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**May 20, 2008
Township Committee
Special Meeting Minutes**

A Special Meeting of the Kingwood Township Committee was called to order at 6:00 P.M. .

Present at the meeting were Deputy Mayor Burke, Committeewoman Niemann, C.F.O. D. Laudenbach, and Clerk MacConnell. Following the salute to the Flag, Deputy Mayor Burke read aloud the following:

NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by publication of the notice in the Delaware Valley News and Express Times on May 15, 2008 and by telefaxing copies of the notice to the Courier News and Star Ledger on May 13, 2008. Copies of the notice were also posted in the Kingwood Township Municipal Building and Baptistown Post Office on May 13, 2008.

In order to ensure full public participation in this meeting, all members of this Committee or Board, and also members of the public are requested to speak only when recognized by the Chair so that there is no simultaneous discussion or over-talk, and further, all persons are requested to utilize the microphones which are provided for your use by the Township. Your cooperation is appreciated.

2008 MUNICIPAL BUDGET – Tax Resolution and Public Hearing

It was moved by Mrs. Niemann, Deputy Mayor Burke stepped down from the Chair second the motion and carried to open the public hearing. **All voted Aye on Roll Call Vote.**

Mr. Burke introduced the Township's Auditor Mr. William Colantano. Mr. Colantano explained that the purpose of the public hearing is to have a hearing on the 2008 Municipal Budget as introduced. He noted that we are not planning to adopt the budget on this date due to the unknown State Aid factor. He explained that there was word last week that the Township would be getting some of their money back. He noted that the original intension of the Governor was that he was going to phase-in reduction State Aid. He explained that the amount of money we are getting back is not a phase-in, but still a substantial reduction. The municipal budget as presented has a \$104,000 loss in State Aid, which is equivalent to 1½ cents, this will require an increase in real estate taxes by 2.2% , because of the 1½ cents reduction. The real estate taxes will be increased by about \$25 per hundred dollars.

He received instructions from Trenton, noting that if the Township adopts their budget on this date and additional State Aid is increased in the future, the State could then decide to reduce it and take control of the local municipal budget.

Public Comments:

Phil Lubitz, - Commented stating that he thought the local Governing Body could raise or lower taxes. Mr. Colantano responded by explaining that the State can do whatever they want in a situation like this one.

It was moved by Mrs. Niemann, Deputy Mayor Burke stepped down from the Chair second the motion and carried to close the public hearing. **All voted Aye on Roll Call Vote.**

Mr. Colantano noted that he will have the amounts when the Township adopts the budget, but stated that we will not require a second public hearing, only if the Governing Body wishes to have an addition hearing.

NJLM REQUEST- Pledge to Challenge COAH'S Third Round Regulations

Deputy Mayor Burke reviewed briefly. He noted that many municipalities would like to challenge this subject. It would cost the Township \$500.00 to support. Mr. Burke is in favor of affordable housing, however, not in agreement with how they are proposing it. He explained that Kingwood is responsible for providing 87 COAH units for low income housing. Committeewoman Elaine Niemann reported briefly on a meeting she attended in Peapack-Gladstone.

It was moved by Mrs. Niemann, Deputy Mayor Burke stepped down from the Chair second the motion to sign the Pledge to Challenge COAH's Third Round Regulations Agreement, and send it to Trenton, New Jersey at the League of Municipalities as soon as possible.

Roll Call Vote:	AYE	- Burke, Niemann
	NAY	- None
	ABSTAIN	- None
	ABSENT	- Augustine

Deputy Mayor Burke announced that a planning issue will be discussed this evening that the Township is looking into, which may have involvement with COAH.

At approximately, 6:15 P.M. the Committee members took a brief recess to gather information.

RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

At approximately, 6:40 P.M. everyone returned to regular session.

Deputy Mayor Burke explained that the Hunterdon County Land Trust Alliance requires support by letter from the Township Committee to help preserve the Clark property, Block 33, Lot 14.

It was moved by Mrs. Nieman, Deputy Mayor Burke stepped down from the Chair second the motion and carried to write a letter to the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance in support of the Township of Kingwood in preserving Block 33, Lot 14, and the Township's participation in the purchase of the property.

Roll Call Vote:	AYE	- Burke, Niemann
	NAY	- None
	ABSTAIN	- None
	ABSENT	- Augustine

Deputy Mayor Burke commented that the Township Committee has been working very diligently on preserving properties. He also mentioned that it is nice to have the Hunterdon Land Trust working for the Township, because they help identify properties and bring funding to the table. Their mission is to work on the stream corridors to protect water quality, and to help with our aquifer and recharge.

Deputy Mayor Burke explained that the Township's Planner David Banisch will be attending the meeting tonight to discuss concepts of creating a town center/hamlet/village around the commercial area of Baptistown. He stated that the original concept was brought up by the Planning Board years ago. He explained that he and Chairman of the Planning Board John Mathieu met with a representative from the State Planning Division of the Department of Environmental Protection. He spoke of a plan they discussed for a town center within Baptistown. He noted that they are very excited about the plan. Mr. Burke commented that COAH would be a part of the plan for low and moderate income residents. He briefly discussed that he contacted several "green architects/builders for general ideas regarding this type of plan. The plan is to make provisions for accessibility for people who do not have vehicles so they can walk to a shopping area. It may also assist in relieving current septic issues within Baptistown in the event that a public wastewater treatment plant is installed as part of the project.

Planner David Banisch arrived at 6:50 P.M. introducing himself to the audience.

David Banisch started out by explaining why he was present at the meeting. He gave an overview of ideas for the possibility of creating a Hamlet from the town of Baptistown. He talked about looking into the Gombosi farm as part of the project. He then distributed several maps, such as, an environmental constraint map, an aerial photo and wetlands map and reviewed the nearby streams.

Mr. Banisch reviewed the amount of acres, which would be available to utilize on unconstrained land. The vision is to include mixed income families. Currently there is a few septic problems in the Town of Baptistown, and it was noted that the Township would have to decide where to locate a wastewater treatment plant. Deputy Mayor Burke explained that the New Jersey D.E.P. Planning Department will be taking a look at the ideas of a treatment plant for the Township. There was a lengthy discussion on COAH units and that they would be a large part of the center. Mr. Burke noted he will be meeting with a green builder to talk about the design and ideas of the center and shopping areas. It was suggested that the Township notify the residents of Kingwood, giving them a 10 day notice to come to a meeting and listen to the plan and get their comments and opinions.

The Township has an opportunity to apply for a grant that is available by the State for this type of project. Angela Clerico from Banisch Assoc. contacted authorities at the State in reference to the grant application. It was noted that the grant application would have to be submitted by May 30, 2008. There was a discussion between D. Banisch, and the Township Committee members in reference to the grant, and whether it would be worth it to apply at this late time. It was determined that the Township will never be ready to have all the information to complete the application. Committeewoman E. Niemann feels that we should submit an application and an outline now for the grant and wait to see if the Township needs any additional information. She noted that if we do decide to complete this process a resolution will have to be adopted this evening. She feels that if we cannot do this now, she would like to see it tabled and worked on, and hope that we have another opportunity to apply. Mr. Burke feels that we should table the idea of applying for the grant at this time, and continue to working and getting ideas for the project. He also feels that the Planning Board should start to work on their ideas and think about forming a Baptistown center investigation committee to review the project for a town center.

The Committee members thanked David Banisch for coming to the meeting to speak.

It was moved by Mrs. Nieman, Deputy Mayor Burke stepped down from the Chair second the motion and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 P.M. **All voted Aye on Roll Call Vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia L. Keller, RMC
Deputy Clerk