

Borough of Norwood  
Work Session  
April 14, 2010

The Work/Executive Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Norwood were held on the above date.

Council President Condoleo called the meeting to order at 8:02 PM.

Council President Condoleo stated:

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Law, P.L. 1975, Ch. 231, setting forth the time, date, place and purpose of this Public Meeting through a legal notice published in the Record and Press Journal.

**PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:**

Councilman	Frank Marino
Councilwoman	Marianne Orecchio
Council President	Edward Condoleo
Councilman	Allen Rapaport

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Borough Attorney	Andrew Fede
Chief Financial Officer	Maureen Neville
Tax Collector	Kunjesh Trivedi

**ABSENT:**

Mayor	James Barsa (Mayor Barsa entered the Closed Session at 10:35 PM)
Councilman	Barry Scott
Councilman	John Nicolai

**Consent Agenda:**

Motion to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda was made by Mr. Rapaport, seconded by Mrs. Orecchio and declared carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present.

Approval of the minutes of the February 24, Work/Executive Meeting; March 2, 2010 Public Meeting and March 10, 2010 Work/Executive Meeting

Approval of the following Resolutions:

- 10:79 Authorizing the payment of bills and vouchers in the amount of \$2,732,017.00
- 10:80 Opposing a Rate Increase for United Water
- 10:81 Authorizing Gotthold Paving, LLC to perform drainage improvements to the Kennedy Park Baseball Field for \$5,595.00
- 10:82 Endorsing the submission of the recycling tonnage grant application to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection by John Oddo, Recycling Coordinator
- 10:83 Authorizing Mario Pareja to assist the Tax Assessor in the review and research of 2010 tax appeals at a cost not to exceed \$5,000.00
- 10:84 Granting permission for Family Promise of Bergen County to travel through the Borough on Sunday, April 25, 2010 during its Seventeenth Annual Bike Bergen
- 10:85 Approving issuance of a peddler's and solicitor's license to Mr. Edward Eglence for lawn care services on behalf of Weedman Lawn Care, River Edge, New Jersey
- 10:86 Approving issuance of a peddler's and solicitor's to Mr. Keshwani Lakshya for lawn care services on behalf of Weedman Lawn Care, River Edge, New Jersey

Mr. Condoleo explained that due to the large number of tax appeals filed for the year 2010 (over 100), it is the recommendation of the Tax Assessor that a reassessment of the entire Borough be undertaken. Motion in support of this recommendation was made by Mr. Rapaport and seconded by Mrs. Orecchio. All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

**Items for Discussion:**

Cablevision of New Jersey application for renewal of cable television franchise (Public Utilities Committee to review application-Council Members Marino, Nicolai and Condoleo; alternate member, Councilwoman Orecchio) – The application has recently been received and will be distributed to the members of the newly established committee.

Renewal of Solid Waste Contract-specifications to be ready by September (Appointment of Committee by Mayor to review—Mayor Barsa and Council Members Marino and Rapaport) – Mr. Rapaport reported that Miele Sanitation has not raised its rates and Messrs. Marino and Condoleo voiced their opinion that the contractor is more than fair and does a good job. It was the consensus of the Council Members present that further discussion take place at the May 12, 2010 Work Session.

Request by New Jersey Youth Club, Inc. to canvass door-to-door selling gourmet gift items - Mr. Fede explained that there have been Supreme Court rulings that nonprofit organizations cannot be prohibited from canvassing/soliciting. He further explained that according to Borough Code Chapter 172-5, a nonprofit organization does not have to apply for or secure a license or pay a license fee. However, a sworn statement must be provided the Borough Clerk stating the name and purpose of the organization; the names and addresses of the officers of the organization; the names and addresses of the agents or representatives who will solicit, sell merchandise or distribute literature in the Borough. Following a brief discussion, the Deputy Clerk was directed to send a letter to this effect to the applicant.

Bid solicitation responses for additional work for Kennedy Park War Memorial – Recommendation by Administrator that additional quotes be obtained from local contractors – The Council Members present were in agreement with Mrs. McMackin’s recommendation that additional quotes be obtained.

**Attorney’s Report:**

Mr. Fede advised that he had contract negotiations and a lease agreement matter to discuss in Closed Session.

**Administrator’s Report:**

In the absence of the Administrator, no report was given.

**General Public Comment:**

Motion to open the meeting to the public was made by Mrs. Orecchio, seconded by Mr. Rapaport and declared carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present.

George Hertzberg, 24 Carter Street, referred to the last order of business usually being Closed Session discussions and suggested that any decisions made once the Council reconvenes in open session be made known at the next Work Session. It was the consensus of the Council Members present that this was a reasonable request.

Stu Bran, 101 Aspen Court, made reference to the discussion regarding New Jersey Youth Club’s request to canvass within the Borough. He noted that the Northwoods Association frowns upon people going door-to-door in their community and questioned whether there was any way they could be prohibited. The Borough Attorney again advised that the Supreme Court has ruled that non-profit organizations cannot be prohibited from soliciting/canvassing. However, the

Borough Code does permit exclusions and suggested the Northwoods Association contact the Police Department to be included on an exclusion list.

Mr. Bran referred to the proposals received for the operation of the compost facility and questioned whether a recommendation would be made this evening. Council President Condoleo advised that a recommendation would be made at the next Mayor and Council Work Session (April 28, 2010).

Regina Stonitsch, 143 Kensington Avenue, referred to the introduced 2010 Municipal Budget, and engaged the Council in a question and answer period that lasted approximately one hour. During this time, she suggested that the Council entertain shared services with other towns, specifically for the Department of Public Works or contract out the services performed by this department. She referred to New Jersey Division of Local Government Services Municipal Information Sheets and compared Norwood's to Old Tappan, Northvale, Harrington Park and Closter. Ms. Stonitsch voiced her opinion that the Borough's contribution to the Public Employees' and Police retirement systems are too high as well as the aid provided to the Library. She also provided her belief that the salaries and wages for the Municipal Clerk, Financial Administration, Police Department and DPW were disproportionate compared to other towns. Ms. Stonitsch noted that Borough's website is not as up-to-date as it should be.

Mr. Rapaport explained that many of the areas Ms. Stonitsch referred to are not controlled by the municipality, i.e. the contributions to the retirement systems are governed by a State formula. He also explained that Police salaries are established as a result of arbitration and DPW salaries through union contract negotiations. Mr. Rapaport advised that the salaries and wages for the Municipal Clerk and Financial Administration do not represent salaries for one individual but for the departments. Mr. Condoleo reported that the services of a webmaster were investigated and found to be too expensive and that the website is updated by the Administrator/Clerk who has numerous responsibilities.

Stu Bran, 101 Aspen Court, voiced his understanding that the fourteen-manned Police Department is understaffed according to the ratio recommended by the New Jersey State Police. He noted that the budgets for the local and high schools comprise over half of the budget, with the municipal portion being approximately 24% and the remainder allocated for the County's portion. Mr. Bran recommended that Ms. Sonitsch pose the same type of questions at school board meetings. He described the municipal staff as hard-working people.

Mr. Condoleo advised that the budget as introduced would represent a 12.86% increase in municipal taxes. However, it will be reviewed and amended to decrease this number.

Betty Gillon, 100 Summit Street, questioned whether the Borough would be receiving State aid to further reduce this anticipated increase.

Mr. Condoleo explained that the State's budget would not be finalized until June 30, 2010; therefore, the state aid numbers would not be available until after that time.

Mr. Rapaport noted that the Borough is still in negotiations with the Police and DPW unions and that both groups would be contributing 1.5% of their salary for health benefits as of May 21, 2010 and that the same holds true for all full-time municipal workers.

Liza Kurtz, 401 D'Ercole Court, referred to the New Jersey Youth Club canvass request and voiced concern with individuals going door-to-door in this apartment complex. Mr. Fede again suggested that the Police Department be contacted to add Fox Hill to the exclusion list.

Betty Gillon, 100 Summit Street, noted the large amount of debris that was still along the roadways throughout town from the storm and questioned whether there was any truth in the rumor that the DPW staff were engaged in an on-the-job slowdown due to lack of a contract. Both Messrs. Rapaport and Condoleo advised that this was not the case and that the members of the Department are doing their best with the equipment they have available to them. According, George Hertzberg, 24 Carter Street, voiced his opinion that under the circumstances, the DPW is doing an excellent job.

Peter Stonitsch, 143 Kensington Avenue, referred to the Kennedy Park War Memorial and advised that during the Easter Egg Hunt his daughter almost experienced a leg injury due to the water and leaves in the trough of the monument. He was informed that the DPW cleared the area yesterday. Mr. Stonitsch noted that mention was made in the newspapers regarding the Governor's "tool kit" and questioned whether it has been provided. Mr. Rapaport advised that although the Borough Auditors are in constant contact with Trenton, the specifics of this "tool kit" have not been made available. Mr. Stonitsch also recommended that the arbitration process be revamped and explained that there are FEMA grants available for equipment for the Fire Department.

George Hertzberg, 24 Carter Street, questioned whether cuts are being considered for the library. Mr. Fede explained that the contribution to BCCLS (Bergen County Cooperative Library System) is based upon a formula pertaining to the assessed value of homes and that the Borough's contribution could not be reduced. Mr. Rapaport advised that this amount is approximately \$600,000.00.

Stu Bran, 101 Aspen Court, confirmed that the State requires municipalities to annually increase their contribution to libraries by 15%.

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Murray Bass, 331 Piermont Road, announced that Senator Cardinale will be attending the Norwood Republican Party meeting on Monday, April 19, 2010 at 8:00 PM and extended an invitation to all.

No one else wishing to be heard, a motion to close the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Marino, seconded by Mrs. Orecchio and declared carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present.

**Closed Session: Adoption of Resolution 10:87 – Authorizing the Council to convene into closed session to discuss contract negotiations and a lease agreement. Formal action may be taken upon returning to open session**

At 10:30 PM, motion to adopt Resolution 10:87 was made by Mrs. Orecchio, seconded by Mr. Rapaport with all Council Members present voting aye.

At 11:10 PM, Mayor Barsa reconvened the regular meeting.

Motion to authorize the Borough Attorney to review the amendment proposed for the Fox Hill Manor ground lease was made by Mr. Rapaport, seconded by Mr. Condoleo and declared carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present.

**Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn at 11:15 PM was made by Mr. Marino, seconded by Mrs. Orecchio with all Council Members voting aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine L. McMackin, RMC, CMC  
Administratoir/Clerk