

Merchantville, NJ

March 10, 2008

A Budget Workshop was held at 6:45 PM. All attended but Mr. Waldron. Mr. Perno joined at 6:02 PM. The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 PM.

A regular meeting of Borough Council was held at 7:36 PM, Monday, March 10, 2008. Mayor Frank M. North presided. Pledge of Allegiance and Silent Prayer were observed. Announcement was made that the meeting had been advertised in accordance with the regulations prescribed by the "Open Public Meetings Act".

ROLL CALL:

Council Present: Alloway, Fields, Volkert, Waldron, Perno and Brunton.

Borough Clerk Fry, Deputy Clerk Brouse and Denise Moules were present.

PUBLIC:

Gail Ford, 135 North Centre Street, asked about the minutes.

Jean Collins, 116 Poplar Avenue, asked about Corzine's consolidation initiative. Are we opposing mergers? Mayor North answered, yes we are opposing them.

ENGINEER'S REPORT:

Consulting Engineer Services provided a written project status report.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Qualified purchasing agent mandate from NJ Municipal Management Association
Colonial National Bank rate

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Mrs. Fields stated the Planning Board will discuss satellite dishes. There will be a code enforcement meeting on March 26. EMS ambulance is still out of service.

Mr. Waldron delivered the Public Events report. Art Fair will be April 19th, Birthday Celebration will be 1st Saturday in June. He delivered Shade Tree Commission report and the Historic Preservation Committee report.

Mr. Brunton gave the Public Works report. Department of Public Works used CC Correctional Facility workers for Merchantville. The office of Emergency Management's first meeting is March 31st. and the Board of Health licensing report was presented.

Mr. Perno reported on the Community Development Block Grant, buildings & grounds driveways and closet cleanout. Community Center's emergency lighting failed. A vendor looked at the HVAC.

Mr. Volkert delivered the Fire Department report. They are well trained in Incident Command System. Sewer repair on Cove.

Mr. Alloway gave the Police Report and read letter of thanks from Freeholder Carmen Rodriguez.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

John Fry, Borough Administrator, provided Council with a written report and outlined a few of the points.

NEW BUSINESS:

FINANCIAL REPORTS: On the motion of Mrs. Fields, second of Mr. Alloway and a unanimous roll call vote, Council approved the Chief Financial Officer's Report of Cash Receipts for February 2008.

RESOLUTION-OPPOSING STATE AID REDUCTIONS IN GOVERNOR'S BUDGET MESSAGE-On a motion by Mr. Alloway and second of Mr. Volkert, Council unanimously approved the following Resolution:

08-32

RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF MERCHANTVILLE, OPPOSING THE FAILURE OF THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED STATE BUDGET FOR THE 2008-2009 FISCAL YEAR TO TREAT PROPERTY TAX RELIEF AS OUR PRIORITY

WHEREAS, on February 26, 2008, in Trenton, Governor Jon S. Corzine presented his FY 2009 Budget proposal to a Joint Session of the State Legislature, which proposal now goes to the Legislature, which must pass a balanced budget by the start of the State's next Fiscal Year, which begins on July 1; and

WHEREAS, the proposal, which represents what the Governor called "many unpleasant choices," calls for the elimination of two Departments of State Government (the Departments of Agriculture and Personnel) and the State Commerce Commission, and asks all other Departments to absorb funding cuts, and further calls for sacrifice in a number of other areas, including direct property tax relief, hospital aid, higher education assistance and Medicaid, with the inordinately deep cuts in municipal property tax relief funding; and

WHEREAS, one year after the historic Special Session for Property Tax Reform, which purportedly eliminated the need for a Citizens' Convention, our property taxpayers will once again be asked for patience, and they will be asked to shoulder more than their fair share of the funding burden; and

WHEREAS, local officials have done so much with so little for so long, that State Budget-makers now believe some can do everything with absolutely nothing; and

WHEREAS, municipal property tax relief will be slashed by \$189.6 million; and

WHEREAS, for municipalities with a population of less than 5,000, there will be no CMPTRA funding this year; for municipalities with a population total between 5,000 and 10,000, this relief will be limited to one-half of the amount received in the State's 2006-2007 budget; and the \$32.6 million distributed according to the CMPTRA formula, which municipalities received last year as 2008 Municipal Property Tax Assistance, is gone; and

WHEREAS, all municipalities will receive level Energy Tax Receipts Property Tax Relief funding, despite State Law that 'requires' annual inflationary adjustments of this (and CMPTRA) funding; and

WHEREAS, last year, municipal efficiency was promoted to the tune of \$34.8 million, but in this proposal, this funding has been eliminated; and

WHEREAS, last year's \$32 million in Municipal Homeland Security Funding is gone, Special Municipal Aid funding is cut from \$153 million to \$145.4 – a loss of \$7.6 million, Extraordinary Aid funding is reduced by \$1.7 million – from \$34 million to \$32.3 million, and the \$8 million Regional Efficiency Aid Program will not be funded; and

WHEREAS, beyond these cuts, certain municipalities served by the State Police will be asked to contribute \$20 million to the State's General Fund, and Homestead Rebates for Homeowners will be cut by \$257 million, and for Renters by \$124 million; and

WHEREAS, the reduction in state aid will cause a .28 cent increase in the tax rate for the citizens of Merchantville, or the equivalent reduction in essential services provided throughout the community; therefore, now be it

RESOLVED, that the governing body of The Borough of Merchantville *calls on* its elected representatives in Trenton, Senator Diane B. Allen and Assembly members Herbert C. Conaway and Jack Connors, to work with their colleagues in the Legislature and with the Governor to take affirmative action to restore program funding sufficient to honor state statutes and their stated commitment to the cause of property tax relief in all New Jersey municipalities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to Governor Jon S. Corzine, Acting State Treasurer R. David Rousseau, Senate President Richard J. Codey, Senate Minority Leader Thomas H. Kean, Assembly Speaker Joseph J. Roberts, Assembly Minority Leader Alex DeCroce, the Chairs and Members of the Senate and Assembly Budget and Appropriations Committees, our own Senator Diane B. Allen and Assembly members Jack Connors and Herbert C. Conaway and to the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

RESOLUTION-APPROVING DENISE K. MOULES, CFO, TO SIGN WARRANTS: On the motion of Mr. Alloway, second of Mrs. Fields, Council unanimously approved the following resolution:

R08-33

RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF MERCHANTVILLE, COUNTY OF CAMDEN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY AMENDING RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, on January 3, 2008 the Borough Council of the Borough of Merchantville approved Resolution #08-14; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Merchantville wishes to amend said resolution and allow Denise K. Moules, Chief Financial Officer, to sign warrants;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Merchantville that Denise K. Moules, Chief Financial Officer, be permitted to sign warrants.

RESOLUTION-AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH RLC III, LLC, ACCESS TO CERTAIN PROPERTIES: On the motion of Mr. Perno, second of Mr. Volkert, Council unanimously approved the following resolution:

R08-34

RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF MERCHANTVILLE, COUNTY OF CAMDEN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT WITH THE RLC III, LLC REGARDING ACCESS TO

CERTAIN PROPERTIES

WHEREAS, the Borough of Merchantville (hereinafter "Merchantville") is a municipal entity organized under the laws of the State of New Jersey and located in Camden County; and

WHEREAS, the RLC III, LLC is a limited liability company of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania whose offices are located at 1025 Beaumont Road, Berwyn, PA 19312 (referred to as the "RLC"); and

WHEREAS, RLC is the legal and/or equitable owner of certain properties located at 28, 30 and 32 West Maple Avenue in Merchantville; and

WHEREAS, Merchantville wishes access to these properties for its Fire Department for the purposes of the training its members; and

WHEREAS, RLC has agreed to permit Merchantville access to these properties upon the approval of a Hold Harmless Agreement in favor of RLC from Merchantville; and

WHEREAS, Merchantville shall indemnify, hold harmless and defend RLC, its employees, officers and agents, from and against all liability, claims, suits, losses, damages, costs and demands, on account of bodily injury, including death, or property damage, arising out of or connected with the performance of the services under this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, Merchantville and RLC intend, by virtue of this Resolution, to set forth the terms and conditions of this Agreement; and

WHEREAS, it is the intention of the Borough Council of the Borough of Merchantville to authorize the proper municipal officials to execute the Resolution on behalf of the Borough of Merchantville;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Merchantville, County of Camden, State of New Jersey, that Frank M. North, Mayor of the Borough of Merchantville and John C. Fry, Borough Clerk of the Borough of Merchantville be and hereby are authorized to execute this Resolution providing for access to certain properties located at 28, 30 and 32 West Maple Avenue in Merchantville for the Merchantville Fire Department for the purposes of the training its members.

DISCUSSION-PROPERTY MAINTENANCE OR ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES FOR 24 WEST END:

Code Enforcement & Board of Health cannot do anything further. **Bill Joseph** said he could issue notice of unsafe structure which would lead to demolition. **Timothy J. Higgins** said he thinks we have an abandoned properties ordinance and will confirm.

APPROVAL-Borough historian to view newspapers in Borough display case.

DISCUSSION-Payment for special DWI court sessions will be done.

DISCUSSION TABLED-Abatement of taxes for Maple-Chapel was tabled until after the sale of the property.

PAYMENT OF BILLS:

On the motion of Mr. Alloway, second of Mr. Volkert and a unanimous roll call vote, Council unanimously approved the following bills for payment:

R08-31 RESOLUTION

RESOLVED that the Report of the Department of Accounts and Auditing be accepted and spread upon the minutes and the Treasurer be is hereby authorized to pay bills approved therein.

DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND AUDITING HAS EXAMINED THE FOLLOWING BILLS

AMOUNTING TO \$ AND FINDS SAME TO BE CORRECT:

CURRENT FUND: (PER 3/10/08 CHECK REGISTER)

CHECKS DELIVERED

CHECK # 013384-013388 & 311-316 (01334/013339/013243/013353/013360 VOID)

22,988.75

CHECK # 013389-013456

\$121,099.12

\$144,087.87

DOG ACCOUNT: (PER 3/10/08 CHECK REGISTER)

CHECKS DELIVERED

CHECK #

CHECK#

GENERAL CAPITAL ACCOUNT: (PER 3/10/08 CHECK REGISTER)

CHECKS DELIVERED

CHECK #

001435-001437 (001433

CHECK# VOID)

10,736.62

10,736.62

MERCHANTVILLE SEWER UTILITY: (PER 3/10/08 CHECK REGISTER)

CHECKS DELIVERED CHECK #

CHECK#

CHECK

#

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE TRUST FUND: (PER 3/10/08 CHECK REGISTER)

CHECK DELIVERED

CHECK #

CHECK#

RECREATION COMMISSION: (PER 3/10/08 CHECK REGISTER)

CHECKS DELIVERED

CHECK#

CHECK #

TRUST ACCOUNT - OTHER FUNDS: (PER 3/10/08 CHECK REGISTER)

CHECKS DELIVERED

CHECK #

CHECK # 001154-001160

109,001.02

\$109,001.02

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION: (PER 3/10/08 CHECK REGISTER)

CHECKS DELIVERED

CHECK #

CHECK#

TOTAL:

\$263,825.51

**EXAMINED AND FOUND CORRECT (SIGNED PATRICIA A. FIELDS)
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND AUDITING**

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

PRIVATE:

On the motion of Mr. Alloway and second of Mr. Volkert and a unanimous roll call vote, council adjourned into private session to discuss matters of personnel, contract negotiations & possible litigation.

ADJOURNMENT:

On the motion of Mrs. Fields, second of Mr. Volkert, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.

JOHN C. FRY
BOROUGH CLERK