

TOWNSHIP OF DENVILLE
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
BUDGET WORKSHOP

FEBRUARY 12, 2011

The Meeting was called to order by President Kuser at 9:06 a.m. The Salute to the Flag was recited, followed by the reading of the Open Public Meetings Act Statement by Deputy Township Clerk Kathy Costello.

ROLL CALL: ANDES, FITZPATRICK, GOLINSKI, SHAW, SMITH, STECKY, KUSER
ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: MAYOR HUSSA, ADMINISTRATOR WARD, CMFO GOBLE,
RECREATION DIRECTOR BOGARDUS.

OPEN PUBLIC PORTION:

Don Casse, 21 Snyder Ave., noted that he is on the Recreation Committee and that the Committee had a preview of Mr. Bogardus's power point presentation for today. He commented on the number of non-sport and summer programs that are offered with a small staff. Mr. Casse noted that there have been many discussions regarding Veterans' Field and what kind of playing fields will be put there. Mr. Casse stated that he hopes to hear a resolution of that issue today.

Gerry Idec, 1 Longview Trail East, noted that he agrees with a newspaper article he recently read that the Rockaway property, that the Township is proposing to purchase, should not belong to Rockaway. His second point was that the site should be for the use of all residents and they should be allowed to put canoes or kayaks on the Rockaway River at that site, at their own risk.

Mr. Idec then asked if any headway has been made with regard to Township vehicles being taken home by employees, and how many cell phones are given to employees. Mr. Kuser told Mr. Idec that Administration will address his questions.

Administrator Ward replied that he does not have the exact number of cell phones, but the number of cars has been reduced. He said that they have made some changes in the number of take-home vehicles. Mr. Ward advised that some of the cars are a contractual issue and, the contract that ended as of December 31, 2009 is still being contested. He said that, as of right now, he thinks that there are at least two less than there were when the newspaper article was printed. Mr. Ward advised that, with respect to cell phones, there is a list, which he does not have with him this morning. He said that there are cell phones in the Police Department, some for on-call personnel in the DPW and some for Department Heads in case of emergencies. Mr. Ward explained that they are basic plans and the employees have to reimburse the Township for any minutes that are used in excess of that plan. CFO Goble added that it is only for the tri-state area, has no extras and allows for only limited use.

Mr. Idec disputed the need for DPW workers to have cell phones because they have radios in their cars.

Mr. Ward clarified that point by noting that there are individuals who are sometimes on call and need to be reached by cell phone. Mrs. Goble added that the on-call duty is rotated and the cell phone is rotated as well. Mr. Ward said that he will provide Mr. Idec with the exact number of cell phones, as he has requested. Mr. Idec stated that he has

seen DPW workers on a cell phone in a truck. Mrs. Goble replied that, if Mr. Idec sees that, he should call the Administration because the town has a hands-free policy for cell phones. Mr. Idec then complained that the Police or other town workers stop for coffee and take it in the vehicle with them. He stated that it is against the law to drink coffee in a vehicle. Mr. Kuser advised Mr. Idec that it is against the law to use a cell phone while driving, but not against the law to drink coffee.

Albert Szollosi, 61 Crystal Drive, noted that he is aware of the bad economic times but that Mary Avenue has been ignored, even in good times. He explained the condition of the road and noted that there is an area where, not only can one car not pass another, but there is no room to pull over and let someone pass. He emphasized the dangerous conditions attendant to the poor condition of the roadway and the narrowness of the roadway. Mr. Szollosi invited the Council to come out and drive down Mary Road and experience the conditions themselves. Mr. Szollosi claimed that it is not a money issue rather, there is not the will to address the situation. He stated that Mary Avenue is on the map and, because of public domain, the Township could build a road there anytime they wish. Mr. Szollosi insisted that there would be no legal ramifications because the road has been used for over forty years and has become public domain. He said that the Township declared it a public road when they erected a sign at Diamond Spring Road.

Mayor Husa replied that he has great sympathy for Mr. Szollosi's problem and certainly no one in this room created that problem. He said that Mr. Szollosi's legal opinion does not gel with what our Attorney is telling us. The Mayor advised that, in two cases, Mary Avenue crosses private property and he does not believe that we can make a case that we have an easement there, no matter how long it has been there. He noted that there is a fifteen foot water easement on Crystal Drive and the piece behind it is privately owned. The Mayor advised that the Township is going to look into purchasing that piece and build a road to connect to Crystal Drive. He said that he had looked at it in 2008 but Engineer Rosania stated at the time that it was not feasible. Mayor Husa stated that they will take another look at it. He noted that he believes that Mr. Szollosi is looking, not just to have the road paved, but to have it widened as well.

The Mayor commented that Mary Avenue is a traveled way and was never designated as a road.

Administrator Ward advised that he met with our Attorney in the fall to try and find a solution to this problem. He said that creating a paper road would be prohibitively expensive and remediation of wet lands there would run into the millions of dollars. Mr. Ward advised that he, the Engineer, the Tax Assessor and the Mayor have talked about the proposal to establish a connector between Oak and Crystal; he noted that they will take a look at it in the Spring, when the snow melts.

Councilman Fitzpatrick commented that, after this very brutal winter, everything that the Council has looked at, in the way of road-paving, will likely change. He noted that he has been corresponding with Mr. Ward and Mr. Egbert concerning the road paving. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that he really thinks that the Council will need to look at the road

paving list again, as the winter subsides. Mr. Ward agreed.

Councilwoman Smith noted that Mr. Szollosi is asking for a widening of the road, not a paving job. She asked if Mr. Ward could give Mr. Szollosi a date as to when we will come back with an answer, noting that it would have to be when the winter subsides. Mr. Ward replied that certainly by April 15th the snow should be gone and the Engineer can take a look at the situation.

There was an extended conversation concerning the status of Mary Avenue, the dangerous conditions caused by the configuration of the road and the legal ramifications of crossing private property. Councilman Andes argued in favor of the Township providing some kind of shoulder to allow cars to pass each other on the road.

Another discussion took place regarding a former lawsuit involving the same area. The Mayor explained the details of that lawsuit.

Mr. Andes asked that the Township, at a minimum, provide shoulders on that roadway.

Mr. Szollosi asked, if Mary Avenue is not a legal road, how it is that two building permits were issued for houses on Mary Avenue. Mayor Hussa replied that he will investigate that. Councilwoman Smith interjected that the houses front on a different road.

Councilman Shaw suggested that Administration and the Engineer investigate the Township property on Mary Avenue to make cut-outs for cars to pull off so other cars can pass. He added that Hillcrest should be looked at as well.

There ensued another extended discussion regarding cut-outs being done in-house, the safety issues on Mary Avenue, and the legal aspects involving private property in the area. President Kuser asked that we obtain a legal opinion, in writing, from our Attorney as soon as possible and will have an answer for Mr. Szollosi by April 15th.

Ed Banagan, 38 Old Mill Drive, noted that Mr. Andes and Mrs. Smith had made some interesting points during the Police Department's budget hearing. He said that one of those points involved the seven people that are in headquarters and the question of whether or not they can be replaced by civilians.

Mr. Banagan stated that Mr. Andes and Mrs. Smith were each, at some point, Council President and both served with Mayor Feyl. He asked, since this issue of Mary Avenue has been going on for 40 years, why didn't Mayor Feyl resolve it.

Mr. Andes replied that, during Mayor Feyl's administration, there were lawsuits going on back there. He said that Mr. Szollosi only contacted him last April, it was the first time they ever spoke and that is when it became an issue to Mr. Andes. Mr. Banagan stated that Mr. Andes was Council President at the time and asked what he did about it. Mr.

Andes noted that he went through the process and there was a change in Administrators. He said that one of the first things he said to Mr. Ward was that Mary Avenue needed to be addressed. Mr. Andes advised that the budget had already been passed when Mr. Szollosi contacted him, so this is the time it should be addressed.

Mr. Banagan stated that he doesn't think that the buck should be passed to whoever is new on the Council and this is not a new story.

Mrs. Smith advised that, although there were complaints, the Township was involved in litigation in that area and it could not be addressed. She said that some of that has

been resolved and it is budget time now, which is the best time to address it. Mr. Ward advised that, somewhere around November after being made aware of the issue, he had a one-hour meeting with the Attorney and Engineer to discuss a potential solution and the legal ramifications. He said that it is a more complicated situation, both legally and engineering-wise, than it appears on the surface. President Kuser and Mayor Husa explained the very early history of Mary Avenue and spoke about the legal problems that evolved over the years. It was noted that the Council needs to have an opinion from our Attorney in order to act on this issue.

CLOSE PUBLIC PORTION.

RECREATION BUDGET.

President Kuser introduced Recreation Director Don Bogardus. Administrator Ward, by way of a brief introduction, noted that the operating budgets are a recurring theme, with the Department Heads living within their budget in previous years. He reported that the Recreation budget decreased by 8.5%. Mr. Ward said that, in addition, there was a shifting of personnel in the Tax and Finance Departments and one of the staff members was assigned, part-time, to the Recreation Dept. It was noted that the part-time person is in the Recreation Dept. five times, which resulted in an increase in the salary and wages line item.

Mr. Ward stated that he thinks most of the discussion will involve the Capital budget but, if any members have questions regarding the Operating budget, he will be glad to address them.

Councilman Andes asked about the salaries for the Camp Staff and was advised that the salaries are covered by the camp fees. It was noted that the staffing needs are determined by the sign-ups.

Council members, Fitzpatrick, Smith, Shaw and Stecky had no questions.

Councilman Golinski asked Mr. Bogardus how much time he puts into running the camp and Cook's Pond. Mr. Bogardus replied that he comes in on week-ends to do interviews for staff and it usually is comprised of five Saturdays and one Sunday. He added that there are staff training sessions for both programs on Saturdays and several nighttime sessions to prep for the camp and the lake. Mr. Bogardus stated that, in the summer, he is usually here by seven a.m. for his work day and goes to the lake until closing.

Mr. Golinski asked if a percentage of Mr. Bogardus's salary should be charged to user fees. CFO Goble replied that the amount of fees cannot be anticipated so that would not be feasible. Mr. Golinski compared his suggestion to the break-out of Mr. Egbert's salary.

There was a discussion regarding Mr. Golinski's suggestion and Mrs. Goble explained that the fund to which Mr. Egbert's salary is charged is a dedicated fund and the camp fees are dependent upon sign-ups, which makes the amount unknown. Mrs. Goble further explained the self-liquidating status of the sewer and water budgets.

Mrs. Goble said that she is willing to try anything but, if she puts a portion of Mr. Bogardus's salary in there, she can't guarantee that there will be enough revenue generated to cover it. Mr. Golinski replied that he is trusting Mrs. Goble's judgement that it would be difficult, but he does not think it is impossible. He said that he is not saying it should be done and it looks like it has been looked at, so he will drop it. Councilwoman Smith stated that she is confused on the salary for the Recreation Director. She said that it shows part in the Open Space Fund and part in the Trust Fund. Mrs. Goble said that she does not think it was ever charged to the Trust Fund and she will have to check on it.

Mrs. Smith asked if more money should be charged to Open Space for the Lake Staff. Mrs. Goble replied that she doesn't know how much the Council wants to charge to Open Space.

President Kuser commented that he feels that we are abusing the original ordinance for Open Space which stated that the fund was to "purchase, maintain and improve" open space property. Mr. Kuser asked Mrs. Goble why we are taking money for our Recreation Director's salary out of the Open Space Fund.

Mrs. Goble replied that it is 10% of his salary that is charged to Open Space. Mr. Kuser noted that on the page that they are looking at it is 20%. Mrs. Goble said that she believes that is an error and it should only be 10%.

Mr. Kuser again asked for an explanation as to why any of Mr. Bogardus's salary is charged to Open Space. He said that he has read both the original ordinance and the amended ordinance and it just doesn't make sense to him.

Mrs. Goble provided a history of the charging of salaries to Open Space. She explained that the Governing Body approved charging two full-time Park employees, with benefits, to Open Space to provide relief to the operating budget. Mrs. Goble noted that the rationale was that these employees, as a part of their duties, helped to maintain the open space properties. Mrs. Goble further explained that, in 2008 Mr. Bogardus's salary was increased and, since he put in a good deal of time at Cook's Pond, which was purchased with Open Space Funds, it was decided that a portion of his salary should be charged there. She said that it was following the same pattern that was established with the Parks employees.

Mr. Kuser asked what, specifically, was Mr. Bogardus doing for Open Space besides Cook's Pond, which is a separate line item. Mrs. Goble replied that Mr. Bogardus was in charge of the new building project at Cook's Pond and spent a good deal of time on the summer program at Cook's Pond.

Mrs. Smith interjected that the thought came to her when the Council was trying to figure out how to fund the new pavilion at Cook's Pond. She said that she considered it to be maintaining open space and felt it was within the parameters of the ordinance. Mrs. Goble contended that it is not just about the new building but about the many hours that Mr. Bogardus spends there. Mr. Kuser replied that he understands that but, that is not what the Open Space Fund is about. He said that it is to "purchase, maintain and improve". Mr. Kuser commented that he is sorry but he thinks that money is to buy

Open Space, and we already have \$150,000 a year for salaries charged to the Open Space Fund. Mr. Kuser stated that he is going to ask to have that money removed from Open Space and be put into Recreation because he does not think that we are making proper use of the fund. He asked what the amount of the increase was that was given to Mr. Bogardus. Mrs. Goble said that she does not remember. Mr. Kuser said that he was just told that it was \$12,000. Mrs. Smith confirmed that it was \$12,000. Mr. Kuser noted that he is not denying that Mr. Bogardus deserved a raise, it's what administration decides. Mrs. Goble responded that it was not an Administration decision, it was brought to the Council and it was their decision. Mr. Kuser stated that the Council ratified it but Administration sets the salaries. Mrs. Goble insisted that it was not with that one. She said that it was quite a big discussion at a Council meeting.

Mr. Kuser commented that he would like to ask the Council, because he does not believe that we are using this fund correctly. He said that Mrs. Goble can disagree with him but, using it for \$150,000 in salaries, in his opinion, is not the intent of the ordinance. Mrs. Goble interjected that the Township is collecting almost \$700,000 per year in Open Space taxes, out of which prior debt service is being paid and debt service for the Cook's Pond building. Mr. Kuser asked who else is charged to that fund besides the two Parks employees and the portion of Mr. Bogardus's salary. Mrs. Goble replied that no one else is charged to that fund. Mr. Kuser noted that the Administrator and CFO both work on Open Space and asked if any of their salary is charged to it. Mrs. Goble replied it is not. Mr. Kuser stated that he thinks that salaries should be shifted away from that fund and it should only be used to purchase, maintain and improve Open Space. Mrs. Goble said that she will do whatever this Council wants to vote on to have her do.

Mr. Andes commented that the rationale at the time was not so much Cook's Pond operating but how much time was allocated to the development of our open space. He added that Mr. Bogardus is on the development side of it.

Mayor Hussa added that the rationale was that these people are maintaining the new open space and he thinks it would be a mistake to pull those people out of the Open Space Fund.

Mr. Kuser said that there is only one person and that \$16,000 is being charged to the fund. Mrs. Goble stated that is not correct, it is only \$7,500 and she will have to make that correction.

There was an extensive discussion regarding the rationale behind charging salaries to the Open Space Fund, the number of hours dedicated to maintaining open space and the involvement of the Recreation Director in open space acquisitions. Mrs. Smith stated that if one salary is removed than the other two must be also, and that would result in a tax increase.

Mrs. Goble interjected that, at the time, the thought was that it was double taxation to the residents because they are paying the Open Space Tax.

Mr. Kuser reiterated that he wants to stick to the intent of the original ordinance and not run amok with charging salaries to it.

Mr. Bogardus explained his involvement in the acquisition of open space for either active or inactive recreation and the many hours of meetings that he attends.

Mr. Stecky added his comments on cost accounting with regard to how the salaries are charged.

Councilwoman Smith asked about the percentage of increase on page 32-02. Mrs. Goble replied that there are steps involved in that budget and she does not think that it should be discussed now.

Mr. Ward interjected that, at Tuesday's meeting, we will be discussing retirements and personnel attrition and the possibility of having field and lawn maintenance out-sourced. Mrs. Goble advised that we have lost two people, who will not be replaced, through attrition but the sheets have not been revised to reflect that as yet.

Mr. Kuser asked Mrs. Goble if we are going to scratch the \$8,114 from the Trust Fund. Mrs. Goble advised that she will check into that.

There were no additional questions on the Operating budget.

Capital Budget.

Administrator Ward provided the Council with a hand-out and a brochure on the one item that is on the Capital budget, a skate park. Mr. Ward advised that, after the discussion at Thursday night's budget meeting, he received a letter from Lt. Paul Nigro in his capacity as a member of the Recreation Committee. He said that the letter requested that the Council review, and give strong consideration to a skate park. Mr. Ward explained that this project is aimed at the segment of youth in town that are not motivated towards organized sports activities, such as baseball, football, soccer, etc. He added that the public facilities are not geared towards skate-boarding activities.

Mr. Ward advised that the Joint Insurance Fund has developed insurance coverage, over the past several years, for this type of facility, as long as certain parameters are complied with, which can be incorporated into our general liability policy.

Mr. Ward called the Council's attention to the catalog which displays several different types and sizes of skate parks that are available. He noted that, as was done in Hopatcong, he feels it would be important to involve the youth population of the town in designing the park. Mr. Ward noted that it gives them a sense of ownership and they are then more protective of the facility and of keeping it in good condition. He added that the \$125,000 number that is listed in this Capital budget would provide a nice park with eight to ten ramps, fencing and a level surface. Mr. Ward noted that he, the Mayor, Lt. Nigro and Mr. Bogardus have discussed a few areas, one of which is the parking lot adjacent to the cemetery on Savage Road. He said that part of the lot is rented to commercial vehicles. Mr. Ward advised that it was just one of the locations that was discussed; points in its favor being the proximity to the Police station and the other park facility at Gardner Field. He said that Zeek Road would be too far and would limit its accessibility.

Mr. Bogardus reiterated much of Mr. Ward's presentation and added that he has been approached by merchants who complain of kids skate-boarding on the sidewalks. He

agreed that Zeek Road is too far away and noted that the Savage Road site was just an idea.

President Kuser commented that it is a great idea but he disagrees with the location. He suggested that perhaps a macadam pad could be put down, at Gardner Field, where the Township stores the clay for the fields and add some concrete ramps. Mr. Bogardus noted that, as Mr. Ward stated, we need to have the kids involved and the kids know their stuff when it comes to this type of project.

Councilwoman Smith asked how much the tennis courts are utilized, versus putting a skate park there. Councilman Andes replied that they are used a lot and we can't take from one to give to another. Mr. Bogardus noted that it is school property, as is the area where we keep the clay.

Mrs. Smith interjected that the parking lot next to the cemetery is not the place to have a skate park, especially when a funeral is in progress. She also noted the high volume of traffic on Savage Road.

There was an extended discussion regarding all aspects of a skate park, including location, hours of operation and safety gear to be used. The question of funding was raised. CFO Goble explained that it is an Open Space expenditure so it does not have to be in the adopted budget. She said that the Council can research this as much as they need to and do the ordinance at any time. Mrs. Goble added that the ordinance would be fully funded out of the Open Space Fund.

Mr. Ward stated that this is sort of the first blush of this idea and Administration just wanted to bring it to the Council's attention. He reiterated that it is not a budget, just as Zeek Field is not, but that will be discussed as well.

Discussion continued on the need for a park and finding a proper location for it.

Councilman Stecky brought up the interest of some residents, including himself, in flying model airplanes that are radio-controlled. He noted that it is not permitted in our parks and he has been approached about having the town provide an area for that hobby.

Councilman Fitzpatrick stated that it sounds as if everyone, in principle, thinks this is potentially a good idea, but we are supposed to be discussing the budget and he thinks this is a workshop issue.

The Mayor said that they will come back with a bunch of possible locations.

President Kuser called for a brief recess at 10:55 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 11:08 a.m.

VETERANS' FIELD.

President Kuser noted that the Mayor would like to address the issue of Veterans' Field. Mayor Hussa noted that Administration requested some estimates from Hatch Mott MacDonald. He gave a brief history of this property, noting that the project did not move as quickly as he anticipated that it would. The Mayor advised that there had been

plans to have trees removed at no cost but those plans did not pan out. He said that he feels that it is time to put something in place up there. The Mayor stated that his recommendation is that we go with the \$1.2 million plan, with all the bells and whistles. He said, however, if we don't want all the extras, it becomes like a Chinese menu and we take a few things out. Mayor Hussa added that he doesn't think that we absolutely have to make this decision today, but he would really like a decision to be made during this budget cycle. He spoke about all of the amenities that are included in this plan. Mayor Hussa reminded everyone that, when they had the public hearing on this subject, they promised the neighbors that there would be no lights installed. He said that one option would be to go back to the neighbors and tell them we have changed our mind about lights, which he does not recommend because we made that commitment at a public hearing and he thinks we should stick with it. The Mayor added that, if we don't have lights, we don't need turf. He said that we do need the fields and the Eagle Scout project that was done at the entrance to the parking area is now overgrown. The Mayor noted that this project will be done with Open Space funding and he would like a commitment so we can begin to work on it and it could be ready in a year or two. He asked that the Council decide on what options they want, let the Mayor know by Tuesday and he will go back to John Ruschke and ask for a revised cost. Councilman Fitzpatrick asked if we have to do something because this property was purchased with Open Space funds for active recreation. Mayor Hussa replied that we need to do this because the sports programs need the fields, not because there is any time constraint. He added that the costs would come from Open Space and would not affect the regular budget. Mr. Ward spoke about the out-sourcing of landscape work and noted that he expects that it will be a substantial savings. He added that Mr. Egbert estimates that it requires 1.5 of his staff, plus benefits, strictly for grass cutting. Mrs. Goble noted that hiring new personnel is not anticipated due to the out-sourcing of much of the landscape work. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked about the break-out in terms of Open Space funding. Mrs. Goble explained that, when the Council decides on what cost they want to incur, she will look at what we need to take from the Open Space Fund. She further explained that the last payment for prior acquisitions, coming out of the Open Space Fund, will be expended in 2012. Mrs. Goble advised that the amount is about \$200,000 per year. She added that we will be free in 2013 to take on new projects. Mrs. Goble advised that whatever they do with this project, they would take a bond ordinance for and the final cost would be borrowed and paid off with the Open Space Fund. Mr. Ward interjected that all would be paid off within six years. The Mayor stated that the Township would only be putting in \$60,000 of its own money. Councilwoman Smith noted that they have already agreed, as a Council, to move forward. She said that she believes that the discussion should centered around the type of fields that should be done and what amenities should be included. Mr. Ward noted that, without the lighting, the use of turf fields cannot be maximized. Mrs. Smith asked for clarification of some of the alternatives listed in the estimate.

Mr. Ward noted the following:

- Concession building
- Underground drainage system
- Parking lot with asphalt finish

He noted that some items could be added at a later time.

There was a discussion concerning what is included in the \$1.2 million estimate. It was noted that it did not include a new concession stand, but water and electricity would be installed at the time that the project is started, in order to be ready for future additions. Mrs. Smith suggested that a septic be prepared as well.

There was an extended discussion regarding what should, or should not, be included and how it would be funded. Concerns for the neighbors, and promises that have been made to them regarding no lighting and contamination of wells, were also discussed. The Mayor stated that the bottom line is: cut the trees down, level the ground and plant the grass. He said that is what he would like to see done. Mr. Shaw stated that makes sense, get the thing started.

The Mayor suggested that the Council take a consensus on what they want done and he will get an estimate on that project.

President Kuser asked where this whole discussion came from today. He said that he is glad to discuss it but, all of a sudden, we are in the middle of this.

The Mayor replied that it came from a presentation by John Ruschke.

President Kuser stated that he remembers that and it was about a year ago. He said that, at that time, the Council asked Administration to come up with a plan, with the Recreation Director and Recreation Committee, and bring the Council alternatives. Mr. Kuser noted that what is in front of the Council now is just a print-out that the Council is now expected, during a budget session, to go through and decide what should be in and what should be out.

The Mayor replied that he recommends doing the whole thing because it comes out of Open Space. He said that the Council should take out whatever they don't want.

Councilwoman Smith stated that Mr. Kuser brings up a good point. She said that we are here on a Saturday to discuss the overall budget and the Open Space budget does not have to be done before we settle our budget. Mrs. Smith added that the skate park did not have to be discussed today either. She said that she would rather focus on this year's budget and what it is going to cost the taxpayers. Mrs. Smith noted that she is not saying this should not be addressed, but it should be discussed at a workshop in March to get it resolved. She said that the Council should be given options so they can decide what we can do. Mrs. Smith again stated that the Council should be talking about the budget, not things that are not going to affect the taxpayer.

The Mayor replied that Administration wants the Council's feedback. Mrs. Smith said that she understands that but this is not the venue at which it should be discussed.

Mr. Kuser asked if the Recreation Department has signed off on this as what they want.

Mr. Bogardus explained that there were meetings with about twenty people in attendance and they hammered out what they felt was necessary. He said that the

Committee agreed that the project should be comprised of three full-sized fields and one softball field. He said that the only thing that was changed was the direction of the softball field. Mr. Bogardus stated that this was the original project.

Mr. Kuser asked for clarification on the lighting issue. He said that he has been attending Council meetings for the last three or four years and does not remember any discussion about lighting at those fields. He said that this was brought up by Councilwoman Smith and he thinks it goes back several years. Mrs. Smith responded that it is current and that the residents there do not want lighting. She said that we made that commitment to the residents last year.

Mr. Bogardus said that he does not remember any individual member, or a consensus of the Council, stating that there would never be lights.

It was agreed that it should be checked and Mrs. Smith said that she believes that the commitment was made when we acquired the additional piece at Veterans' Field and held the public hearing. Mr. Bogardus interjected that, that would have been 10 or 11 years ago, before he started his employment here. The Mayor said that it was only a couple of years ago and Mr. Agostini was there but Mr. Eppel was not.

Councilman Golinski suggested that everyone do their homework on this and it be put on a workshop agenda. He said that, in the meantime, we need to focus on getting our budget done.

Mr. Andes suggested that the Mayor take this proposal back, make a recommendation as to what items should be included, get the support of the Recreation Committee and then bring it back to the Council.

President Kuser commented that he feels we are at the end of the story with this. He said that Administration was asked months ago for a plan and they have brought back exactly the same thing. Mr. Kuser noted that Mr. Bogardus should be the lead on this, in conjunction with Administration and all of the various sports leaders. He said that it should not be discussed at a budget meeting.

GENERAL BUDGET

Councilman Andes commented that it came to light this week that the N. J. Foundation for the Blind is selling their property on Diamond Spring Road. He said that one thing that was talked about was a townhouse development, which would be very worrisome for people in the First Ward with all of that additional traffic. Mr. Andes noted that the newspaper quoted the selling price at \$5.29 million, which is way out of our league. He suggested that Mr. Ward reach out to the County and to the Board of Education and see if there might be any interest in the property to help solve the over-crowding in the schools. Mr. Andes noted that the property has classrooms, a pool and banquet facilities and might be a win-win situation for all.

Mayor Husa responded that he has been speaking with the Foundation for the Blind for quite a few months and has recommended certain church groups to rent space in there. He added that Dr. Clark, Superintendent of Schools, does rent space in there. The Mayor noted that he recently sat down with the facilitator for the facility, Richard

Gray to discuss a lot that they are willing to sell. He explained that they have two lots and one, which is a high priority on our Open Space list, is for sale. The Mayor advised that FEMA is urging towns to buy more wetlands and this property is wet lands. Mr. Kuser asked if it is the 1.6 acre lot. Mr. Husa replied that it is and added that Mr. Gray told him that they would like to sub-divide some useless land for their own purposes. The Mayor said that is something else that we can purchase. He said that there is no reason why the PAL could not rent space in there on a temporary basis. Mayor Husa spoke of several different entities that are interested in renting. The Mayor advised that the developer who wants to purchase the property and put in the townhouses called him and the Mayor told him we are not interested in having 100 townhouses on Diamond Spring Road. Mr. Andes reiterated that the Board of Education is in urgent need of classrooms and he would like to see the opportunity offered to them before anyone else.

President Kuser noted that it is something that needs to be looked at. He asked Mr. Ward if he would do that. Mr. Ward replied that he will reach out to the Board of Education.

Administrator Ward stated that we have nothing else for the budget today. He said that the next budget hearing is scheduled for March 3rd, which is to comprehensively discuss the budget. Mr. Ward advised that, if there are any number-crunching ideas from Council, they should let him know.

Mr. Kuser noted that he has a question about the flat budget that Administration has presented to the Council. He asked if it includes the increase in pension and health care. Mr. Ward replied that it is a zero tax increase budget as presented to the Council and it includes \$340,000 in PERS and \$120,000 in public employee pensions.

Mr. Kuser said that he has another very important matter to address. He advised that he had spoken with Mr. Sarinelli at a party and they discussed the pay out for sick time. Mr. Kuser noted that there is half a million dollars, give or take, in the account.

Mrs. Goble said that she will be bringing the Council a proposal of what they are going to do. Mr. Kuser stated that he saw it in the budget. Mrs. Goble replied that is only one portion; she said that in March she will be bringing a transfer of money that is left in the 2010 budget. She explained that it is permissible to do transfers from January through March and, at our last meeting in March she will have all of the transfers showing the Council what is going to fund the budget.

Mr. Kuser asked Mrs. Goble, having sent her a written request, for a five-year spread showing anticipated retirements so that we can look to the future and have an idea of what pay-outs are facing us. He said that he wants to make sure we are responsible with this because it could be a very large blow to any budget if we are not aware of impending pay-outs.

Mrs. Goble replied that she will bring all of that to the Council.

Mr. Kuser said that we need a road map of where we are going. He added that a flat budget is great, but we need to go in with our eyes wide open and he does not want it

to be for political reasons because people are up for re-election, but because people recognize that you did a great job and the budget is a responsible one.

Mr. Stecky interjected that it is not politics. He said that we were striving for a flat budget last year but didn't quite get there. Mrs. Goble noted that we would have achieved that last year until the State came in and took it away from us. She said that we still don't know what the State will do to us this year.

Mr. Kuser asked when we will know. Mr. Ward advised that he had spoken with a member of the School Board and they expect to hear within the next two weeks, so he suspects we will hear around the same time.

Mrs. Goble noted that we are at the mercy of whatever the State decides to do to us.

Mr. Golinski had a question about some of the entries in the budget book and Mrs. Goble explained them for him. Mr. Golinski asked for the actual amounts spent in the budget. Mrs. Goble replied that she would then have to show the transfers as well to demonstrate the funding and it would be total only, not by department.

Councilwoman Smith stated that there are a couple of items from previous budget meetings that she is still waiting for and she wants to add a little to them. She said that one is about personnel, another is the catch basin issue that we heard about at the DPW presentation and it was mentioned that there may be some changes coming up. She said that she wants to make certain that we are properly staffing the department to manage the health and safety of our residents. Mrs. Smith noted that we heard from the Police Department and the audience came out in support of the DARE program; she said that she would like to hear from Administration on where they foresee that going. She asked for a preliminary discussion, at a minimum, regarding what we do this year and how it affects us in the next year or two with the cap. Mrs. Smith noted that what we do with staffing this year will effect us in each year following. She said that she will be asking for a five or ten-year personnel plan, after we finish this budget.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: MOVED BY MEMBER SMITH, SECONDED BY MEMBER FITZPATRICK

AYES: UNANIMOUS

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 11:57 A.M.

Respectfully submitted:

Kathleen A. Costello
Deputy Township Clerk