

BOROUGH OF HASBROUCK HEIGHTS

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING

May 16, 2006

A Special Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hasbrouck Heights was held on May 16, 2006 at 8:10 p.m. at Borough Hall, 320 Boulevard, Hasbrouck Heights, NJ.

Borough Clerk Rose Marie Sees stated that the meeting complied with the Sunshine law, adequate notice of this meeting having been made to all members of the Council by personal service on May 12, 2006 and transmitted to The Observer, The Record and The Herald News on May 12, 2006.

ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor Ronald R. Jones, Councilwoman Maryetta Saccomano, Councilwoman Carol J. Skiba, Councilman Leonard Introna, Councilman Thomas E. Meli, Councilman Ronald F. Kistner, Councilman Justin A. DiPisa

Absent: None

SALUTE TO THE FLAG AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Jones led in the Salute to the Flag and Pledge of Allegiance.

NEW BUSINESS:

REPORT OF CFO MICHAEL KRONYAK AND COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Mr. Kronyak explained that the School Budget had been defeated at the School Board Election on April 18, 2006. As the Statutes require, it comes back to the governing body and it is their duty to make recommended cuts. He reported a number of meetings with the Finance Committee and members of the Board of Education had been held. He noted that an audit of records is not done, there is only a three-week window with the deadline May 19. The budget is reviewed line item by line item. All documents were analyzed with 16 line items that recommendations could be made, with no negative impact upon education. The resolution names each account number and the amount of reduction and a short reason as to why that recommendation was made. The total amount of the reduction is \$200,000. Councilman Meli agreed with Mr. Kronyak, and that anything contractual cannot be touched as it is covered by contract. Mr. Kronyak noted again that all line items are not staff related. He requested specific questions from the governing body.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilwoman Saccomano had asked for information on the large increase of \$186,000 in salaries. He reported there was a net of two staff, three new hires with health benefits, appearing in one line item. There was someone retired, who would not be replaced. This decrease appears in a different line item. The biggest increases occurred in special education.

Councilman Introna questioned what is the percentage in special needs sent out, how much outsourcing is done, and could some of this be kept in house. The percentage was not known.

Councilwoman Skiba referred to tuition paid to other school districts was about \$1.8 million and if this included accelerated programs. It was thought it was any child sent outside the district that the district cannot accommodate. A program or two was put in house, which would have raised the budget additionally.

Councilman DiPisa questioned if these cuts represented more than one tax point which it did. He referred to the last time the BOE budget had not passed, the same question about special needs came up, that each individual student has an IEP which is discussed with the parents, that an advocate is provided who has a say on where the education should take place.

Councilman Introna again questioned the percentages to see if it falls within a normal range.

Councilwoman Saccomano again questioned the salary increase, who are these teachers, what are their titles, where will they be teaching and what is the need for them and that is what she wanted an answer on. He said one is a language arts, one foreign language teacher and one speech. The speech is replacing the outside service. Of the \$186,000 in increases was new employees salaries and benefits. Two come under teachers general fund, one under related services, and one reduction in guidance professional which is a separate line item. She then questioned which school were they going in and it was not known. She was told both of these were due to increased class size, with class size being 28 students.

Councilman Introna asked if there was discussion with the Board of Education with shared services and the library, and was told yes, but they didn't think it was doable.

Councilwoman Skiba questioned if they were able to get representative amounts of disbursements paid back to the school board members and the administrators. Kronyak had spoken with them today, his reports were limited. He was given a monthly expense report. Specific items could be requested from the Board as a public record. She asked how many tax points is the school budget. She was told 55-57% of the total tax rate.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilman Introna questioned how much was last year's school budget and was told - \$17,687,000 to \$18,964,000, a little less than \$1.3 million. With the \$200,000 in cuts, it is about \$1 million. He questioned the school surplus and was told last year about \$275,000, below the 2 ½%. It was also noted that Hasbrouck Heights is also a receiving district.

Councilman DiPisa commended the Finance Committee on the 16 line item cuts.

Councilwoman Saccomano questioned Mr. Kronyak if the resolution is approved tonight and decrease the budget by \$200,000 how many tax points will taxes for the school portion be increased. He said the year must be split, half of last and first half of new. He thought approximately six points, but county and local is still not known. Mayor Jones noted these are suggested cuts. There is no relief from the State for special services.

Councilman Introna again referred to outsourcing and keeping more in house. Mayor Jones, in meeting with the Board of Education, said they indicated they are aware of this.

Councilman Kistner said it would be great if there were no increase. He asked Councilwoman Saccomano if she had any other suggestions. She was concerned about the two additional teachers and if it was a necessity. She wanted affirmation that education would not be touched.

Councilwoman Skiba questioned the second paragraph that the Mayor and Council met with members of the Board of Education, if it could say the Finance Committee. She was told that the Finance Committee was representative for the Mayor and Council. It was agreed to change the wording to "Representatives both of". Mr. Kronyak would correct the front page.

MISCELLANEOUS FROM PUBLIC:

Mayor Jones opened the public hearing for anyone wishing to speak.

Patricia Godfrey, 223 Boulevard, noted some of the questions raised tonight were answered very thoroughly at the Board of Education hearing with only eight people present.

There being no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed.

RESOLUTIONS: 83. Board of Education Budget Amendments

On a motion by Councilman Meli, seconded by Councilman DiPisa, with Councilman Introna voting Nay, the foregoing Resolution was approved.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to be conducted by the Mayor and Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

I, ROSE MARIE SEES, Borough Clerk of the Borough of Hasbrouck Heights, do hereby certify that the foregoing Minutes are to the best of my knowledge a true account of the Special Mayor and Council Meeting held on May 16, 2006.

Rose Marie Sees, RMC
Borough Clerk