

Public Meeting
July 21st, 2014

Meeting was opened by Council President Julie McCleary at 6:00pm. Those present were J. Meehan, P. MacAdams, G. Gilbert, J. Granstrom and M. Mevoli. The Solicitor was Timothy Higgins, Esq.. T. Branella was absent.

This Meeting was advertised in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, and complies with all the laws therein.

Reading and Approval of Minutes of June 4th and June 16th, 2014:

Motion – G. Gilbert
2nd – P. MacAdams
All in favor: Carried.

Approval of Committee Reports:

Motion – J. Granstrom
2nd – G. Gilbert
All in Favor: Carried.

Open to Public:

Robert and Sandra McKinney, 221 Fifth Street, asked council about the letter that was sent out about the increase in taxes. The letter explained there was a mistake in the tax year 2013 and is being rectified in the 2014 tax year. The mistake was on the school debt service. It was incorrectly deferred to 2014. Mr. McKinney asked why we have to pay for a mistake made in a prior year. He also asked when council found out about the error. R. Giles, borough clerk, said that council found out a few days ago. He said he found out about the error in early January. Mr. McKinney asked why the clerk did not inform anyone. The clerk said he informed the Mayor immediately after he found out about the error and it really was not his place to tell everyone. J. McCleary said that the business administrator, Robert Delengowski, is in the audience and can answer any questions on the error. Mr. Delengowski explained that when the taxes were deferred, the tax rate went down on the school side. Since the 2014 debt has to be paid along with the 2013 debt, the taxpayers are hit with a significant increase because they are on the hook for two years of debt service payments. Mr. Delengowski reiterated that if the deferred amount from 2013 was in last years' rate, taxes in the town would have increased and not decreased. Therefore, you are only paying the taxes you should have paid across the last two years. It just looks like a huge increase because of the bulk of the payment coming in the last two Quarters of 2014. The increase is \$342 for an average assessment of \$150,000. Mr. McKinney asked why the people were not informed. Mr. Delengowski said it was discussed in one of their public meetings. He also reiterated that to explain an error without a tax rate would be hard to explain. Mrs. McKinney asked if we knew before the bond referendum. The Borough Clerk and Mr. Delengowski said they did know prior to the bond referendum. Mrs. McKinney stated that the residents should have been informed before the referendum because my husband and I could have changed our decision on the vote. You took that informed decision out of our hands.

Adam Tussey, 202 Sixth Street, stated that he was furious over this letter. He said he knows taxes will go up, but this is something the people are going to struggle with. Some

will have to pay up to \$500 more for the next two quarters. If we were informed, we could have prepared ourselves. He asked if there was any repercussions for his mistake. Mr. Delengowski stated that he offered to submit his resignation to the Board. The solicitor said we are not in a place to discuss what did or did not happen to punish the business administrator. This is between the Board and Mr. Delengowski. Mr. Tussey stated that in the private sector a mistake like this would result in a firing. He says he feels there should be some type of reprimand. He asked Mr. Delengowski if he felt guilty for this mistake. He responded that he does feel guilty and he made an honest mistake. We have put in checks and balances to avoid this issue in the future.

Mr. McKinney reiterated that we should have been informed immediately. He feels that everyone could have hid the information so the referendum could pass. William Muldoon, 241 New Jersey stated that a lot of people are on fixed income and would have benefited from an advanced warning of some kind. J. McCleary thanked everyone for their input and Mr. Delengowski for coming to the meeting on behalf of the school board.

Closed to the public.

Old Business:

Ordinance:

8-14 Approving Permanent Easement Relative to Block 16 Lot 21.01

9-14 Amending Chapter 114 – Property Maintenance

Second Reading

Public Hearing – No Questions or Comments from the Public.

Motion – M. Mevoli

2nd – J. Meehan

All in Favor: Carried.

New Business:

Ordinance:

10-14 Amending Salary Ordinance

Motion – G. Gilbert

2nd – P. MacAdams

All in Favor: Carried.

Resolutions:

102-14 Authorizing Cancellation of Property Taxes for Totally Disabled Vet

103-14 Authorization to Apply Municipal Liens

104-14 Authorize Agreement for Shared Service Agreement with Merchantville

105-14 Authorize the Rejection of All Bids for Reconstruction of Community Road

106-14 Authorize Purchase of E-Ticketing System and Enter into Shared Service Agreement with Gloucester Township

Motion – M. Mevoli

2nd – J. Meehan

All in Favor: Carried.

Approval of payment of bills: \$ 375,319.42

Motion – J. Meehan

2nd – G. Gilbert

All in favor: Carried.

Open to Council:

G. Gilbert said the Fourth of July was great considering the bad weather. Thanked everyone who came out and the volunteers.

J. Granstrom asked about a timeline for dumpsters being allowed in front of resident's homes. The clerk said he was unsure of any timeline. On the particular property in question, the clerk informed Mr. Granstrom that a roof was being replaced. J. Granstrom also said that the Legion ball field maintenance is almost complete. The plumbing in the stand will get done this week and the fence has been fixed.

P. MacAdams asked about the speeding in the alleyways and side streets. It was brought up in prior meetings and wanted to know of any progress. The clerk said the chief of police is on vacation and will get the committee together to come up with options.

M. Mevoli thanked everyone for their help for the Fourth of July celebration. Mr. Mevoli thinks this was the first time it rained during the parade. He remembers it raining later in the day but not during the celebration.

J. McCleary thanked everyone who came out for the Fourth of July. It was nice to see everyone despite the weather.

The clerk gave everyone new email addresses and asked everyone to log in as soon as possible.

Motion to Adjourn – M. Mevoli

2nd – P. MacAdams

All in favor: Adjourned.

Ryan Giles
Borough Clerk