

SPECIAL MEETING

HUNTERDON COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

Main Street County Complex, Second Floor

Flemington, New Jersey 08822

January 31, 2012

The special meeting of the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders convened in open session at 9:00 a.m. in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

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

CONVENE

Director Walton 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 faxed on or before January 18, 2012, to the Hunterdon County Democrat, The Express, Courier News, Trenton Times, and Star Ledger, newspapers designated to receive such notices and by filing a copy with the Hunterdon County Clerk."

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

FINANCE – CONTINUATION OF BUDGET DISCUSSION

Library Budget continued from January 10, 2012 Budget Session on Pino Report costs and the South County Library Lease.

Kim Browne, Finance Director and Margaret Pasqua, County Treasurer came before the Board and advised they have not contacted Al Pino yet with regard to his report. Mrs. Browne and Mrs. Pasqua did look at the Pino Report and when they met with Mark Titus, Library Director, he had expressed concerns about being charged a rental fee when the Library reimburses for improvements of the buildings. Mrs. Browne stated while that is not the case, stating the Pino Report is a tool, which is based on square footage. Mrs. Browne stated the previously discussed \$1.8 million is a little high for the Library to achieve.

Mrs. Yard advised it would be an impossible task to go through each department to determine how much they really spend. The Pino Report is the tool which the County uses to determine costs.

Mrs. Yard confirmed the Library is paying the County back currently for the North Branch County Library and stated that debt is almost paid off.

This matter will be further discussed at the next budget meeting to be held on Tuesday, February 14, 2012, at 9:30 a.m., in the Freeholders' Meeting Room.

South County Library Lease

Mrs. Yard informed the Board that the South County Library lease is due to expire in April 2012. A copy of the lease has been provided to County Counsel, Shana Taylor. Currently the County is paying \$22 a square foot.

Director Walton and Freeholder Holt confirmed with Mark Titus, Library Director, that the Library wants to continue a South Branch of the Library. This does not necessarily mean it will be in the same building. They explained the County has to be flexible in these economic times.

Mr. Mennen questioned if the Facility Committee should be notified to look at other opportunities before the discussion takes place with the landlord. County Counsel should not negotiate with the landlord. He recommended Ms. Taylor contract the landlord of the South County Branch Library and convey to him that the County is looking at other opportunities and ask him to provide term sheet. Once the term sheet has been received, it can be discussed by the Board

Mr. Titus advised the Board that the Library Commission would be happy to help in anyway it can.

Mr. Sworen informed Mrs. Browne that when she contacts Mr. Pino as he would like to be present because the Pino Report is important to the County for the allocation received from the state; but there maybe more effective ways for the County to be able to use the report or have a report created to get more money back from the state and the federal governments.

Attrition Analysis

Mrs. Yard provided the Board with an attrition analysis for 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011, showing which departments have been impacted.

Trust Balances and possible application to budget

Mrs. Browne provided the Board with the balances on the Trusts in the County comparing December 31, 2010 and what they were on December 31, 2011.

Mrs. Browne noted that the salary offsets for 2011 have not yet been made in the Special Activities/Senior Services Trust and the Senior Health Services Trust.

Mrs. Browne reported on the trusts which salary offsets can be made from. In the 2011 budget they used the Weights and Measurers Trust offsetting a salary by \$50,000. This year being suggested from that trust is \$25,000.

Mrs. Browne stated the trust funds not available for salary offsets are the Surrogate's Court and the County Clerk's Office.

Mrs. Browne advised two salaries were offset using the Parks and Recreation Department, Special Recreation Trust in 2011, in the amount of around \$62,000. This trust is also used in the 830 Line, where certain activities are paid through. The Recreation trust is up and the County Treasurer and Mrs. Browne recommend using the \$62,000 to again offset salary in 2012; plus the amount could go up to around \$100,000 if the Board decides.

Mrs. Yard advised the Special Recreation Trust is replenished from the Parks and Recreation programs. The trust is used to put on the Summer Nature programs, making them cost neutral.

Mrs. Browne reported the EQEF (Environmental Quality) is the Health Trust. Nothing was offset from this trust in 2011 and she is recommending \$30,000 be used for 2012 to offset a salary.

Mrs. Yard stated through the years, it has been learned that the County could be more aggressive in getting reimbursements through Haz-Mat. This has now been moved to be a part of the Public Safety delivery system (Haz-Mat and the Haz-Mat Team), so she would imagine the County will now aggressively be seeking reimbursements when responding to Haz-Mat spills and their cleanup), so there maybe offsets available under the Haz-Mat function.

Mr. Sworen asked Mrs. Browne and Mrs. Pasqua to how much the County has billed and received towards Haz-Mat cleanups for the past couple of incidents. He wants to make sure the County has billed for time, vehicles, and materials. Director Walton agreed.

Mrs. Yard suggested finding out when the new policy was implemented. Mrs. Yard further stated that the responsibility lies with the County's Health Department.

Mr. Holt doesn't feel the policy has been adequately addressed. This policy is to recapture costs. As the County moves further, the question is how can the County maximize its reimbursement. Someone has to make sure bills go out.

Mrs. Yard thinks the decision to move the primarily responsibility under Public Safety will cause the County to be more aggressive in going after those funds. As Mr. Sworen brought up a few years ago, there is money to be recouped.

Mrs. Browne informed the Board that the Tax Board Trust fund is currently paying for a temporary person in the office.

Mrs. Browne advised that motor vehicle fines are used to help offset the Department of Roads, Bridges and Engineering's road surface treatments.

Mrs. Yard stated one of the Prosecutor's Trusts is a blank check for any law enforcement activity.

Mr. Mennen confirmed with Mrs. Browne that there are two groups of trust accounts; (1) there are those over which the Freeholder Board does not have control and (2) those over which the Board does have control and the use of those funds are prescribed by statute.

Mr. Mennen confirmed with Mrs. Browne that the County has utilized to the greatest degree or to the degree which Mrs. Browne feels is most rational and appropriate, those funds which this Board has the ability to use.

Mr. Melick questioned what other uses the Tax Board Trust can be used for.

Mrs. Yard explained years ago when the Tax Administrator came to the County his salary was offset by the trust but the County is now told it can't be used for salaries. The Tax Board used to use the funds for trips/meetings. Now, the trust can only be used towards the modernization of the office.

Mrs. Browne feels this is an area where the Governor may want to look at, in order to make these trusts more available.

Mr. Melick said the trusts should be used to benefit the County's taxpayers. He said the County's legislative representatives need to review this matter and make changes in legislation on what the trusts can be used for.

Raritan Valley Community College

Director Walton confirmed with Mrs. Yard that Somerset County asked Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC) to cut their budget by 10%.

Mrs. Yard stated, as instructed by the Board, sent a letter to RVCC telling them at Hunterdon County would also be looking for a 10% reduction and that Hunterdon would wait until that cut is shown in their budget. Mrs. Yard sent the letter on January 19, 2012 communicating the 10% reduction and advised them once the reduction is made they should meet with the Board to discuss the budget. Mrs. Yard received an email back from Mr. Trojan who wanted to schedule

an opportunity to present RVCC's budget and other interesting news to Hunterdon's Freeholder Budget Committee in the first week of February but for both counties combined the 10% cut would be a huge \$1.3 million number. The email states that RVCC has made an appeal to Somerset County.

Mr. Holt advised both counties need to make it clear about the direction (10%) which needs to be taken. It is his opinion there is no response to this other than entertaining a date when RVCC wants to discuss their budget.

Mrs. Yard said the County has already set the expectation that included in that meeting should be the 10% reduction. She will reaffirm that with Mr. Trojan.

Mr. Mennen suggested doing what Hunterdon has done in the past, is to engage our counterparts in Somerset so that everyone is speaking from the same script. RVCC is going to have an appeal from RVCC and so is Hunterdon. He feels the discussion needs to be between Board of School Estimate members from Hunterdon and Somerset. When Hunterdon and Somerset stands together a better argument is made than when the counties stand alone. Mr. Mennen stated the Freeholder Director is a member of the Board of School Estimate but this Board has to decide the other member. The two members from Somerset and the two from Hunterdon need to meet and have this discussion. This should be done before RVCC meets with either county.

Mrs. Yard will contact her counterpart in Somerset County and inform them what this Board is planning. She will also find out who their two members of the Board of School Estimate are for Hunterdon County.

Mrs. Yard advised there is an issue with the minor capital which RVCC places \$750,000 in. Hunterdon County has repeatedly asked what the college spends that money on and it isn't books or the students. Sometimes it is spent on computers and sometimes it is couches and office furniture. If RVCC is interested in working with Hunterdon, they could 10% (\$75,000) from this line item.

Mrs. Browne stated Hunterdon gets no accounting for this line item and it not all of it is spent at times.

Mr. Holt stated that last year, he was told that the Director's job is to voice the opinion of the entire Board.

After further discussion, the Board agreed to discuss membership on the RVCC Board of School Estimate at the February 01, 2012 meeting.

Outstanding major and capital projects

Mrs. Yard provided the Board with a listing of outstanding major and capital projects for future use. These projects listed has not been vetted by the Board or prioritized by the Board.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

At this time, no one from the public wished to address the Board.

FOR DISCUSSION

Mr. Holt recused himself from the meeting as his wife is on the Rotary.

Rutgers and Rotary: Growing Lives One Seed at a Time Program

Mrs. Yard informed the Board that the "Rutgers and Rotary: Growing Lives One Seed at a Time Program" is a mutual project working with Rutgers' University for Rutgers' Cooperative Extension of Hunterdon and the Rotary Organization. Eventually this project will go worldwide. The project is starting with pilot programs and one is in Hunterdon County. The Hunterdon County Facilities Evaluation Committee was asked to consider a request which will assist people to be part of from the seed of learning to grow. The project includes either special needs people, developmentally disabled, medically challenged, and mentally challenged. This food is grown from the seed up and it is donated. People are not charged to receive the food. Rutgers' has been very supportive of the program. The Rotary has a hoop house which is a 20' x 30', and has been donated to this program. The Hunterdon County Facilities Evaluation Committee was asked to determine if the property around the new Rutgers' building at the Route 12 County Complex had room to place the hoop house. Mrs. Yard stated that 4-H would be very involved in growing and working with these special needs people to develop this program with the understanding the program will go statewide then nationwide and worldwide. The Facilities Evaluation Committee had no problem in recommending this project be endorsed by the County and recommends to the Board that this program be endorsed.

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Mennen seconded a motion approving the placement of a hoop house at the Route 12 County Complex on property near the building that Rutgers' Cooperative Extension is house for the "Rutgers and Rotary: Growing Lives One Seed at a Time Program".

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWORN, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK, MR. WALTON.
(ABSTAIN) MR. HOLT.**

Mr. Holt informed the Board that currently there are five counties involved in the "Growing Lives One Seed at a Time Program" and will have an initial garden and the end result is this expands into the private sector and ultimately teaches people how to care for themselves.

Mr. Holt left the meeting at 10:14 p.m.

Vacancies

(Housing Assistance Technician, Division of Social Services-Family Service Supervisor, and the Division of Social Services-Family Service Worker)

Mrs. Yard informed the Board that the County's Housing Assistance Program is fully funded through Section 8. Replacing this person is of no costs to the County. This position needs to be backfilled because the County has already pared that staff down to a workable staff. This individual does a lot of the inspections.

Director Walton confirmed with the Board there are no questions on the vacancies to be filled. With that, Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Walton seconded a motion to fill the positions of Housing Assistance Technician; Family Service Supervisor in Social Services and Family Service Worker in Social Services.

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

Mr. Holt returned to the meeting at 10:16 p.m.

Request – "Smoke Drill"

Correspondence has been received from Union Township requesting permission to conduct a "Smoke Drill" in a building at Hoffman Park, on or about the week of February 06, 2012, from 6:30 p.m. until 10:00 p.m.

Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion granting permission provided this event is coordinated through the County's Department of Public Safety.

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

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Mennen moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 01/31/12-4A RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION, Approving the reappointment of George B. Melick to the Hunterdon County Utilities Authority.

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

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

At this time, no one from the public wished to address the Board.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Melick seconded these:

See Page 01/31/12-4B RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Executive Session to discussion various personnel issues.

See Page 01/31/12-4C RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Executive Session to discussion various contract litigation.

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

The Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders went into Executive Session at 10:19 a.m. and reconvened in Open Session at 11:07 a.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Director Walton adjourned the meeting at 11:07 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise B. Doolan
Clerk of the Board