

07/11/2016

**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING  
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL - TOWNSHIP OF EDISON  
July 11, 2016**

A Special Meeting of the Municipal Council was held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Complex on Monday, July 11, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 7:11 p.m. by Council President Lombardi followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present were Councilmembers Coyle, Diehl, Gomez, Lombardi, Patil, Sendelsky and Shah.

Also present were Township Clerk Russomanno, Deputy Township Clerk McCray, Township Attorney Northgrave, Business Administrator Ruane, Mayor Lankey, Township Engineer Kataryniak, Health Director Elliott, Recreation Director Halliwell, Public Works Director Haines and Fire Chief Latham.

The Township Clerk advised that adequate Notice of this meeting as required by the Open Public Meetings Act of 1975, has been provided by a Special Notice sent to The Home News Tribune, The Star Ledger and the Sentinel on June 30, 2016 and posted in the Main Lobby of the Municipal Complex on the same date.

Council President Lombardi asked for a brief Moment of Silence for the victims in Dallas, Minnesota and Baton Rouge. He said we are here tonight for the Public Hearing on both our Municipal and Solid Waste Budget. Mayor Lankey will be presenting both budgets as introduced and will give everyone an opportunity for oral petition and remarks.

Mayor Lankey thanked Council President and members of the Council. We are here tonight to show some details on the budget. He said he will spend approximately 15-20 minutes doing the presentation, copies on front desk and power point is on overhead projector.

Starting with page 3, when we came into office about three years ago we talked about infrastructure challenges, reputation of the town and ratable base crumbling. We needed to come up with a plan in the next ten pages some details about this year budget and where we need to go. Our goal is to maintain municipal services and keep taxes as stable as possible.

Page 4, is a snap shot of the table of equalization factor of assessed value, our assessed value is about half.

Page 5, on a \$350,000 market value ranking each town and what they would pay in taxes. Looking at same value house we want to keep our tax rate as low as possible.

Page 6, this pie chart shows where your tax dollars go, 58% goes to school, 25% to municipal purpose, and 17% to county.

Pages 7 & 8 showing where revenues and expenses. Our state aid has dropped. Our biggest expenses are in public safety which is about 60% of expense for township.

Page 9, just shows us compared to Woodbridge similar size town and population.

Page 10, shows calculation of our maximum tax levy.

Page 11, looking at our debt, showing what we have and additional debt allowed. We are not mortgaging our future.

Page 12, this chart shows the debt repayment plan.

Page 13 Planning is the key to everything, to stabilize our foundation moving forward.

Page 14, this is a summary of our road improvement program.

Page 15, in conclusion we have addressed our foundation, now it's time to market our town. We are meeting with business leaders and moving into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. A few examples are Federal Express is moving into the old Revlon site and the old Frigidaire on Route 27 is being constructed into warehouse space.

Council President Lombardi thanked Mayor Lankey for his presentation and informed everyone that the Introduced Budget is still under review with the Finance Committee and they are still meeting with department heads over their individual budgets. He asked if any Council members had any questions for the Mayor before he opens public comments.

Councilmember Diehl also thanked Mayor Lankey for a nice job explaining where we are and the foundation in place to market our town. The information was good and understandable. He asked Mayor Lankey where the public can get a copy of his presentation.

Mayor Lankey said copies will be available at the Clerk's office and on our website.

Councilmember Gomez as Chairman of the Finance Committee, he said the committee is assessing all department, they are on their second round of meeting this week and should have a report within the next few weeks.

Councilmember Patil also thanked Mayor Lankey for a great job. He asked if he could give the residents some insight on plans for example Stelton Community Center.

Mayor Lankey explained we are presently doing a study on the Community Center. We are looking into some grants and aid whether to relocate or build another facility on that site. A lot of our buildings were built in 60's, 70's and 80's that need to be assessed also.

Councilmember Sendelsky thanked Mayor Lankey for a well thought out presentation. As part of our planning stages of Stelton Community Center, we need to have a way to pay for it. We are working on making it a reality.

Council President Lombardi opened meeting for public comments.

John Poyner, 40 Roosevelt Blvd., regarding our debt ratio chart, what were the funds used for.

Mayor Lankey replied two things, tax appeals and infrastructure.

Craig Camless, Arrowhead Section of Town, very good presentation this is his first time in sixteen years he is at a meeting. He received his tax bill and saw an increase of 8%. He also asked why ratable are declining and why we have throughout the town handicapped ramps leading to nowhere.

Mayor Lankey explained the breakdown in the increase our municipal is about 2.5%. The rateables are declining due to tax appeals, primarily commercial. The ramps are mandated by Federal law.

Chris Triano, 20 Hill Road, revenue on page 7 state aid, please clarify and give some examples of miscellaneous and other revenues.

Mayor Lankey explained its mandated funding we receive from the state. In the past it was increasing but now it has been capped and remained flat. On page 10 of the Introduced Budget you can find the list of other revenues.

Walter Stochel, 2118 Oak Tree Road, asked if Hotel Tax has increased in the past year. How are the expense compared to last year. Is our Road Department doing any paving and how many more land miles will we be paving. He would like to see funding in the budget for the Environmental Commission for 205 Tyler Road approximately \$10,000.00 and money in budget for Master Plan and some money for 1072 Building in Kilmer.

Councilmember Gomez replied the committee has already discussed putting money into the budget for the Environmental Commission.

Mayor Lankey said we are looking to do quite a bit more, however our road department is not doing any paving right now.

Hearing no further comments from the public Councilmember Gomez made a motion to close the public hearing, which was seconded by Councilmember Sendelsky and duly carried.

Council President Lombardi, thanked Mayor Lankey again for coming out to present the budget and reminded everyone copies are available at the Clerk's office as well as on our website.

On a motion made by Councilmember Diehl seconded by Councilmember Sendelsky, the meeting was adjourned at 8:02pm.

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Michael R. Lombardi  
Council President

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Cheryl Russomanno, RMC  
Municipal Clerk