

MAY 17, 2010

The South Harrison Township Committee held a work session meeting on Monday, May 17, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. in the South Harrison Township Municipal Building.

Mayor James McCall 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: Joseph Calabro – present, Robert Diaz – present, Robert Gaines – present, Gary Spinner – present, James McCall – present, Christie Ehret, CFO – present, Celeste Keen, Deputy Clerk – present.

**New Business: Resolution R-10-53
Resolution of the Township of South Harrison Introducing the 2010 Budget**

Motion to adopt Resolution R-10-53 was made by Robert Diaz, second by Gary Spinner.

Roll Call Vote: Joseph Calabro – yes, Robert Diaz – yes, Robert Gaines – yes, James McCall – yes, Gary Spinner - yes. **R.C.V.: 5 – yes', 0 – no's. Motion carried.**

**Resolution R-10-54
Resolution of the Township of South Harrison Certifying the Tax Levy Associated with the Kingsway Regional School District Budget**

Motion to adopt Resolution R-10-54 was made by Gary Spinner, second by Robert Gaines.

Roll Call Vote: Joseph Calabro – yes, Robert Diaz – yes, Robert Gaines – yes, James McCall – yes, Gary Spinner - yes. **R.C.V.: 5 – yes', 0 – no's. Motion carried.**

Motion to open the meeting to allow discussions pertaining to South Harrison Township Board of Education's budget was made by Gary Spinner, second by Robert Gaines. **Motion carried.**

Mayor McCall advised that since the last meeting he and Committeeman Spinner had been working on the budget and had come to an amount of \$169,362 to be reduced from the BOE budget. Mayor McCall noted that he understands certain Committee members feel that that amount is not enough and that is reason for additional discussion. Committeeman Spinner stated that changes were made to the 'Proposed Budget Reductions' worksheet in an attempt to maintain the teaching staff. Medical benefits budget line may have some room for reduction as well as some administrative expenses being reduced allows for the \$169,362. Committeeman Diaz asked the BOE their

thoughts on the revised numbers. Debbie Cunningham advised that the BOE is not pleased by the cutting of two teacher's and the impact on class sizes.

Committeeman Gaines stated that he's not happy with these numbers either, 12% of the voters voted down the budget. He further advised that he would like to see the budget reduced by \$200,000 to make it easier on the taxpayers. Is sorry for the impact on any individuals, but will be voting against this proposal because he feels more could be cut.

Committeeman Calabro asked what the BOE thought of the proposal. Ms. Cunningham advised that cutting two teachers is more about the impact on the students. Committeeman Spinner advised that although some administrative salary freezes have been agreed to, teachers are part of a collective bargaining unit and as such must agree as a whole. Ms. Cunningham stated that while the State has recommended medical benefits contributions, South Harrison BOE already contribute toward their benefits; and is tentative regarding medical benefit reductions due to anticipating that some employees will be opting in this year. South Harrison's Board Administrator is currently one of the lowest paid BA's in the County. BA's currently stay on for 2-3 years due to salaries offered by other districts. Committeeman Calabro stated that he felt as though Administration still has room for more reductions; salary reductions not just freezes.

Jeff Brown asked what the Committee feels would be a fair salary? Committee Calabro advised that the Governor put out a report with recommendations regarding Superintendents and in management positions from \$100-200,000. With 369 students and 19 classroom teachers. Mayor McCall and Committeeman Spinner didn't feel comfortable in asking Superintendent Datz to make a pay cut.

Committeeman Diaz noted that 4.9 million dollars divided by 377 (proposed enrollment for 2010/11 school year) equals 13K per student with debt service; or 10K without debt service.

Motion to open the meeting to the public regarding Resolution R-10-55 only was made by Robert Diaz, second by Robert Gaines. **Motion carried.**

Mark Nagtegaal of 719 Franklinville Road – questioned the transportation salary line item of 13K. Janine Wechter, BA advised that it goes to an administrative person it's 1/3 of her salary it is an estimation of the time spent on transportation related issues. In regard to line item 11-000-217-100 with a 35K salary; Ms. Cunningham answered that it is for three (3) one on one aides required due children's special needs. BA position not a viable share service at this time. Committee advised Mr. Nagtegaal that outside of the debt service the budget is flat. Debt service equates to approximately \$54 per household.

James McShea of 426 Fislerville Road stated that he left engineering and entered the teaching industry, he is the President of SHEAA. Governor is mistaken; requested that the Committee not to make further cuts in budget. Smaller class sizes are recommended for better education.

Joan Ballard of 19 Sweetbriar Court referencing a Gloucester County Times article noted that South Harrison has highest cost per student. Ms. Ballard noted that at Kingsway Regional School the classes sizes are over 30, get the children used to the commotion.

Jack Fitzpatrick of 911 Monroeville Road asked how many employees in South Harrison Elementary School? Answer; 54 full and part time. Mr. Fitzpatrick noted that \$137K to be raised by taxes approximately 4 cents per \$100.

Julie Haines Legg of 1205 Commissioners Road as a teacher at Rowan she can tell students that come from smaller class sizes.

Adina Kline 1006 Lincoln Road is a parent and a speech pathologist, what she's seen there is no where to cut in this budget. As Ms. Legg just stated smaller class sizes are needed in elementary schools. While high school is learning reading assignments; elementary school is teaching basics that need more attention. Ms. Kline advised bringing more tax ratables to the Township other than the taxes. Mayor McCall responded that an over 55 community is coming in to the Township. Mayor McCall also advised that commercial businesses are not coming in to South Harrison Township.

Committeeman Diaz welcomed those in the audience and requested that they come to more meetings and become aware of the many issues that the Committee is dealing with and not just for this one issue. Committeeman Diaz noted that most of the people present were employees of the school and therefore had little concern for the other matters within the Township.

Lisa Henjes of 9 Laurel Drive asked the Committee, of the other towns that had failed school budgets how many tried to get a 0% raise in taxes. Mayor McCall stated that he did not know. Committeeman Spinner advised that Swedesboro and Woolwich was attempting. Ms. Henjes compared South Harrison to Woodbury. Committeeman Spinner advised that the Woodbury school district made many reductions prior to their election. Ms. Henjes stated that it is her understanding that in 2005, 22K was budgeted for legal fees within the Township. In 2010 the budget amount is 60K for legal fees and litigation. Requested that the Committee take heed to reign in their own spending.

Committeeman Calabro stated that South Harrison Elementary is unique and some choose to compare ourselves with other towns which are not comparable.

Melvin Robertson of 103 Foxford lane asked Committeeman Calabro if he was aware of what the health contribution is for the average teacher? Committeeman Calabro stated that he did not know. Committeeman Spinner advised that it is approximately 10K - - it is one of the highest in the state. Mr. Robertson stated that elementary children are in their formable years and need smaller class sizes. While assisting the township this winter he found Mr. Datz was using his own snow blower. We are living in a premier community with individuals that go above and beyond.

Liz Spinner of 102 Antelope Drive referenced the facts of Lisa Henjes prior statements. Woodbury cut teachers and an administrator prior to the election.

Joseph Marino of 402 Harrisonville Road has four (4) young children, education means a lot. He is a product of South Harrison Elementary as well as his family for generations. Budget was defeated and the Committee is obligated to cut the best way possible amicably.

Mary Howard of 4 Hollybrook Road asked the BOE, were cuts made prior to the election. Answered by Ms. Cunningham – 1 ½ teachers, an aide, a guidance counselor, a bus route, some maintenance and a part time secretary were reduced. If not happy with the current offer; what would they recommend cutting? Committeeman Calabro stated that he would look at Administration; Committeeman Gaines suggested increase in classroom sizes.

Motion to close the meeting to the public on this matter only was made by James McCall, second by Robert Diaz. **Motion carried.**

Ms. Cunningham asked to restore the teachers = 88K + medical benefits. Committeeman Diaz asked is there any other line item to cut 88K? Ms. Cunningham answered no. Jonathan Feinbaum advised regarding the surplus in the school if you take that away you expose the residents to great risk.

Mayor McCall advised that there would be a five minute break.

A revised worksheet with reduced cuts totaling \$158,720 was distributed and reviewed. Committeeman Diaz noted that the worksheet contains recommendations made by the Committee and that the figures are not mandates merely suggestions. Salary cuts across the board should be made if, after all the comments made by the public, it's that important every one should be willing to sacrifice. Jonathan Feinbaum advised that the teachers have not received a pay increase outside of the step increase.

Resolution R-10-55

Resolution by the South Harrison Township Committee Reducing and Certifying Amount to be Raised for School Taxes for the 2010-2011 School Year

Motion to adopt Resolution R-10- 55 with the tax levy amount aforementioned above was made by Robert Diaz, second by Gary Spinner.

Roll Call Vote: Joseph Calabro – no, Robert Diaz – yes, Robert Gaines – no, James McCall – yes, Gary Spinner - yes. **R.C.V.: 3 – yes', 2 – no's. Motion carried**

Resolution R-10-56

Resolution Authorizing Addendum to Collective Bargaining Agreement

Motion to adopt Resolution R-10-56 was made by Robert Gaines, second by Gary Spinner.

Roll Call Vote: Joseph Calabro – yes, Robert Diaz – yes, Robert Gaines – yes, James McCall – yes, Gary Spinner - yes. **R.C.V.: 5 – yes', 0 – no's. Motion carried**

Mayor McCall advised that there will be a meeting in the Township building on Wednesday, May 19th at 6:30 pm with Clayton Rager who will offer a solar presentation. The meeting will be open to the public.

Open Meeting to the Public:

Motion to open the meeting to the public was made Gary Spinner, second by Robert Gaines. Motion carried.

Marc Nagtegaal of 719 Franklinville Road regarding the budget, stormwater management issue will require more funds. Mayor McCall advised that it is being taken care of.

Close Meeting to the Public:

Motion to close the meeting to the public was made by Robert Diaz, second by Gary Spinner. **Motion carried.**

Committeeman Diaz noted that Mr. McShea had earlier attempted to discuss a meeting for seniors assisting with tax freeze. Committeeman Diaz requested that if anyone knows Mr. McShea, please advise that possible web site information may be uploaded. Additionally advised the public that if there was any community information that they felt should be shared, to contact him and he will receive Committee approval and furnish on the Township website.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn was made by Gary Spinner, second by Robert Gaines. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Celeste Keen, RMC
Deputy Clerk