

SEPTEMBER 9, 2009

The South Harrison Township Committee held the regular meeting on Wednesday, September 9, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the South Harrison Township Municipal Building.

Mayor Robert Campbell called the meeting to order and was followed by the flag salute

Requirements of the "Open Public Meetings Act" were met. Notice of this meeting was given by: (1) sending sufficient notice herewith to the Today's Sunbeam of Salem and the Gloucester County Times of Woodbury; and (2) posting notice on the public bulletin board at the South Harrison Township Municipal Building.

Roll Call Vote: Robert Campbell – present, Robert Diaz – present, Robert Gaines – present, Gary Spinner – present, Charles Tyson – present, John Eastlack, Solicitor – present, Richard Fini, Engineer – present, Jeffrey Bruckler, Administrator – present, Nancy Kearns, Municipal Clerk – present.

Committee Reports:

Police Department – July 2009 Report

Ticket Revenues: The chief will have to be present in order to give the answer.

Construction Code Official – July 2009 Report

The Committee asked Joe Wille a question as to if the numbers on the summary report are up? Joe Wille replied that the Township will get \$4,000.

Engineering Report – August 2009

The Jackson Road and Lake Street bid will hopefully be out this month and a recommendation from the Engineer will be made by the October 14 meeting.

Veteran's Memorial Report

Edmund Crispin: The final cost is \$7,200 for the monument. It's anticipated that the monument will arrive before Veterans Day on November 11. (He also showed an image of what the monument will look like.) Mr. Crispin was asked if he had met with Theresa Roeder and Sarah Freeman and if he was permitted to circulate flyers during Community Day in order to get donations. Mr. Crispin said he talked to Theresa and they would be allowed to have a table at Community Day.

Community Day

Sarah Freeman: We have joined with Gloucester County to have a movie night as well as kick off a Community weekend with Community Day to follow. There will be an additional concession stand on Friday night to raise more money in order to send the 6th grade children on their annual trip which is about \$12,000. A resident volunteered to take flyers and mail them out to all of the residents in order to make the residents aware of what they can do in order to help.

Resolution R-09-104

Resolution Authorizing the Solicitor to Notify the Surety and to Take Action Against the Performance Bond Regarding the DeStefano Road Opening project on Cedar Grove Road

Motion to adopt Resolution R-09-104 was made by Robert Diaz, second by Charles Tyson.

Roll Call Vote: Robert Campbell – yes, Robert Diaz – yes, Robert Gaines – yes, Gary Spinner – yes, Charles Tyson – yes. **R.C.V.: 5 – yes’, 0 – no’s. Motion carried.**

Public Works Department – Status Report – Jon Sukeforth

Tax Collector Report: Taxes collected for the month of August \$50,396.41.

Old Business:

County EMS Update

Mayor Campbell reported that he asked Andy Lovell to prepare and update for tonight, but Mr. Lovell could not be here tonight. Mr. Bruckler read the report submitted by Mr. Lovell. Committeeman Diaz advised that Unity Ambulance has joined the Harrisonville Fire Company and that the Township has filed a law suit to seize the ambulance owned by Unity Ambulance.

Public Works Update

Mayor Campbell asked Jon Sukeforth to submit a report on the employees needed in order to get the work they need done efficiently and safely. Mayor Campbell, Mr. Gaines, and Mr. Tyson went to three other Public Works Departments in the local area in order to see what other towns are doing. Mr. Bruckler read the report submitted by Jon Sukeforth of the Public Works Department.

Construction Code Office Update

Joseph Wille, Construction Code Official gave a verbal report to the Committee advising that there is a 30 day extension for the RFP’s regarding hiring a 3rd party company to do the inspections. Letters will be sent to the basin owners reminding them of the obligation to maintain their basins.

Re-Constituted Sub-Committee

Robert Gaines was directed to be a liaison on the sub-committee in January of 2009. He was not permitted to vote; his job was to get the paperwork together. He met with one independent, one republican, and one democrat in order to see where each of them stood. Ronald O’Connor spoke with the individuals after in order to discuss more material with them.

He read his report that explained what the outcome of the investigation done by the New Jersey Police Department of the breach of documents on the computer on April

16, 2008. There were no charges filed because there was no evidence in wrong doing found. The recommendation was that this should be handled on an administrative level.

He suggested that the investigation should be ended and no further action would be able to prove anything. The meeting was between Carol Brodtkin, Pat Mulligan and Robert Gaines around May or June. There were no errors found in the New Jersey State Police report.

Gary Spinner was asked what the purpose of the report was. Gary Spinner said the purpose of the report was to indicate that it should be handled at an administrative level and because there were residents who asked for an investigation. The committee report indicated there was no criminal activity involved.

Mr. O' Connor also went on to say that he feels like other things needed to be looked into to better the township such as larger recycling bins.

New Business:

Resolution R-09-108

**Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of South Harrison
Authorizing Certain Reductions in Staff for Budgetary Reasons**

Mayor Campbell spoke of budget issues and the need to cut \$256,000.00 from the budget. \$79,000 had to be taken out of the budget reserves this year so there were no additional taxes added on to the residents. He also discussed that he spoke with the Chief first in order to discuss the Police Officer's budget. The only option was to cut back and to take money out of the budget. This resulted in a loss of officers.

Mr. Eastlack was asked to prepare a report of what should be done. Mr. Eastlack stated the there would have to be a cut in officers and it would be based on the last hired.

Committeeman Spinner stated that the Township will be getting a \$125,000.00 reimbursement for the Assessment and the impact the cut would have on the residents and feels this should be opened to the public for discussion.

Motion was made by Gary Spinner to open the meeting to the public on this issue, second by Robert Diaz. Motion failed.

Motion to adopt Resolution R-09-108 was made by Charles Tyson, second by Robert Gaines.

Committeeman Diaz does not feel that 2 of the members should vote on this action. Committeeman Gaines does not agree. Mayor Campbell said this is for budgetary reasons. Committeeman Spinner cited that the budget for this year has already been passed with the salaries in place. Committeeman Diaz stated that Mayor Campbell, Deputy Mayor Tyson and Committeeman Gaines are trying to hobble next years Committee with their "the sky is falling" speeches. Committeeman Diaz asked Mr. Eastlack why they can vote after saying the police are dirty.

Mr. Diaz was told that he was off topic and that he was being opinionated. Mr. Eastlack stated that a person is not allowed to vote if the person had a personal gain of monetary value resulting from the vote. If there was a personal issue, a person could not

sit in and make judgment that decides the outcome. Mr. Diaz asked Mr. Eastlack if he thought Mr. Gaines and Mr. Tyson were sitting in on the meeting only for the benefit of the budget.

Gary Spinner recited a quote from Charles Tyson on why he stepped down. Charles Tyson said it was because he “couldn’t trust his Police Department.”

A member of the audience then asked how much they would be saving on their taxes. The answer they received was \$.04.

Roll Call Vote: Robert Campbell – yes, Robert Diaz – no, Robert Gaines – yes, Gary Spinner – no, Charles Tyson – yes. **R.C.V.: 3 – yes’, 2 – no’s. Motion carried.**

Return to Old Business:

Ordinance O-09-11

An Ordinance Amending Chapter 120 – Solid Waste of the Township of South Harrison, County of Gloucester and State of New Jersey

Reintroduction and first reading.

There was an issue about garbage should only be placed in plastic bags because the animals will then be able to get into the bags.

Motion to adopt Ordinance O-09-11 on first reading was made by Charles Tyson, second by Robert Gaines.

Roll Call Vote: Robert Campbell – yes, Robert Diaz – yes, Robert Gaines – yes, Gary Spinner – yes, Charles Tyson – yes. **R.C.V.: 5 – yes’, 0 – no’s. Motion carried.**

Public hearing and final adoption set for October 14, 2009 at 7:30 pm.

RFP for 3rd Party Sub-code Inspectors

John Eastlack went over the revised specifications for the RFP for 3rd party inspections.

Motion to accept the revised RFP was made by Robert Gaines, second by Charles Tyson. Motion carried.

Return to New Business:

Resolution R-09-112

Resolution Awarding Contract for Collection and Removal of Garbage, Trash and Recyclables

Motion to adopt Resolution R-09-112 was made by Charles Tyson, second by Robert Gaines.

Roll Call Vote: Robert Campbell – yes, Robert Diaz – yes, Robert Gaines – yes, Gary Spinner – yes, Charles Tyson – yes. **R.C.V.: 5 – yes’, 0 – no’s. Motion carried.**

Ordinance O-09-12

An Ordinance Amending Chapter 24 of the Code of the Township of South Harrison, County of Gloucester and State of New Jersey

Motion to table this ordinance to the October 14, 2009 meeting was made by Gary Spinner, second by Robert Diaz.

Roll Call Vote: Robert Campbell – yes, Robert Diaz – yes, Robert Gaines – yes, Gary Spinner – yes, Charles Tyson – yes. **R.C.V.: 5 – yes’, 0 – no’s. Motion carried.**

Open Meeting to the Public:

Motion to open the meeting to the public was made by Charles Tyson, second by Robert Gaines. Motion carried.

Jim McCall asked about the grant which stated there had to be a certain amount of police officers on the force. Mayor Campbell answered that to his knowledge they would be okay. Mr. McCall then asked why Mr. Campbell is going to resign. Mr. Campbell answered because of his health.

Jack Fitzpatrick advised that he has concerns about the monument Mr. Crispin is building and brought up when he had previously mentioned that the Township should pay half for the memorial. He stated that Mr. Tyson said they would pay half. Mr. Tyson said that he said they should take it out of their salaries. Mr. Fitzpatrick was then upset about a previous meeting in which he was told to sit down, but there were five other people who spoke who were not told to sit down. He also questioned how much was being saved by cutting the two police officers. He was told there was an estimate about how much was being saved and for a fact they would be saving \$70,000.

Michael Crammer asked what the purpose of a Special Class 2 Officer is. No one could give him an answer. He said it was to save the Police Department money. He then asked how much they would be making and Mr. Spinner said 13 dollars an hour. He then brought up when an officer is sick they will now have to call in a higher up officer in order to fill in the spot which will then cost more money. Mr. Crammer then asked if they have called about the federal grant in order to gain knowledge about releasing the police officers. Mr. Campbell said he had the Chief look into it, but they still had to let the police officers go.

Robert Diaz stated that neither issue was brought up on any of the boards he is on. He also said he asked Mr. Eastlack about it. He was told he was invited to be at every major meeting with Mr. Holmstrom.

Gary Spinner said he sent out proposals to all board members and only received an answer from Mr. Diaz.

Harold Holmstrom asked when the firings would be enforced. He was told September 18. Mr. Holmstrom then asked if taxes were raised. Mayor Campbell said no.

Mr. Holmstrom then asked how they are going to make up the 0% they didn't raise this year. He was told there was a certain amount of reductions they are going to be taking in order not to raise the taxes. Mr. Holmstrom had said they are going to take every action they have to in order to get the point across that they had to cut this officer and to make officers work 12 hour shifts. He also said he thinks they are making a big mistake and he doesn't believe they are going to come up with the money they need.

Jeff Wotten addressed Mr. Tyson and Mr. Campbell and congratulated them on the hiring of officers a couple years ago, but told them they are making a big mistake. Mr. Wotten is an officer from Runnemede who was laid off. He told the members that once the Police Department was cut, the rate of crime dramatically increased with severe crimes that are not usually committed. He brought up the possibility of a home invasion happening which would not be able to be handled by a cut in the Department.

Marc Nagtegaal had a question about what had happened when they had discussed the 24/7 protection. Also, asked why they would go against the wishes of the people in the town who want the 24/7 protection. He said he wanted the protection of local guys not State Police. He said a Sheriff told his wife that Gloucester County will be taking over the Police Department.

Mr. Diaz went on to say that they are only certain they are going to be able to cut out expenses. He said there is no basis or way to see clearly how it is going to affect the future.

Ashley Meader discussed the March 3 snowstorm that she was injured in. She wants to know why Country Bridge Estates does not get plowed. The Township was supposed to be plowing the streets since 2006, but have not done so in years. The Engineer answered that the bonds were dropped before 2007. Another issue was two houses on the corner that have been vacant which are becoming an eyesore. The answer was that there is no ordinance to keep the properties maintained, but they would get John Eastlack to prepare one.

Janice Huggins applauded Theresa and Sarah for Community Day.

Melanie Shoemaker stated that she is displeased about the ambulance being thrown under the bus and now throwing the police officers under the bus. She believes there is a personal gain.

Tom Devine asked Robert Campbell if he was for the township. Mayor Campbell said he was.

Craig Harper said he doesn't remember reading much about South Harrison Township in the paper until Mr. Campbell was voted in. Also, he was upset about hearing that the school now has to get someone to mow their grass and shovel their snow. He is concerned about not hearing about decisions until after they are already made.

Mel Robertson asked if new homes cost the taxpayers money. The answer was that it depends on what type of house it is. Mr. Robertson stated that he has talked to people who pay taxes and they wouldn't mind if taxes went up in order to keep the police officers.

John Campbell asked if the budget was in and approved, which it is. He then asked if the cut of the officers is to save for the future, which it is. He is still upset that there is no answer for the question he asked at a previous meeting about how much it costs to pay for the unemployment of the officers.

Rob Schenk asked if Mayor Campbell has a personal vendetta. Also, he told them they still have time to bring these officers back in order to save them from being sued.

Debbie Cunningham advised that she heard gunshots on her property and state officers didn't come until an hour later. She asked when the school would be receiving the tax money. She was told that it wouldn't be coming this month or next month. She was told that was not true and that the money should be received shortly, they were waiting for paperwork to be received by the CFO.

Radine Konawel said if anything happens to her in the middle of the night she will wake the Committee up.

Chris Jones advised that he is the Trooper who is assigned to the area. He says since he doesn't have local knowledge, he won't know how to get around the township when a life threatening situation is taking place which may mean he might not get to them on time.

Donna McWain hopes the Committee will reconsider letting the Police Officers go.

Jennifer Jones advised that she is scared that her children's health and life are being put at risk. She said she would be willing to work more in order to pay more taxes in order to keep the Officer.

Jeff Wotten asked if Mr. Tyson if would be the tie breaker to put these officers back to work.

Ben Freeman is upset that Committee members don't show up to the ambulance meetings. Also, he is upset that only one officer will be on during certain days, which if that officer gets hurt they will then have to call someone else. The answer to this was they would sit down with the Chief in order to determine what will happen.

Sarah Freeman said she didn't want to do Community Day this year, but was told she had a budget and to spend it.

Mark Townsend said when Colleen was hired they were told the Administrator would be paid by grants. The grants were applied for, but have not been received. He

then asked if they could get a grant for the police department, but the Committee could not answer because it was up to the Chief.

Jeannine Campbell asked about the grants that were discussed and who supervises the police department. The answer was the Committee and Chief Mabey was asked about the grants, but there has been no answer.

Chris Konawel told the board that when he was growing up he always looked up to the police officers. He is also disgruntled that when someone threatens a Committee member, action is automatically taken, but when the Committee members make a threat towards the police officers it's ok.

Mike Bowen said if there is not enough coverage with the police department, there is going to be a much higher crime rate then there is now. He asked who would have an officer's back if it's the middle of the night. The answer was the State Police.

Deana Ferta restated that the taxpayers will be more then happy to pay more taxes in order to keep the police officers.

Bob Ferta stated that the Committee isn't listening to their taxpayers, which is their job.

Mike Crammer advised of a double murder that occurred in West Deptford which involved a six and nine year old. The armed suspect was still inside threatening to kill the mother and her newborn baby. Mr. Crammer said the suspect was unable to kill the other two because more officers showed up. He stated that if these two officers were fired, the back up would not be able to make it in time.

Close Meeting to the Public:

Motion to close the meeting to the public was made by Charles Tyson, second by Robert Gaines. Motion carried.

Resolution R-09-109

Resolution for Excluding the Public

Motion to table Resolution R-09-109 was made by Robert Campbell, second by Charles Tyson.

Roll Call Vote: Robert Campbell – yes, Robert Diaz – yes, Robert Gaines – yes, Gary Spinner – yes, Charles Tyson – yes. **R.C.V.: 5 – yes', 0 – no's. Motion carried.**

Resolution R-09-110

Resolution for Public Fireworks Display

Motion to adopt Resolution R-09-110 was made by Robert Diaz, second by Gary Spinner.

Roll Call Vote: Robert Campbell – yes, Robert Diaz – yes, Robert Gaines – yes, Gary Spinner – yes, Charles Tyson – yes. **R.C.V.: 5 – yes', 0 – no's. Motion carried.**

Resolution R-09-111

Resolution of the Township of South Harrison Requesting the Director of the Division of Local Government Services to Authorize the Insertion of a Special Item of Revenue in the 2009 Budget of the Township of South Harrison County of Gloucester State of New Jersey

Motion to adopt Resolution R-09-111 was made by Robert Diaz, second by Gary Spinner.

Roll Call Vote: Robert Campbell – yes, Robert Diaz – yes, Robert Gaines – yes, Gary Spinner – yes, Charles Tyson – yes. **R.C.V.: 5 – yes', 0 – no's. Motion carried.**

Sections F, H, and I will be carried over to the meeting on September 23, 2009. Special meeting scheduled for September 17, 2009 at 6:30 pm for audit review.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn was made by Charles Tyson, second by Gary Spinner. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy E. Kearns, RMC
Municipal Clerk