well capitalized and surplus is there but and it may increase the County's tax levy. He feels there will be some tax relief and that the surplus has a purpose. Mr. Peterson stated he respected Mr. Melick's thoughts and opinions, but added that he wants to look at a different way to get a tax decrease.

Mr. Melick advised he hopes the County can begin to work on savings immediately for next year. Things need to be put in place and adhered to in order to save money, such as the hiring freeze. The County's problem is its labor contracts because they all need to be negotiated, and that is something that can't be done over night. The County needs to make a commitment to try to build its finances back up.

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 05/19/09-10A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the amount to be raised by taxation for the County's Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. PETERSON, MR. MELICK
MR. MENNEN**

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 05/19/09-10B

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the amount to be raised by taxation for support of the Operating Budget for the County Library.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. PETERSON, MR. MELICK
MR. MENNEN**

Mrs. Yard wanted to express also that this is the first budget prepared by Kim Browne, the County's Finance Director and Margaret Pasqua, the County's Treasurer, and thinks they did a wonderful job. She wanted to offer congratulations.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Director Mennen adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Denise B. Doolan
Clerk of the Board**