

**BOROUGH OF MOUNT ARLINGTON
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 21, 2010**

1. Call to Order

- 2. Adequate notice** of this meeting of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice was published in the Roxbury Register and the Daily Record on November 25, 2009; notice was posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building on November 23, 2009 and has been available to the public. Notice of the Budget Public Hearing and Change in Meeting Location was published in the Daily Record on September 19, 2010 and posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building on September 17, 2010; notice of this meeting is on file in the office of the Borough Clerk.

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-1 et seq.), the Borough Council opens every public meeting for comments of the public. However, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 : "Nothing in this Act shall be construed to limit the discretion of a public body to permit, prohibit or regulate the active participation at any meeting,...."

Speakers at Borough meetings shall have five minutes to present their comments to the Borough Council so as not to consume time that would otherwise be allotted to other persons who wish to speak. Speakers shall be courteous to the Council and other persons attending the meeting. Offensive remarks or unruly behavior will not be allowed and anyone who violates this policy will be barred from participating in the meeting.

3. Flag Salute

Council President Galate asked for a moment of silence to remember our troops fighting overseas.

Council President Galate publicly welcomed Acting Chief Lieutenant Keith Licata for his return from medical leave.

4. Roll Call

Councilman Driscoll, Councilman Sorge, Councilman Sadow, Councilman Windish, Councilman Doran, Council President Galate. Matthew Giacobbe, Esq., Borough Attorney, Joe Kovalcik, Budget Consultant, Bud Jones, Borough Auditor, Carolyn Rinaldi, Finance Department, and JoAnne Sendler, Borough Administrator, were also present. Mayor Arthur Ondish was absent due to recent surgery.

5. Open to Public (Due to the following Budget Hearing, this Public Session will entertain any topic except budget issues.)

Marietta Domanico, 17 Hickory Way:

- Ms. Domanico questioned the meeting time of 6:00 p.m., stating it is difficult for those working to attend.

Wendy Maler, 75 Mountainview Avenue:

- Ms. Maler referenced the Daily Record article wherein a Jeer was given to Chatham for considering re-hiring their Administrator once retired. Why did the Borough rehire our Administrator at \$500/day.

*Council President Galate stated the Borough rehired the Administrator at half the salary and she is on call 24/7, receiving no pension or benefits. This decision was made in the best interest of the Borough due to her knowledge and expertise. Ms. Sendler does have a Borough cell phone because she is on call 24/7 and would be here at any hour of the day if needed.

Marlene Ackerman, 56 Rogerene Way:

- Ms. Ackerman questioned whether the Administrator was planning to move to south Jersey.

*The Administrator stated she is not planning to move.

Council President Galate closed the Public Session.

Council President Galate stated that at the last Council meeting, Mr. Kosch gave Council pictures of the electrical box at the firehouse, questioning the inspectors approval. Council President read the following statement from Fire Chief Norman: *"I believe Mr. Kosch's photos were taken when the firehouse was under construction months ago. I am not an electrician or engineer in any way, but I see nothing wrong with the wires; it is a neat and clean job and has been signed off for approval."*

Council President Galate explained that at the last Council Meeting, the Council approved resolutions accepting three grants worth over \$489,000.

Council President Galate gave an overview of the budget process. Bud Jones, Borough Auditor, Nisivoccia & Company, gave a description of the annual procedures performed by Nisivoccia & Company for the Borough. The Borough Administrator gave a description of the internal Borough budget process and the time frame regarding the State aid decisions, leading to tonight's meeting. Joseph Kovalcik, Borough Budget Consultant, gave a brief overview of his prior consultant/CFO experience.

The Borough Administrator explained the 3% employee salary increase included in the budget but there will be no Borough raises. Once the Borough applied for the waiver and the aid, we could not amend the budget but we can cancel the amount of the raises, by resolution; it cannot be used this year and it will fall to fund balance to be used to offset next years budget.

6. Budget Resolutions

2010-106 Resolution of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington, in the County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Amending the 2010 Introduced Budget.

Motion to Approve: Councilman Driscoll.
Second: Councilman Sorge.
Public Hearing on Resolution #2010-106:

Marietta Domanico, 17 Hickory Way:

- Ms. Domanico asked when the Borough received the transitional aid, if the Borough had transitional aid prior to the recent award, and if the Borough had received interest on any money.

*The Borough received the aid on September 16, 2010, had no transitional aid amount prior to the new award, and has no accounts eligible to receive interest.

Joe Kovalcik explained the aid application process and the cap laws/procedures. Council President Galate stated that the Borough was one of fourteen municipalities that received aid, due to the fact that we met every criteria given by the State. Council President Galate stated the reputation and relationships formed by Mayor Ondish in Trenton were also a plus to the Borough's favor. Council President Galate stated that Mayor Ondish has brought millions of dollars to this community.

*The Borough Auditor explained that the Borough has also submitted an application for a tax levy waiver. Council President Galate stated that this Public Hearing pertains to the \$500,000 transitional aid.

Mary Cilurso, Brookside Lane:

- Ms. Cilurso questioned the need for a Budget Consultant because the Borough has a Business Administrator, a Finance Officer, and a Borough Auditor.

*The Borough Administrator stated that due to the fact that the Council knew our budget process would be rocky for the next few years, they agreed to hire Mr. Kovalcik to assist in the process; our CFO is part time, 5 hours per week.

Michael Bocher, 65 North Bertrand Road:

- Mr. Bocher asked for an explanation of how the Borough got to this point, regarding the cap on tax increases, and what is the state of affairs for the next couple of years, and stated there is a perception of mismanagement of the Borough finances.

*The Borough Auditor explained the past issues of water/sewer connection fees, debt service fees regarding completion of capital projects, fund balance and surplus. The Borough was not able to regenerate the fund balance used; the financial health of the Borough is not as good as in previous years but this is a result of what the State has forced the Borough to do. Joe Kovalcik explained in detail the decreases in revenue and fund balance.

Charles Squires, 26 Birch Terrace:

- Mr. Squires asked the percentage of the Borough's delinquent tax payments.

*The Borough Auditor stated the uncollected taxes are based on the calculated number based on the prior year's collection rate.

Lois Wasas, 14 Brookside Lane:

- Ms. Wasas asked how the transitional aid money is used and if there are any upcoming projects in the Borough.

*Mr. Kovalcik stated the aid is used to offset the taxes in the Borough; there will be no more projects on the infrastructure for now.

Marlene Ackerman, 56 Rogerene Way:

- Ms. Ackerman asked about the streetlights on Howard Boulevard and the fact that the residents are paying for the electricity for the lights.

*The Borough Administrator stated the committee for the streetscape project was set up in the late '90's however the Borough shortened the streetscape project, under the Mayor's vision, and only continued with the safe streets for school purposes. We will not be installing any more streetlights unless we receive a grant.

Angelo Pantazes, 21 Harrison:

- Mr. Pantazes asked the final tax increase for 2010.

*The Borough Administrator stated the fourth quarter tax bill will go down significantly because the \$500,000 transitional aid from the State will offset a portion of the taxes. Councilman Doran stated the tax bill is comprised of the school tax, which is the largest portion, the municipal tax and the county tax, which is not finalized yet; the municipal tax rate was originally 22% but with the state aid, it has dropped to approximately 13%.

Richard O'Connell, Rogerene Way:

- Mr. O'Connell requested the meeting time be changed as it is difficult to attend due to work schedules, traffic, etc.

Peter Domanico, 17 Hickory Way:

- Mr. Domanico questioned the increase in taxes and questioned the lack of a chart comparison to last years increase.

*Joe Kovalcik stated that the municipal portion will increase to 13%.

Wendy Maler, 75 Mountain View Avenue:

- Ms. Maler asked who was on the original Beautification Committee.

*The Borough Administrator stated the streetscape/village project began in 1999.

Council President Galate closed the Public Hearing on Resolution 2010-106.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Windish, Doran.

Nay: None.

Motion Approved.

2010-107 Resolution of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington, in the County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Adopting the 2010 Budget.
The Borough Clerk read the resolution into the record.

Motion to Approve: Councilman Driscoll.

Second: Councilman Sorge.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Windish, Doran, Council President Galate.

Nay: None.

Motion Approved.

Added Resolution:

2010-108 Resolution of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Mount Arlington, in the County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Cancelling Certain Appropriations Within the 2010 Municipal Budget.

Motion to Approve: Councilman Sorge.

Second: Councilman Doran.

Councilman Sadow stated this motion is vague and the cancelled appropriations should be spelled out more clearly.

Motion to Table to October 5, 2010 Council Meeting: Councilman Sadow.

Second: Councilman Driscoll.

Roll Call:

Aye: Driscoll, Sorge, Sadow, Windish, Doran, Council President Galate.

Nay: None.

Motion Approved.

7. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn: Councilman Driscoll.

Second: Councilman Sorge.

All in Favor – Aye; None Opposed.

Motion Approved.

Linda DeSantis, RMC
Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved at Council Meeting of November 9, 2010.