

**BOROUGH OF BOUND BROOK-  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES –FEBRUARY 28, 2009**

Mayor Pilato called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with a reading of the Open Public Meetings Law Statement, Opening Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance read by the Borough Clerk.

**ROLL CALL**

Mayor Pilato	present
Council Thompson	present
Council President Vasquez	absent-arrived at 10:55 a.m.
Council Auletta	present
Council Pranzatelli	absent –out of state
Council Dietrich	present
Council Petti	present

In attendance: Randy Bahr, Borough Administrator, Donna Marie Godleski, Borough Clerk;

**AGENDA: FINANCE**

Mr. Bahr opened up the meeting addressing the following-

We have not heard any official documentation from the state regarding state aid. We received the extraordinary aid application on Thursday. The due date is April 1<sup>st</sup>.

The budget needs to be introduced prior to that date. The state has extended our statutory date to March 17<sup>th</sup> for introduction of the budget.

Spreadsheets prepared by Mr. Bahr were reviewed. Sheets provided a three year history and the budget request. Mr. Bahr stated that we have not gone through and made any budget cuts yet. Department heads been told more than likely operating expenditures will be of last year. He received requests for additional staffing-part time and he advised very unlikely for this year.

We are looking at telephone service to switch over to voice over internet with a landline as a safety backup. This will be going into place the end of this month. This will save 60% from the actual Verizon charges.

Mr. Bahr attended a seminar with Mayor Pilato on renewable energy. We will reach out to the school district about possible resources together.

Mr. Bahr reviewed tax collections; very well for 2008; 97.81%.

Grants will be updated on the spreadsheets.

General Fees are being reviewed as well as Construction fees.

We are looking at all fees; alarms, taxi, towing, registration fees for landscapers and contractors working in the borough.

C. Auletta asked if we are moving ahead on medical insurance employee contribution.

He suggested a “cafertia plan”. Mayor Pilato stated that regulations do not allow that.

Mr. Bahr stated the Mayor is correct. The state is getting more and more pressure, they might be acceptable to this. Mr. Bahr stated that he would look into a share of premium cost, pretax deduction to pay for certain benefits related to health.

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Mr. Bahr stated that we can do an ordinance for employees to pay a health premium. Will cover non-union. Then negotiate with AFSCME and PBA to include. Next is an enticement to help employees offset that cost by having it tax deferred. C. Auletta asked if we could move ahead on this and Mr. Bahr concurred. Mayor Pilato suggested in the health policy that retirees retire at their current health benefit status. As package increases coverage is by the retiree.

Mayor Pilato stated a way of getting toward what C. Auletta suggests is a health savings account. A better tax benefit for employees.

Mr. Bahr stated that he will meet with a knowledgeable person to review all of this.

C. Thompson suggested looking at Somerset County for sharing health benefits plan. Mayor Pilato stated that the County is meeting in two weeks to review this area.

Mr. Bahr reviewed Sale of Municipal Assets. He is moving forward with E-Gov Deals with vehicles.

Mr. Bahr stated that he has met with a person who is interested for transit village position. His name is John Schunk. He is a public works employee that was laid off. He is a reliable person, has a drivers license. He will require a vehicle. Mr. Bahr will call him on Monday. His hours will be worked out for the part time position. Mayor Pilato suggested you may want prior to his hire, a community clean up day for the Battle of Bound Brook.

Mayor Pilato reviewed under Sale of Municipal Assets-

The Bolmer Site, Capital One-Carriage Park, Bank Building Downtown.

Mr. Bahr stated if we received contracts agreements we could include those in the budget. Right now when we prepare the budget we should not anticipate any redevelopment funds in the budget.

Mayor Pilato reviewed on the side of expenditures. He asked Mr. Bahr if he will ask department heads to come in lower with their budgets. Mr. Bahr will ask for at least a 5% reduction from last year. He is asking all departments to think outside of the box ways to reduce costs.

Mr. Bahr reported the biggest increases are utilities and fire hydrant costs. C. Thompson questioned the charges. Mr. Bahr will bring in a representative from the New Jersey American Water Company to discuss fire hydrant service charges.

Mr. Bahr is monitoring legal and engineering fees.

C. Auletta reported that he has met with Mr. Bahr about dividing up the budget areas into their respective committees. Monitor on a monthly basis and have the information funneled to them automatically. Information to be in a useable format. Right now this is not being done. Mr. Bahr stated that he will meet with Mr. Auletta to discuss this.

C. Auletta gave an example referring to the monthly Bill List. Purchase Order Requests going to the committee chairs for review prior to going on the Bill List. Mr. Bahr asked if he wanted to implement this. Each council committee chair would need to come in every day to sign off on purchase orders. Mr. Auletta suggested electronic request be sent to the committee chairs and the administrator.

Mayor Pilato suggested the Wednesday prior to the regular meeting, department heads would come in to approve the purchase orders.

C. Thompson suggested an "access program" that Somerset County uses. E-mail recipients are automatically set up.

C. Thompson recommended updating our service system in the borough in order to accommodate these recommendations for improvements.

Mr. Bahr stated he received a call from the Somerset County MIS Department. He also talked with Mr. Nuse, the boroughs computer consultant. He advised the networking costs will be relatively low. The wiring is already there. A new server will tie everyone in.

C. Auletta stated the voucher description requires improvement.

Mayor Pilato asked to point out a solution; placement of an ordinance on the table regarding this. Mayor stated that we already have an ordinance on the books right now regarding financial operations of the borough. The ordinance (since the 1980's) currently says the department chair is to sign off on purchases.

Mr. Bahr stated that currently no department is doing this. Maybe that ordinance is antiquated.

C. Auletta asked if Mr. Borough could come up with two budgets- a bare bones minimum and a budget where we want to be.

Mr. Bahr stated he could provide that. He stated that what he may consider is what you may not consider bare bones budget. For example, recreation programs.

C. Thompson stated that you cannot make one portion of the borough pay and not the other. Across the board as a whole, do not single out

Mayor Pilato asked about Salaries and Wage Requests- Mr. Bahr stated that this will be discussed in executive session.

Meeting adjourned to Executive Session at 10:40 a.m.

Resolution No. 09-42-A- Authorize Executive Session- Personnel- Salaries and Wages

Motion: Dietrich      Second: Thompson      All in favor: Ayes

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Meeting adjourned to regular session at 11:20 a.m.

Comments by C. Vasquez regarding department budgets. Need to focus on controlling expenses. Salary freeze for this year, employee health contribution. Partnership with school board on energy savings. Mr. Bahr stated that an effort will be made to meet with the schools regarding energy savings costs. We will also review conservation and efficiency for the municipal building. Also, review a solar roof for the Train Station.

Mr. Bahr reported that the borough will introduce the budget at the March Regular Meeting.

Special Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

  
Donna Marie Godleski, Borough Clerk