

HUNTERDON COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

Main Street County Complex, 2nd Floor
Flemington, New Jersey 08822

September 01, 2009

The regular meeting of the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders convened at 3:12 p.m. in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

PRESENT: MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK, MR. HOLT, 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 August 21, 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."

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Discussions on the 2010 Budget

Kim Browne, Finance Director, Margaret Pasqua, County Treasurer, Cheryl Wieder, Human Resources Director and Cynthia J. Yard, County Administrator came before the Board

Director Mennen advised the stated purpose of this early session is to continue budget discussions. Copies of the 2010 Budget Reaffirmation were made available to the press and public. Director Mennen explained this is a recitation of pronouncements, determinations, decisions, policy statements and directions that have been given by this Board during the course of the last six to nine months. The purpose for reaffirmation now is because this is moving into the next phase which is the 2010 budget cycle; the purpose today is two fold, (1) to achieve the objective which was stated in the Emergency Policy adopted unanimously by this Board in April 2009, which is a flat tax rate for 2010 and (2) to provide direction to staff so they can provide direction to departmental managers in the preparation of their budgetary requests. This is so no one has any false expectations or understandings in the direction and so that guidance from this Board is clear.

Mrs. Yard informed the Board there are 24 priorities listed; it started with 18 priorities/further study items which the Board selected and all told there were 34; and these 24 are seeking further direction to continue with the objective. Director Mennen stated they are for further direction or reaffirmation to confirm the policy direction of this body so they can be clearly enumerated to departmental managers for their preparation of their budgetary requests.

Director Mennen questioned if the Board would like to affirm these items as a group or talk about them individually or pull key items that may require further discussion.

Mr. Sworen feels before this discussion can take place, information is needed. This Board has worked very hard to come up with lists and ideas and a number of things have been implemented and while the Board is not blindly going into the future but before he can make a final determination on something, he would like to know where we are. He has nothing in front of him that shows, financially, where the County is today with all the expenditures versus budget.

Mrs. Yard informed Mr. Sworen that the Freeholders were given that piece of paper, which is dated July 21, 2009 and the numbers have not changed; that was in the last meeting's agenda packet. That information has not been updated.

Mr. Sworen said the numbers need to be updated in order to come up with where the County is today. A plan was set with x-number of dollars and a budget was set and processes were put in place to do things differently to reduce that costs. The key is to see where the County is with those pieces and if the County is on track this year or ahead of track and compare it to last year's numbers and the previous year.

Mr. Sworen thinks the process here is there is a budget and at this point, the County should be at a certain part of the budget and he would like to know where that is. What is being done today is important so the Board can see if some of the items on the list need to be trimmed more now or if further discussion is needed or if the County is in a good place. It is important for the Board to know this information versus making statements.

Mrs. Yard recalls Mr. Sworen saying at the last meeting that the Board doesn't need to hold a lot meetings; the Board just needs to reaffirm what the Board is doing. Mr. Sworen agreed saying that is what this list does. The Board puts these plans in place and it is important to see if they are working.

Mrs. Browne stated that most departments at this time are under their budget numbers but there are a few concerns.

Director Mennen asked Mr. Sworen if an update would enable him to better give direction to department managers in terms of the parameters for their submissions for budgetary requests. Mr. Sworen thinks it will help fine tune it, but he also thinks this Board needs to know where the County is on a regular basis, so if things are not what the Board feels they should be, the Board can take additional action.

Mr. Melick stated the Finance Director and County Treasurer has stated that the County is on track with the Budget. Mrs. Browne advised sometimes it is difficult to gauge because some departments spend heavily in the later part of the year. Mrs. Pasqua informed the Board that if the Finance Department looks at something and is concerned, it is brought to the attention of the County Administrator and the Board.

Mrs. Yard stated the resolutions adopted by the Board of Freeholders created a timeline which says when people have to have things done. As an example, it is known that the Transportation Committee must have a report to the Board which will identify recommendations to make the services more affordable.

Mr. Sworen asked if that means he can't ask this question. He told Mrs. Yard she is going in the wrong direction.

Mrs. Yard stated the Board's direction was followed. Mr. Sworen said he knows but he's making a statement that he feels this information is important and he would like to see it on a monthly basis to show the Board where the County is. He wants to see the financial side of this.

Director Mennen asked the County Treasurer when the full report will be done for the month of August. He realizes that today is only the first of September. Mrs. Pasqua will get that information updated and get copies to the Board.

Mr. Holt stated Director Mennen advised there are 24 items before the Board for consideration. He asked what the goal to be accomplished today.

Director Mennen explained the idea is to have the Board reaffirm of these items. These are items the Board has already done. This is an attempt to reaffirm action that has already been taken, by in large, there maybe one or two items that is not a reaffirmation, so that this Board can provide clear direction to the County Administrator, so that at her Administrative Meeting, can provide clear direction to Department Managers which was done last year; Department Managers were told not to ask for new cars or anything, so they can clearly know that in the formation of their budgetary requests for the 2010 budget cycle what is an acceptable parameter and what isn't.

Director Mennen stated that on April 14, 2009, this Board unanimously adopted a policy which had a clearly stated objective, which was the maintenance of a flat tax rate for budget year 2010. By reaffirming and initiating certain policy statements, pronouncements, decisions and direction, in the spirit of and furtherance of advancing that objective.

Director Mennen recommended the Board concerning #9 of the objective items, which the Board has danced around for the better part of six to nine months. This is a precautionary measure to begin the necessary protocol with the New Jersey Civil Service Commission to include furloughs and/or layoffs as a last measure to achieve a flat tax rate. The recommendation is to authorize the Human Services Director, Cheryl Wieder, and whomever else Ms. Wieder needs to work with, to start putting together a plan that would allow them to interface with Civil Service. Director Mennen anticipates such a plan be general in nature as opposed to department specific.

Mr. Sworen informed the Board that the ruling came down this morning and this can't be done that way anymore. The only way furloughs can be done, is you would need to furlough an entire department or an entire group. Director Mennen advised if the County were to furlough, it would be the entire County workforce. He asked the Human Resources Director to look into this and report back to the Board but in the meantime, he asked that the changes be assimilate the changes in the law and put that into the framework of a plan. This Board put in the initial policy statement saying it is an acceptable strategy to look at layoffs and furloughs, and this needs to be taken to the next step because if this is going to be used as a budgetary tool in 2010, it needs to be in place by the time the budget is adopted. Mr. Sworen stated Director Mennen is correct. Mr. Sworen did not want a false expectation set because the rules have changed.

Mr. Melick moved and Director Mennen seconded that Item #9 (precautionary measure to begin the necessary protocol with the Civil Service Commission to include furloughs and/or layoffs as a last measure to achieve a flat tax rate) be approved by this Board so that the work can begin through the Human Resources Department.

Mr. Melick said the Board needs to consider what the rateable base is doing. He questioned if anyone on the Board does not want to achieve a flat tax rate for next year. There was no response.

Mr. Holt confirmed Mr. Melick is asking Human Resources to come back in two weeks with the details and a plan for action for the Board to consider.

Director Mennen stated if the Board wants a Furlough Plan to be a constructive part of the budget next year, this is a process that is out of our hands, concerning the timeline. The process must be started now. This does not necessarily mean that the County has to follow through on this but ultimately; but this will keep it as a viable strategy that can be used.

Mr. Melick moved and Director Mennen seconded this:

See Page 09/01/09-3A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the Human Resources Director to work with the New Jersey Commission of Civil Service on a Furlough Plan for the County of Hunterdon.

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

Items #1, 2, 4, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 21 and 22 were pulled from the 2010 Budget Reaffirmations for further discussion.

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Melick seconded a motion to approve Item #3, to continue to evaluate all trusts and where appropriate, offset respective budgets.

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

Mr. Sworen said regarding Item #4, (Restrictions on food/beverages, memberships, subscriptions to periodicals, meetings, training, education and conferences), he would like to see in the next budget cycle, this Board place an amount in every department's budget for periodicals, memberships, conferences and such, that is an acceptable level. He feels that the Board is now paying \$400 to not pay for a \$25 magazine subscription because Mrs. Yard's time is valuable and she spends hours writing letters and reviewing these requests. The Board should set limits and when a department exceeds those limits they would come before the Board. Director Mennen agreed and stated the current limit is zero.

Mr. Holt confirmed Mr. Sworen would like to re-evaluate for next year the line items in various departments and incorporate something greater than zero recognizing that there is a value to Training, Education, Conferences, and subscriptions.

Mrs. Yard advised the limit is not zero, because if someone needs C.E.U's or a license or a credential, a person can attend a conference or a trip in state and get these requirements but there are no international memberships. Director Mennen agreed the County has a clearly worded policy statement which sets out criteria but Mr. Sworen is also right, it is a glaring waste of time to spend hours either by this Board or staff time talking about a \$25 subscription. If this Board were unified in its pronouncement that the answer is no, the policy is the policy; he feels there would be far less attempts to skirt the policy. Director Mennen and Mr. Melick recommended the policy stand firm at zero.

Mrs. Yard explained there was \$50,000 spent a year on periodicals/newspapers, etc. and they looked at that since the County is looking at ways to cut the budget. They did not just look at subscriptions to the Hunterdon County Democrat, it was the totality of someone having two subscriptions to a magazine and someone else has an international subscription. Mr. Sworen agreed but said there are subscriptions and memberships that are valuable and the managers need to inform the Board what is appropriate, and that's all they get. A department may not need five subscriptions but one may be useful. In his mind, this County has very highly paid, well qualified managers who can make the decisions on these small items. If this Board questions a manager's capability, then that is something the County Administrator should be doing and bringing back to the Board.

Director Mennen questioned how direction would be given to a manager creating a budgetary request of that sentiment. Mr. Sworen stated they would come to the Board as part of the budget process with that request; knowing that this Board will keep it as minimal as possible. Director Mennen stated that would contradict this Board's policy.

Mrs. Yard explained the County drew up this policy because while our Department Managers are great, and ask for what they think they need, there needs to be parameters.

Mr. Sworen stated he would like to discuss this issue again, next year, during budget times.

Mr. Holt thinks this Board can adopt/reaffirm this language and if Mr. Sworen wants to take a look at the policy and present to the Board a policy which still contains restrictions, he can. Mr. Sworen may want to have the policy modified or changed in 2010.

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion to reaffirm Item #4, to continue restrictions of the policy for food/beverages, memberships, subscriptions to periodicals, meetings, training, education and conferences. It was noted that Mr. Sworen is open to revisiting this policy in 2010 budget sessions.

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

Mr. Holt advised Item #1, the continuation of the full hiring freeze and Item #2, the continuation of the moratorium on promotions, new positions and re-classifications, has language which allows for consideration by the Board should a department head make such a request. Mr. Holt added that essential services have been added to those two items.

Mr. Melick would like department managers to look within their departments on how people can be shifted around, should a vacancy occur, in order to get urgent jobs done; that is permitted under Civil Service Rules and Regulations.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion reaffirming Items 1 and 2 concerning personnel services.

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

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to reaffirm Item #5 - realize a ten percent on County dollars required to operate and maintain the County Fleet; Item #6 – Realize the identified cost savings as a result of the Phone Committee's recommendations for cost-savings; and Item #7 – to reaffirm the County Transportation Services review and adjustments for cost savings.

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

Mr. Sworen explained he pulled Item #8 (realize savings from the Health Benefits Analysis, carving out prescription services, educating/evaluating health plans with no diminution of services) because it does not have items the Board talked about such as coming up with a valid offer for people to not take medical insurance. Ms. Wieder informed Mr. Sworen that, that issue will be a part of negotiations with the unions. Mr. Sworen stated if the County has two people that work for the County who are married; it would be cheaper for the County if they both had their own insurance as there is a \$2,000 penalty for married couples. The cost is around \$58 for a single person and \$1,300 for a married couple. Ms. Wieder does not recall people having overlapping coverage; most people have their own single policies. Mr. Sworen stated this needs to be offered to employees because it can save the County money.

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Melick seconded a motion to reaffirm Item #8 for the 2010 Budget concerning Health Benefits.

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

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to reaffirm Item #10 for the 2010 Budget for the return of the five percent reserve re-allocated in the 2009 Budget to appropriate line items and re-appropriate as necessary.

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

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion to reaffirm Item #11, for the continued suspension of Vacation Buy-Back for unclassified personnel.

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

Mr. Holt informed the Board that concerning Item #12, regarding fee schedules/charges for County Services, that in 2008 the County Health Department asked to update its fees and in 2009 the Roads and Bridges Department asked to update their charges. Mr. Holt would like to see those requests back on the Board's agenda for consideration. Mrs. Yard advised this was listed because a statement was made to revisit these requests. Mr. Holt would like to see adoption of these updated fees/charges this year.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to reaffirm Item #12, to establish a regular schedule to review fees/fares/charges for County services; including fees for Shared Services that are not intended to generate revenue but to offset the costs for the County to provide such services.

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

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to task the Sustainable Green Committee to recommend and establish a tracking system to measure savings, thus reaffirming Item #13. Mrs. Yard confirmed with Mr. Holt that the Sustainable Green Committee has met and is a recognized committee.

Mr. Holt asked if this committee has teeth since it is not an official committee of Hunterdon County, even though it has a name. Mr. Holt recognized the Transportation Committee is the same. Mrs. Yard stated they were charged, whether they have teeth or not, to get recommendations back to the Freeholder Board as a result of the citizens and the staff's recommendations to save money.

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

Director Mennen questioned the Board if further discussion is needed concerning Item #14, which is to determine the direction for managers to follow with regard to budget reductions and if the criteria is actual versus budgeted (including overtime).

Mr. Sworen feels the direction should be that department managers should be told that the budget will remain flat; the hiring freeze remains; they should save money everywhere they can and don't plan on something that is out of line for next year.

Director Mennen thinks this Board should consider asking department managers again to find 5% to reduce their budgets this year. He realizes they were asked to find 10% last year, but feels 5% could be done this year. A flaw was found in the exercise from last year, in that department managers were cutting off of budgeted numbers as opposed to actual expenditure numbers.

After further discussion, Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Mennen seconded a motion reaffirming Item #14, asking department managers to do 5% off of what was spent in their 2009 Operating budgets.

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

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion to reaffirm Item #15, to evaluate the Human Services reserve and provide direction to the Human Services Manager on the amount to be reduced (if any) in the Provider Service agreements; direct Human Services, Finance and the County Administrator for planning proposals directing Human Services to communicate a ten percent reduction for 2010.

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

Mrs. Yard stated it is very important to get these reaffirmations out to the department managers, to give them guidance.

Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to reaffirm Item #16, to communicate to Raritan Valley Community College, Polytech and any other outside agencies that they are to develop their request to the County to be consistent with the governing body's budget decision; Item #17, reaffirming that the frequency/distribution method of the Parks and Recreation newsletter, the Harbinger, was modified in 2009 with instructions to the Parks and Recreation Department to evaluate other methods of distributing this information; this evaluation should be pursued.

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

Mr. Sworen questioned Item #18, which is a resolution to conduct a cost analysis of the Interlocal Agreements between municipalities and the Health Department in order to offset costs to the County for providing services. The County Administrator will rework the resolution for the Board to take action on later in the meeting.

Mrs. Yard explained Item #19, which is the determination by the governing body of the budget modifications made to the Constitutional Officers budgets so that those appointing authorities can begin to develop strategies to operate within established budgets. Mrs. Yard advised as the Freeholders agreed to have Human Resources develop a draft of a plan to the State Civil Service Commission, in order to enact a temporary or a full layoff; the County has that ability in all areas except for the Constitutional Officers who are their own appointing authorities. If the Freeholders decide to reduce the budget by a certain amount, then the Constitutional Officers have to deal with the Civil Service Commission to examine their strategies if they are required to reduce the budget. Mr. Holt confirmed the Freeholders control that item simply by controlling the budget. Mr. Sworen confirmed the Constitutional Officers have already been told to be prepared to cut their budgets by an additional five percent.

Director Mennen explained the Constitutional Officers are their own appointing authorities. The Freeholders have control over County policy and budgetary allotment. The Freeholders set the budget and the Constitutional Officer determines, within guidelines, the appropriate salary and staffing levels that meet with that budgetary allotment. This item asks if the Freeholders wish to entertain a discussion with regard to budgetary allotment to Constitutional Officers which could affect how they staff their offices, and if so, the Board should do so now as a courtesy to the Constitutional Officers so they have the ability to react and plan.

Mr. Sworen stated if that is what is being attempted; then it should be precisely/correctly put into a statement.

Director Mennen explained to Mr. Sworen that the resolution which the Board did not get to at the last meeting, the operative paragraph reads and this one deals with the County Clerk since the Board had elongated discussions about volume of work in that department and trends over the last couple of years: "The Board of Chosen Freeholders requests the County Clerk in recognition of the above (which is all the whereas paragraphs) and in recognition of the decline in transactions processed by her office to prepare a plan in her capacity as the appointment authority for her office to continue operations while accepting a reduced salary and wage allotment in the 2010 budget."

Mr. Sworen stated that is only for one Constitutional Officer out of the three the County has.

Mr. Holt confirmed with Ms. Wieder that within each Constitutional Office, except for the Surrogate's Court, the employees are covered under a union contract. Ms. Wieder advised that the State Department of Personnel says that each appointing authority has the right to decide whether or not they want to implement a plan like the County's; the County's plan will not cover them.

Mr. DeSapio recalls Freeholder Holt had made a suggestion about meeting with the Constitutional Officers to deal with the issue of the trust funds and those discussions dealt with saving costs; so the Freeholder Board may want to establish a committee of two Freeholders to sit with the Constitutional Officers and talk specifics before the County adopts its project. If the Board were to have a meeting or two with the Constitutional Officers to explain the County's budget problem and ask them to help solve it and point out areas where they can help address the problem and ask if they can do it.

Mr. Holt recommended the meetings take place with the Constitutional Officers and inform them what the County is doing and recommend they do the same with their offices. Then it was done in a fashion that respects their offices and elected positions.

Director Mennen agreed and suggested the Board wait and see what the outline is of the plan that Ms. Wieder will present in two weeks in order for this Board to be consistent.

Mr. Holt volunteered to meet with the Constitutional Officers with Director Mennen to discuss a plan for the County. Director Mennen confirmed this Board agrees to ask the Constitutional Officers to participate in kind with the manner/plan which the County is developing to address the salary and wage issue.

Director Mennen confirmed Mr. Sworen has now reviewed the resolution for Item #18 for the Interlocal agreements with the municipalities for Health related services.

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 09/01/09-6A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving a resolution to conduct a cost analysis of the Interlocal Agreements between municipalities and the Health Department in order to offset costs to the County for providing health related services.

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

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion to reaffirm Item #20, the County's grant protocol that when a grant award is reduced or eliminated, the governing body will consider this discretionary service and the funding by County dollars.

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

The Board discussed Item #21, the 2010 free Concert Series through Parks and Recreation. Mr. Sworen advised the Parks staff did collect over \$1,100 in donations towards the concerts. There are some legal issues involved in charging per vehicle and such. One of the issues is the people who park vehicles are volunteers so the County would have to develop a policy/protocol on who is allowed to take money. One of the problems is that the rangers do not park vehicles; affiliated groups with the County park vehicles so it is all volunteers that park cars. John Trontis, Parks and Recreation Director advised one Park Ranger oversees this to make sure it is done safely.

Director Mennen recommended having fewer concerts. Mr. Trontis advised one concert was cut this year and more could be cut. Mrs. Yard advised there could be the same number of concert for the same amount of dollars using cheaper acts. Mr. Sworen said that was done.

Mr. Sworen would like this issue held in order to come up with more recommendations to be brought back to the Board. Director Mennen asked Mr. Trontis to report back to the Board in two weeks if there is a mechanism for the rangers to collect funds and research that with County Counsel DeSapio.

Mr. Holt expressed concern regarding Item #22, to determine a dollar amount to be placed in the 2010 Health Department Operating Budget for Public Health Nursing, because the Health Director is not present. He questioned what this is doing in this list.

Director Mennen advised it is anticipated giving direction in the course of contract negotiations so they know the degree to which they can encumber. Mr. Holt advised the Board the Department should be brought here, as any other department would be brought in to discuss this. He wants this removed in order to deal with it, with the department head in the room in order to get hard numbers and facts and figures over what is needed.

Director Mennen explained he has spent hours with the Health Director over the course of the last six months and heard each month that it could not be done and for \$500,000 the program has been operating. He recommended giving the HMC Public Health Nursing the direction that the same number will be used for 2010. Mr. Holt stated he would accept the language that the funding be no less than it was for 2009.

Director Mennen said the County has a track record and has shown that this service can be done at this reduced figure. He recommended that HMC be told the amount will not be higher than it was this year and they should assume the same figure. Mr. Holt will agree as long as the figure is not lower. He noted that the HMC has been doing this service under that dollar amount for four months. He would like the department to be allowed to be present.

Director Mennen advised this is a contract with the Hunterdon Medical Center for public health nursing and education services, it is not a department budget. The County is party to a contract and this Board has the ability to control how much we choose to contract and how much we choose to bring in-house. If this Board wanted to supplement the contract we could tell them the amount is \$200,000. He asked why it is inappropriate to say what the contract amount should be. Mr. Holt said it isn't appropriate not to have the department here to represent what is going on.

Mrs. Yard apologized if Item 22 was written the wrong way. This was not only for reaffirmation but directions to department managers so they could start to plan their budgets.

Mr. Sworen said the crux is that words have meaning, words are powerful. The words that have been written are perhaps the incorrect words. Mrs. Yard took exception to that. She knows how to speak and how to write. Mr. Sworen said the word "determine" is saying that this body is determining here and now the dollar amount. Director Mennen said the Board is and that is this Body's function to determine the amount of money to be contracted. It does not have to be done today but that is this Board's function and anyone who wants to shirk that responsibility is going down the wrong road. Any suggestion that this should be opened up and let someone else tell us the cost, which is what has been done with this contract, is wrong. Mr. Sworen said he does not disagree on that. He doesn't know what the cost for public health nursing should be for next year, it could be more or it could be less. He can't make that determination today but he can tell the department head not to expect an increase in that budget item. He does not feel that dollar amount will be determined today.

The Board held items #22 and 23 at this time.

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Melick seconded a motion to reaffirm Item #24, to determine and convey to department managers acceptable Capital Budget requests to be based on documented need and ability to complete the work to be done. Director Mennen stated last year the Board directed that equipment requests should only be if it is needed/broken not wanted, and no vehicle requests.

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

Director Mennen confirmed with Mrs. Yard that Freeholder Peterson is aware of the time the meeting started today. Mrs. Yard stated that Denise Doolan, Freeholder Board Clerk, exchanged emails with Freeholder Peterson and informed him the meeting started at 2:00 p.m. today.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Melick seconded these:

See Page 09/01/09-7A RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Executive Session to review the executive session minutes of June 02, 2009, June 16, 2009, July 21, 2009, August 04, 2009 and August 14, 2009.

See Page 09/01/09-7B RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Executive Session to update the Board on a pending personnel investigation.

See Page 09/01/09-7C RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Executive Session to discuss negotiations with the CWA Bargaining Unit.

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

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 09/01/09-7D RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Executive Session to discuss the matter of Hunterdon County versus Melick LLC concerning road improvements for County Route 517/523.

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

The Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders went into Executive Session at 3:35 p.m. and reconvened in Open Session at 5:04 p.m.

H1N1 Update

Mr. Holt reported to the Board that on CNN the other day, they reported that over the course of the summer there were 800,000 cases of swine flu in New York City but because of the time of year and the strain being subdued in summer months, it was similar to a standard flu.

Mr. Holt reported he and Mr. Sworen, two weeks ago, had the opportunity to spend time with John Beckley, Health Director and Ms. Rose Poulle, to get updated on what would be presented today. This year will be a challenge in that there will be the standard flu season and at the same time the swine flu will co-circulate with that. The standard flu tends to affect one segment of the population and the swine flu tends to affect a different segment of the population.

Mr. Peterson came into the meeting at 4:11 p.m.

Mr. Holt advised the swine flu vaccine with start to be delivered in mid-October and it will come in phases.

Ms. Poulle provided the 2009 Influenza Season Update:

2009-2010 Influenza Season – Unique Public Health Challenges

- Seasonal influenza will co-circulate with the novel H1N1 “swine” flu
- Both types of influenza cause illness and death and are unpredictable
- Vaccine for swine flu is not available until mid-October so there is high potential for widespread illness
- These different influenza strains impact different categories of individuals
- Widespread illness would add stress to already difficult economic conditions
- This situation is being considered a public health event

Planning for a Public Health Event

- Over 50 people involved in the planning efforts to date
- Across agencies and disciplines (primary care physicians, public health specialists, school nurses, school superintendents, daycare administrators, law enforcement, EMS, OEM, business, public information, occupational health, information technology, infection control, hospital)
- 6 Task Forces
 - Public/Private Healthcare Partnerships
 - School/Childcare Communities Vaccination Program
 - Vaccination Clinics Operations and Logistics
 - Vaccine Storage, Inventory, Distribution and Tracking
 - Healthcare Workers/First Responders Vaccination Program
 - Public Information and Health Education

NOTE: These plans are event driven and subject to change.

Priority – Providing Swine (novel H1N1) Flu Vaccine (voluntary vaccination) to Populations Identified in CDC Recommendations

- Pregnant women
- Household contacts and caregivers for infants younger than 6 months old
- Healthcare workers/emergency medical services
- People 6 months to 24 years of age
- Individuals 25 to 64 years of age with specified medical condition

Primary Care Private Practices

- Pregnant women
- Children 6 months to 10 yrs. of age
- Individuals with medical conditions

Public Health Sponsored Clinics

- Children/students ages 10 to 24 yrs. old
- First Responders associated with patient care

Hunterdon Medical Center Occupational Health

- Hospital employees
- Hunterdon Healthcare system associated employees
- Healthcare workers in Hunterdon

Selected Task Force Actions to Date

- Survey on vaccination capability and capacity to practices
- Parent letter and brochure designed
- Identification of pre-registration information technology
- Draft algorithm on rapid testing and use of antiviral medication for doctors
- Draft dates, times and school based locations for mass clinics
- Draft enhanced influenza-like-illness surveillance for schools
- Identification of viable solution to private practice flu clinic registration
- Media releases and WDVR radio segments
- Presentation to daycare administrators
- Presentations to senior groups
- Scheduled vaccinator training for school nurses and MRC (over 50 participants anticipated)
- Sept. 11 presentation to public school superintendents
- Scheduled September grand rounds presentation at hospital

Challenges

- **Pandemic Influenza**
 - Swine flu affects the young
 - Resistance to anti-viral medication has been reported in the US
 - Social disruption is difficult for many to accept
 - Evolving event
- **Funding**
 - NJ has not released supplemental funds to the local level
 - Total costs are in the process of being identified
- **Staffing**
 - Temporary jobs may need to be quickly created to staff public health sponsored clinics
 - Medical center/public health preparedness contract may need an amendment to support task force recommendations
 - Public and private sectors need vaccinators
 - Recruiting and training enough vaccinators is critical to vaccination programs
 - Pre-registration for private and public clinics is necessary
 - Reduced public health staff with mass clinic experience

Good News

- **Prevention measures limit spread of illness**
- Partnerships are productive and inspiring
 - County Departments
 - County Superintendent of Schools
 - IT
 - Public Safety – OEM and EMS
 - Purchasing
 - Roads and Bridges
 - Buildings and Grounds
 - Prosecutor's Office
 - Hunterdon Healthcare System
 - Local OEM
- State released preliminary funding figures - **\$132,719 for Hunterdon**

Freeholders Play an Important Role in an Effective Response to a Pandemic

- A pandemic influenza season may be unpredictable– it will not necessarily be business or government as usual
- **Rapid and decisive decision making and policy interpretation may be needed as the event evolves**
- Support public health specialists in planning and response efforts
- Voice concerns immediately to your health department liaison so that they can be addressed
- Share concerns expressed to you by other elected officials and residents

Websites

Hunterdon County Public Health

www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/health.htm

New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services

www.state.nj.us/health

Centers For Disease Control

www.cdc.gov

www.flu.gov

Novel H1N1 Clinical Trials – National Institutes of Health

<http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/news/QA/vteuH1N1qa.htm>

Ms. Poule confirmed at this time Hunterdon County is scheduled to receive \$132,719 in preliminary state funding, which is for Phase I and Phase II.

Director Mennen confirmed the \$132,719 is not inclusive of the cost of the vaccine. The County does not have to pay for the vaccine out of that amount, that amount is for administration and setting up the program.

Ms. Poule advised there is also Phase III funding to run the clinics but that amount has not been determined yet.

Route 29 traffic issues/project w/DOT

Mr. Holt thanked John P Glynn, Director, Roads, Bridges and Engineering and Sue Dziamara, Planning Board Director because a year ago, they met with the New Jersey Department of Transportation Commission, Stephen Dilts, regarding a traffic issue project on Route 29, in Lambertville. At that meeting the original proposed correction to Route 29 was around \$7 million. They met again around six months ago with Commissioner Dilts who had his department redesign the project; at that meeting they redesigned the project from \$7 million to \$2 million and Commissioner Dilts has promised that this project will be done this year. Mr. Holt thanked the County's department heads who have been involved in the project and Commissioner Dilts. This project has been tossed around for approximately 10 years and it is now getting done.

FLEMINGTON RAIL PROJECT Update

Mr. Holt reported to the Board that work has been some through the summer regarding the Flemington Rail project and last Monday the New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) gave a verbal commitment for funding for a feasibility assessment for this project. This means the project will now become an official project. Mr. Holt noted the County has been successful in getting New Jersey Transit to agree to do the work and begin the work around the third quarter of next year. The reason it won't start until then is because they are finishing up work on the Raritan Valley Rail line capacity which will be part of the study.

Mr. Holt provided the Board with a copy of a letter from NJTPA where money will be placed in their 2010 budget to move this project forward. There is not a commitment for funding. Mr. Holt again expressed his appreciation to the County's personnel for working on this project.

TRANSPORTATION PRESENTATION - Overview of County Para-Transit System

PRESENT: Janet Previte, Lupe Fowler and Pam Pontrelli – Human Services Department.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT:

- As part of the 2009 cost saving initiatives, the Transportation Committee was reconvened to review the County's current Transportation delivery system and make recommendations to the Board of Chosen Freeholders for efficiency measures for this \$3.5 million dollar transportation service budget.
- The County transportation service is funded through grants and other funding sources (\$2 million dollars) and the County Budget (\$1.5 million dollars). While this consolidated human service transportation and rural public transit system was created in 1984, this service is discretionary and the extent to which it is offered is controlled by the governing

body and their willingness to supplement the available grant funds. As grant funds decrease, the governing body must make annual financial decisions on the amount of County dollars to be used to supplement this program.

- Ridership of the County's consolidated transportation service delivery model consists of approximately 47 percent of individuals with special needs, 28 percent of senior population and 25 percent public riders.
- The Capital cost for replacement of fleet has not been evaluated during this analysis but is an expenditure that needs to be reconciled in the future.
- Any change in funding of either grant or County monies, could result in modifications to the budget and/or services.
- The Committee met on eight different occasions between June and September and divided the overall analyses into five topics:
 - I. in-house vs. outsource cost analysis
 - II. Shuffle service review
 - III. cross-county bus route service review
 - IV. specialized services (medical transports, group and coach transports)
 - V. summary of expenses vs. revenues
- The Committee's efforts included a site visit to Somerset County which operates their entire transportation services in-house.

- ***In-house vs. Total Outsource***

The Committee reviewed the data provided by Human Services, which assigned costs to replicate the services provided by our third party vendor, Easton Coach. The total projected in-house cost is \$2,865,765.00 in contrast to the \$3.3 million dollars it currently takes to operate the transportation system. This \$3.3 million dollars includes third party contractor costs as well as the County administrative expenditures, fuel and bus maintenance costs (County cost is approximately \$575,000.00) using the actual expenditures for the 2008 calendar year. The Committee unanimously agreed that despite a potential savings of +/- \$400,000.00, the hidden costs of growing government, contractual obligations and managing a transportation system that operates 16 hours a day, 6 days per week would most likely be cost ineffective if implemented by the County.

- ***Recommendation:***

Do not bring transportation services in its entirety in-house at this time but this should be a further study item in the future.

- ***Shuffle Service***

The County offers four (4) Shuffle routes around Flemington, which stop every two to three minutes at locations such as apartment complexes, grocery stores, shopping centers, eateries, the Hunterdon Medical Center, Independence Manor, Hunterdon Care Center and HealthQuest. All riders are welcomed (seniors, individuals with disabilities and public riders). The fares for Shuffle service were increased in 2009 to \$2.00 for unlimited boarding.

Two of the Shuffle routes (#16 and #19) are 80 percent County-funded (\$256,000.00) at an annual cost of \$320,000.00 to the County. The average cost to offer this service is +/- \$67.00 per hour.

The remaining Shuffles (#20 and #21) are entirely grant-funded with the objective of getting people to jobs. These Shuffle routes are operated on Saturdays and evening hours at a cost of +/- \$67.00 per hour. The ridership on these fully grant-funded (Job Access) routes is limited and the hours of operation (one route until 11:00 p.m.) makes this a costly service.

- ***Recommendations to Modify the Existing Shuffle Service for Routes #16 and #19:***

1. Reduce hours of operation – Transportation Services is currently conducting a ride analysis of "how many ride, where to/from and when." This data would provide a needs assessment for future scheduling decisions.
2. Modify the second Shuffle run – because the route is virtually the same, the analysis referenced above will assist in determining which routes to offer and identifying peak ridership. This may result in a decreased frequency of bus stops on the route but would result in more riders on the bus.

- ***Recommendations for Current Fully Grant-Funded Evening and Saturday Shuffles for Routes #20 and #21:***

1. Eliminate this service when funding stops.
2. Utilize a smaller vehicle or alternative method to meet grant objective
3. Reduce evening hours by ending operations at 9:00 or 10:00 p.m. instead of 11:00 p.m.

- ***Recommendation to Consider a County-Operated Shuffle Service***

The "carving out" of this service came as a result of a cost analysis for the County to assume operations versus a third party vendor. The hiring of three (3) full-time drivers and two (2) per diem drivers were considered, as well as insurances, driver training requirements, uniforms and the fuel, maintenance and washing of these County-owned buses. The results of the comparison analysis provided the following total cost to the County:

In-house projection = \$258,635.00

Current Third Party = \$451,926.00

The potential for savings is \$178,154.00. The Committee discussed this option with Somerset County; their Transportation Director encouraged Hunterdon to look at dispatch requirements and, after reviewing our analysis, indicated it might be a viable option to reduce costs but recommended the County strongly consider employing a dispatcher which has been included in the fiscal analysis above.

- **Cross-County Bus Route Service**

The LINK offers cross-county services with a North/South Route and an East/West Route using a deviated fixed route. These service routes are provided by using two (2) vehicles for each of these routes during peak times and one (1) vehicle for each route during off-peak hours. From 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. these cross-county routes are provided as “on-demand” service. The cost per trip (based on the first quarter of 2009) varies from \$7.84 to \$32.26 on 18 routes. The peak hour routes transport 47 percent special needs consumers, 28 percent seniors and 25 percent public riders to work activities throughout the County. The Association of Retarded Citizens (Arc) contracts with the County for this service. There are six (6) other routes on this cross-county system which are provided by the County as specialization, leisure or recreational activities for special groups which run from \$7.84 to \$39.25.

- **Recommendation:**

1. Reduce hours of operation and analyze costly routes for reduction or elimination.
2. The six (6) evening socialization, leisure, recreational routes should be charged the full cost. The special shopping routes to Clinton Walmart/Shoprite, which fall into this category, have been discontinued since the Flemington Walmart opened. The special Whitehouse/Clinton Walmart should be discontinued. (**Special Note:** the regular cross-county bus routes make daily trips to this shopping location).
3. The contract with the Arc has not been adjusted since the 1980’s. The contract amount is \$189,667.00. It costs the County in excess of \$500,000.00 (which includes the \$189,667.00) to provide this service. The Arc has agreed to a five (5) percent increase (to \$200,000.00) in 2010. In discussions with many counties, this Arc service is greatly subsidized by counties.

- **Specialized Services**

Specialized transportation services include sedan medical trips for both Medicaid and non-Medicaid consumers. At this time, all Medicaid trips have been fully funded by the State; the 2009 budget for Medicaid transports is \$340,000.00. The majority of these Medicaid medical trips are out-of-County medical services for seniors and the disabled. In the past, the County had placed restrictions on the number of times that a rider could utilize this service. Early in this decade, the Board of Chosen Freeholders waived those restrictions. Coordinating the non-Medicaid medical trips continues to be challenging and cost inefficient. The County is fortunate to have 18 volunteer drivers that utilize County vehicles to transport this group of consumers. The County aggressively evaluates each of these medical sedan requests and, if possible, these requests are accommodated through established bus routes and/or coordinating multiple riders on one trip. These efforts have proven successful and significantly increased the efficiencies in these specialized services.

Also under this category are group trips and coach trips which are primarily utilized by seniors for special activities and/or entities which may need transportation for a particular group to get to/from an event.

- **Recommendations:**

1. Continue close monitoring and coordination of the best utilization of vehicles and scheduling of all medical trips.
2. Conduct a needs assessment and cost analysis for non-Medicaid, out-of County, specialized medical trips.
3. Schedule every medical trip as a one-way guaranteed drop-off time but not a guaranteed scheduled return time. Rider may have to wait but will allow multiple riders to be transported in one trip.
4. For non-Medicaid medical trips, eligibility should be limited by age; individuals aged 18-59 who present a disability medical certification that precludes them from obtaining a drivers license and those individuals over age 60.

- **Funding and Expenses**

2009 Projected Funding:	\$3,727,937.00
(Includes County’s share of:	\$1,353,150.00)
2009 Projected Expenses:	\$3,360,174.00
2010 Projected Funding:	\$3,634,648.00
(Assuming flat transportation service funding from the County)	
2010 Projected Expenses:	\$3,484,018.44

- **Future Considerations for Contract/Operations Modifications**

1. Evaluate the fleet for consideration of reducing the number of vehicles on the road at any given time. If fleet is reduced by four vehicles, the cost savings is \$20,000.00 per year.
2. Refer Easton Coach space issue to the Facilities Evaluation Committee for consideration of allocating County space.
3. Explore alternative software and New Jersey Transit’s requirement for billing reports.
4. Re-negotiate the hourly cost with East Coach on Shuffle service and compare with the County through a cost analysis of providing Shuffle service in-house.
5. Evaluate increasing mid-day down time.

- **Action to Be Taken by the Board**

- Allow the Department of Human Services to implement the recommendations of the Transportation Committee. Do not reduce line item in 2010 budget.
- Eliminate the performance bond. This would result in a savings of \$20,000.00 per year.
- A fare analysis should be conducted every two years and brought to the Board of Chosen Freeholders for consideration.
- Work with Risk Manager to evaluate the ramifications of reducing liability insurance from \$5 million to \$2 million.

- The Transportation Committee should be re-commissioned in preparation for the 2011 Budget to re-visit the recommendations of this 2009 transportation study.

The Board thanked Mrs. Pontrelli, Mrs. Previte and Ms. Fowler for their in depth presentation.

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED AVAILABLE FUNDING FOR SOCIAL SERVICES/CASE MANAGEMENT

Mrs. Pontrelli advised with the state of the economy, the Social Services Division of Human Services is seeing more and more people applying for assistance. Today's request is to ask for positions and overtime but there are dollars.

Mrs. Pontrelli provided the Board with a chart provided by the Division of Family Development that matches people who are losing their unemployment benefits against people receiving food stamps. This was provided to Social Services because of the timeline when they will be losing unemployment benefits. By February 05, 2011, there is estimated that 6,616 people will be losing their benefits. The Division Head for Social Services of Hunterdon County was asked to submit a plan to the state on how this will be addressed because these individuals will be coming to the Division of Social Services for food stamps and other benefit programs. In August, 2009, 400 people in Hunterdon lost their unemployment benefits.

Mrs. Pontrelli reported she was called to a meeting at the state two weeks ago to hand out additional social services for the homeless, American Recovery, and Reinvestment Act funds which the state received. Of that, Hunterdon County was provided an additional \$36,000 through the end of the year and if more was needed, the County is to contact them. Other counties also received more funds. Overall, from the State, Hunterdon usually only receives \$55,000 a year for homeless services. The state is saying that next year the county will receive three-times that amount and if more is needed, the County should let them know. With these dollars the income level is being increased to 350% of poverty level for a family of 4, which the amount above \$70,000. Also, the County now can provide 4 months worth of rent/mortgage, and can assist if they have an appliance that needs to be fixed in order to stay in that home; the County can now assist with security deposits and they don't need to prove they can sustain themselves after four months. The hope is these people will get employment as time progresses. Mrs. Pontrelli advised the state is asking the County to put a case manager on to assist these families because money is being given. Mrs. Pontrelli is asking to use \$4,500 of the \$36,000 for overtime. Also, \$12,000 was received from the American Recovery and Reinvestment funds which was for Food Stamp overtime.

Mrs. Pontrelli advised regulations will be provided from the state to track the overtime. There will be a state database which the state mandates on homeless information.

Mrs. Pontrelli would like to propose a new position next year, since her department will receive three times the \$55,000 for homeless services. It is not known how long the funding will remain, so the funding may be short-term.

Mrs. Pontrelli informed the Board that the Hunterdon County Division of Social Services has \$20,000 built into their budget with the state for overtime.

Mrs. Pontrelli reported the state received additional dollars over the last year for the PSAP program which provides services to individuals with disabilities, and it assists them to attend school/work. Hunterdon went from serving 11 individuals to serving 22 people. When Hunterdon does its PSAP contract with the state starting January 01, 2010, Hunterdon will go from \$33,000 to administer the program to \$64,000.

Mrs. Pontrelli stated she is asking to use the overtime dollars in the County's Division of Social Services Budget which will incur some County costs because there is a match. The County's caseload in 2007 was 2,900 and it is currently 3,700. Caseloads per worker are now at 267 and back in July of 2007 it was 187.

Mrs. Pontrelli advised the previous Human Services Administrator put in a request ten years ago for more workers because the caseloads were 120 per worker. In two years, there has been a 99% increase in general assistance, 72% of food stamps are for people being served and there has been a 95% increase in family care and 105% increase in temporary assistance. Also, Readington Township used to do their own general assistance and the County will be taking that over. It was not optional for the County not to take this over.

Mr. Melick asked if hiring new personnel would be more cost effective than having to spend overtime dollars. Mrs. Yard said it is both. Money is set aside at the state level for new employees but there is also money set aside for overtime but the County may have to provide funds for a match.

Mrs. Pontrelli asked the Board to approve two positions and the authority to use overtime. One position would be state funded by the PSAP funding and the other position would be funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which will only go through the end of next year. That position would be eliminated after the dollars run out.

Mrs. Browne confirmed when the grant funds run out, the position would be discontinued/eliminated.

After further discussion regarding positions, Ms. Wieder informed the Board that someone could be hired tomorrow for up to a year under the state funding. Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion to accept the \$36,000 and to permit \$4,500 to be used for overtime and to utilize the \$20,000 in the Social Services Division for overtime.

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

FINANCE

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 09/01/09-13A RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Requesting the insertion of an item of revenue in the 2009 County Budget for the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program, in the amount of \$75,000.

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

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded these:

See Page 09/01/09-13B RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Requesting the insertion of an item of revenue in the 2009 County Budget for the Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan, in the amount of \$16,117.

See Page 09/01/09-13C RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Requesting the insertion of an item of revenue in the 2009 County Budget for the Homeless Grant, in the amount of \$36,000.

See Page 09/01/09-13D RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Requesting the insertion of an item of revenue in the 2009 County Budget for the Public Archives and Records Infrastructure Support Program, in the amount of \$613,793.

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

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 09/01/09-13E RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the cancellation of a grant receivable for the 2007 State Health Services (BT), in the amount of \$36,764.

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

PURCHASING

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Peterson seconded this:

See Page 09/01/09-13F RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving Requisition #ElectionBoard.00030, using NJSA 40A:11-5dd, with Sequoia Voting Systems, for a software license fee, for Elections, amount of \$14,500.

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

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Melick seconded this:

See Page 09/01/09-13G RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving Requisition #HCJ.47582, using County Quote #0054-2009, with Derby Industries, for mattresses, for the Division of Corrections of the Department of Public Safety, in the amount of \$12,560.

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

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Peterson seconded this:

See Page 09/01/09-13h RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the award of County Bid #2009-16, for the Hunting License Agreement for Block 6, Lots 44, 49 and 49.02, in Holland Township, to the Farmers' Sportsman's Club, Inc., amount to be received: \$9,679.99.

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

ROADS and BRIDGES update

John P. Glynn, Director, brought the Board up to date on various road and bridge projects.

- Bids are being reviewed for the County Route 523 project. A preconstruction meeting will be scheduled and the contracts should be ready for approval at the next meeting.
- Stone veneer work has started on the retaining wall in Pittstown.
- Punch list items are being done for the Surface Treatment project. There were a significant amount of claims on the County Route 579 section of the road, including asphalt cement getting on vehicles. The contractor is processing those claims.
- The InterCounty Bridge B-26-W with Warren County has chosen a contractor. A preconstruction meeting is scheduled for the week after Labor Day.
- A preconstruction meeting will be held for County Bridge D-345 the first week of October. The bridge will be closed and signage will be set up in advance of the closing. Also being worked on are the shop drawings and utility coordination.
- Beams should be set for Bridge M-110 tomorrow.
- Specifications are complete for the Holland Brook Bridge. It will be bid with a start date in March 2010.
- Mr. Glynn reported on the Multi-Purpose Trail which connects to the County Arboretum. This trail goes under Route 31 and runs across a small piece of concrete and then there is a bridge that crosses the Prescott. The pedestrian truss is 8' wide. The estimated cost of the project will be \$517,000. Mr. Glynn recommended the County finish the design and figure out how to do the trail. He would like authorization to complete the final design and specifications of the connection trail. The cost for the final design is \$50,000.

Mr. Sworen asked if the bridge being removed from Franklin Township can't be used for this project. Mr. Glynn explained by the time the bridge is retrofitted it gets more costly. It is not cost effective to re-establish one of the old trusses.

Mr. Peterson recommended waiting until the Freeholder Board knows more about the next years budget before committing funding. Mr. Glynn advised the money for the project is in the capital budget from 2008. Mr. Sworen stated it was listed in the 2007 capital budget.

Mr. Glynn suggested applying to the NJTPA for the enhancement project since it is ready to go. That is how the County did the Hamden Bridge.

Mr. Glynn confirmed for the Board that the permit received for this project will last for five years.

Mr. Sworen confirmed there is \$50,000 in the 2007 capital budget for the plans. The question is while it may be in the capital budget was it funded. Mr. Glynn will report back to the Board on that issue.

- Bridge A-39 is open for school traffic.
- Bridge painting is substantially completed. There are punch list times for the covered bridge.
- The fuel system at the County Arboretum is fully functional.
- Moved to the NJTPA transition list are County Bridge E-166, C-88 and RQ-164. The federal government has modified the specifications for a lot of the transparency reporting and how the money is to be allocated. The specifications have to be modified to the 2007 specifications and the plans have to be modified for all these projects which were awarded in 1999, 2000 and 2001. Everything has to be brought up to 2001 standards. The County is working on getting proposals from the consultant and the County has two months to get it done otherwise the projects won't be in the 2010 funding year.
- Stimulus projects now have to be brought up to the 2007 specifications, not the 2001 specifications. The County has not used that at the local level. The County has modified its plans and specifications and they are now being resubmitted to Local Aid. To get the stimulus funding the County has to have the projects awarded by November of 2009.
- The County is working with the utility companies on the Route 523/517 intersection. The access to this project has been ongoing with the court system.
- County Bridge L-36 is complete and opened last Friday. This project was done in-house.

Mr. Glynn reported action is needed regarding County Bridge T-102. He suggested doing the project without the stone veneer because it can be added at a later date. The cost of the project is \$325,532.31 with the vendor being HC Contractors, Inc. The County has worked with this contractor before. Numbers concerns have been received about the bridge being closed and safety issues with response to emergency vehicles. Mr. Glynn reported he spoke with the Finance Director, Kim Browne, and there is funding in a couple of ordinances or the funding can be taken from motor vehicle fines.

Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion authorizing the award of a contract with HC Contractors Inc., for County Bridge T-102 in Tewksbury Township, in an amount not to exceed \$325,532.31. Contract will be reviewed by County Counsel once it is received.

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

- The plan for the replacement of the upstream wing wall and the corner of Bridge T-88. Mr. Glynn will be meeting with the contractors on Friday and then will report back to the Board on the costs at the next meeting.
- A four way stop has been put in operation at the Everittstown Intersection on County Route 513/519 yesterday morning.

Discussion of Bridge Engineer vacancy

Mr. Glynn reported to the Board about a Bridge Engineer vacancy which he is asking the Board for consideration to replace. This is not a new employee but a replacement employee. Information has been provided on the cost and work responsibility.

Mr. Glynn advised there are staffing limits in the Engineering Department and the emergency situation with County Bridge T-88 brought that to light. T-88 has been closed since August 02, 2009; there is one structural engineering in the department that is trying to manage all the stimulus money coming to the County and the money coming due for the NJTPA projects. Also, the County is going to have 5 bridges under construction. Mr. Glynn said he could probably go outside the county to have construction services contract but it is the day to day operations, the review of the National Bridge Inspection System (NBIS) with inspections; the management and design of the culverts. It is not cost effective to go outside because every time the County has to contract from the outside, it is for a very specific set of duties; it isn't a general engineering service.

Mrs. Yard confirmed that the County used to have two bridge engineers and due to a retirement the County has been trying to get by with on.

Mr. Glynn added that the County has to review inspection reports and there are 245 inspection reports that go through his office every two years and bridges that are posted come through every year.

Director Mennen confirmed this is a mandated service for the County.

After further discussion, Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Melick seconded a motion authorizing John P. Glynn, Director, Roads, Bridges and Engineering to look at what is available as a structural engineer to fill a vacancy in order to find someone qualified and once someone is found they would be brought in for less than the person who retired.

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

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 09/01/09-15A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approval to amend the current designations of "through street" and "stop" intersections affecting Route 513 in the Townships of Alexandria, Clinton, Lebanon, Union and the Town of Clinton and the Boroughs of Frenchtown and High Bridge.

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

COUNTY Update

Vacancy-Surrogate's Court

Cynthia J. Yard, County Administrator reminded the Board of the County's innovative program to have volunteers temporarily assigned to certain areas. As Mrs. Yard has told the Board before, she has band aids but not a box of band aids. She advised there are union constraints/contractual constraints for reassignments. County Counsel has informed her to use this type of reassignment that the manager would have to agree to release an employee assigned to them and a volunteer would be needed. The County was very hopeful for the volunteer who agreed to be reassigned from Election to the Surrogate's Court. As things turned out, the skill level was more difficult than the volunteer had for the reassignment. Mrs. Yard and Ms. Wieder met with the Surrogate and Mrs. Yard complimented the Surrogate for working with the County and trying to use the temporary band aid. The Surrogate, Human Resources and the County Administrator have come to the conclusion that the vacancy in the Surrogate's Court must be posted and filled. This position requires some paralegal knowledge of probated wills.

Director Mennen said both the volunteer employee and the Surrogate should be lauded for giving this a try and he appreciates Mrs. Yard comments to the Surrogate to that effect.

Phone Committee

Mrs. Yard informed the Board the Phone Committee will be developing a policy/protocol for the type of different features people have in the different departments, such as elite versus basic.

CONSENT AGENDA

Director Mennen announced: "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."

Items #4, 18, 19, 20, and 21 were held at this time.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to approve the claims in accordance with the Claims Register dated September 01, 2009.

See Page 09/01/09-16A

CLAIMS

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

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

See Page 09/01/09-16B

SOCIAL SERVICES FUNDS REPORT

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

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to approve the regular session minutes of July 07, 2009 and July 21, 2009.

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

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded these:

See Page 09/01/09-16C

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Lisa Wim appointed temporary, Interim Family Service Worker, Division of Social Services, Human Services Department. (filling in for a leave of absence).

See Page 09/01/09-16D

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Elisabeth Goger appointed temporary, as needed, Instructor, Division of Senior Services, Human Services Department. (salary paid by program fees).

See Page 09/01/09-16E

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Michelle Schottman appointed provisional, full time Account Clerk/Senior Index Clerk, County Clerk's Office. (title change due to restructuring in office).

See Page 09/01/09-16F

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Gretchen Vallat, Public Safety Department, leave of absence without pay. (medical leave)

See Page 09/01/09-16G

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Ashley Harper, Board of Elections, leave of absence without pay. (medical leave).

See Page 09/01/09-16H

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Mario Filippi, Public Health Investigator, Health Department, reduction in hours. (voluntary reduction in schedule).

See Page 09/01/09-16I

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving longevity payments for employees covered under the Prosecutor's Investigators' contract.

See Page 09/01/09-16J

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving Change Order #1, FINAL, for County Bid #2008-19, for the 2008 Resurfacing and Surface Treatment of various County roads, with Trap Rock Industries, Inc., increase of \$120,091.99.

See Page 09/01/09-16K

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving final payment for County Bid #2008-19, for the 2008 Resurfacing and Surface Treatment of various County roads, with Trap Rock Industries, Inc., in the amount of \$0.

See Page 09/01/09-16L

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving no passing zones on Main Street (County Routes 628 and 635), in Glen Gardner and Hampton Boroughs.

See Page 09/01/09-16M

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing County Route 621 (Round Valley Access Road) from County Route 629 to State Highway 22, be designated as a "Through Street".

See Page 09/01/09-17A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Concurring with High Bridge Borough's Ordinance No. 96-30, regarding loading zones on County Route 513 (Main Street and West Main Street).

See Page 09/01/09-17B

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the release of redacted executive session minutes for April 07, 2009, April 21, 2009, and May 19, 2009.

See Page 09/01/09-17C

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving Application for Payment #2, for Bid #2008-36, to provide and erect one 220' tower and one 120' monopole or equivalent, with JBL Electric, Inc., in the amount of \$82,500.

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

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded these:

See Page 09/01/09-17D

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving Application for Payment #3, for Bid #2008-36, to provide and erect one 220' tower and one 120' monopole or equivalent, with JBL Electric, Inc., in the amount of \$208,000.

See Page 09/01/09-17E

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving Application for Payment #4, for Bid #2008-36, to provide and erect one 220' tower and one 120' monopole or equivalent, with JBL Electric, Inc., in the amount of \$9,798.

See Page 09/01/09-17F

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving Application for Payment #5, for Bid #2008-36, to provide and erect one 220' tower and one 120' monopole or equivalent, with JBL Electric, Inc., in the amount of \$6,367.

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

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded these:

See Page 09/01/09-17G

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the release of a Road Opening Deposit to the Delaware Township Municipal Utilities Authority, in the amount of \$5,000.

See Page 09/01/09-17H

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving that Readington Township's General Assistance Program be transferred to the County of Hunterdon.

See Page 09/01/09-17I

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving an agreement with Rutgers' the State University of New Jersey, for assistance in performing surveillance activities in connection with the County's Black Fly Control Program, in the amount of \$8,950.

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

PROCLAMATION

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded these:

See Page 09/01/09-17J

PROCLAMATION

RESOLVED, Recognizing Michael Caporaso for attaining the designation of Eagle Scout.

See Page 09/01/09-17K

PROCLAMATION

RESOLVED, Recognizing Nicholas Wright for attaining the designation of Eagle Scout.

See Page 09/01/09-17L

PROCLAMATION

RESOLVED, Recognizing J. Evan Tomsy for attaining the designation of Eagle Scout.

See Page 09/01/09-17M

PROCLAMATION

RESOLVED, Recognizing G. Ian Tomsy for attaining the designation of Eagle Scout.

See Page 09/01/09-18A

PROCLAMATION

RESOLVED, Recognizing the Lumbermans Merchandising Corporation on its 75th Anniversary.

See Page 09/01/09-18B

PROCLAMATION

RESOLVED, Declaring September 16, 2009 as "The American Legion Day" in the County of Hunterdon.

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

GRANTS

Mr. Sworn moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 09/01/09-17I

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the 2009 Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning Grant, in the amount of \$509,710 in federal funds and a County Match of \$43,275.93.

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

CORRESPONDENCE

A Request has been received from the Union Fire Company of Frenchtown, requesting permission to hold a Coin Toss on Saturday, September 05, 2009, Sunday, September 06, 2009 and Monday, September 07, 2009, at the Intersection of Highway 12 and Race Street. Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion granting permission provided this event is coordinated through the County's Department of Roads, Bridges and Engineering.

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

FREEHOLDERS COMMENTS/REPORTS

Horseshoe Bend Road property

Mr. Melick said from time to time on the Freeholders' Executive Session agenda, an item comes up concerning property on Horseshoe Bend Road. He is at odds with the rest of the Board on this issue but stated concern because the taxpayers are paying \$9 million. This is based on appraisals/comparisons that are almost, in some cases 10 years olds and public entities were purchasing the properties. This is a poor comparison and the cost is extremely high, it is \$9 million.

Mr. Melick explained he brings this up because there is a newspaper article where Somerset County is purchasing more property, 500 acres for only \$6.9 million.

Mr. Melick feels the appraisals for the property on Horseshoe Bend Road are so old and inadequate and should be redone.

Frenchtown/Green Festival

Mr. Sworen invited everyone to the Green Festival on Saturday, September 05, 2009 and Sunday, September 06, 2009.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Director Mennen adjourned the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise B. Doolan
Clerk of the Board