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May 4, 2010
Township Committee
Special Meeting Minutes

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

Also present at the meeting were Deputy Mayor Lubitz, Committeewoman Niemann, and Clerk MacConnell. Following the salute to the Flag, 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 Hunterdon Democrat on April 29, 2010, and Courier News on April 23, 2010 and by telefaxing copies of the notice to the Express Times and Star Ledger on April 26, 2010. Copies of the notice were also posted in the Kingwood Township Municipal Building and Baptistown Post Office on April 21, 2010.

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.

Kingwood Township School – 2010 – 2011 School Budget

Mayor Burke started out by welcoming everyone that was present. He stated that the Kingwood Township School Budget was defeated, and that everyone was present to discuss where cuts could be made in the budget. Present at the meeting was Superintendent Laura Hartner, B.O.E. Secretary/Business Administrator Roberta Beriont, several Board of Education members, and Teachers from the Kingwood School. The Committee members asked the representatives from the Kingwood School several questions. Deputy Mayor Lubitz asked what amount would be reduced from the school budget to have no tax increase at all to the taxpayers for the 2010 -20100 school year. Roberta Beriont noted that it would be a total of \$203,000.00. Deputy Mayor Lubitz asked what the amount reduced in the budget would be if the no one received a raise in their salary this coming year. Roberta Beriont noted that the amount would be \$121,000.00. Committeewoman Niemann asked questions regarding the oil expenditure. Roberta Beriont responded and stated that there is no addition expense, that it is less then last year. Mayor Burke feels that the cuts that were already taken have been considerable, and he commends the Board of Education for taking the initiative to make the cuts.

He feels that the school is the center of the Community, and if the education suffers then the property taxes suffer as well. He noted with that being said, it has been a very difficult economic year, and many people are out of work, and it is a difficult situation for a tax increase of any amount, but there has been a suggestion from our current Governor to cut at least 2 and ½ percent from the school budgets if defeated. Roberta Beriont explained that right now before any cuts on the general fund tax levy it is a 4 percent tax increase, but, it is being off set by the reduction in the debt service bringing it down to 3.8% for tax payers. Roberta Beriont noted that the cut of 2 and ½ percent in the current budget would total the amount of \$69,000.00.

Mayor Burke opened comments to the public.

Public Comments, Privilege of the Floor

Gary Karlsrud, Board of Education Member Noted that he was present to represent his children. He commented that they cannot vote, comment, or speak up for themselves, and he would like to do that for them. He stated that he was from Colorado, and he gave three reasons why the school budget process in New Jersey is not good.

Karen Love Mathieu, Board of Education Member State that she has been a B.O.E. member for two years at Kingwood School, and she feels the administration in the Kingwood School does a very good job, and that this is already a bare bone budget. She commented on various programs, teachers, and state mandates.

Laura Hartner, Superintendent Commented that she feels they have provided a prudent and fiscal responsible budget, and also advocating for the students of the community.

Robert Beriont, B.O.E. Secretary/Business Administrator Reviewed the previous years school budget increases. She noted that the budget has not passed in ten years. She stated that the heating and oil bill has gone down. She commented on teacher's salaries and benefits, and what they have already contributed and given up this year. She feels the Governor's comments regarding this apply to the rest of the State, but not to Kingwood Township, and feels we should be the model.

Mayor Burke noted that Kingwood Township School has done a great job, but must do more. He suggested they need to eliminate the \$69,000.00 to keep the 2 ½ percent decrease as suggested by the Governor.

Roberta Beriont noted that the amount to be raised by taxes for a homeowner will be reduced to \$57.00 per year, instead of \$98.00 per year if the budget is decreased by 2 ½ percent. Mayor Burke commented that with the \$350,000 cut from the State, it would be detrimental to the programs at the Township School, and the property values in the Township if our school programs suffer.

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Committeewoman Niemann commented on the number of voters in the township who actually voted, which were approximately 35 percent. She stated that 31 percent voted against the school budgets and only 29 percent voted to support the budget here in Kingwood Township. She explained that because of the economic situation, and the hard times that everyone is going through these days, Committeewoman Niemann feels there is no other choice than to be in favor of going down to 2 ½ percent, and even a little further.

Deputy Mayor Lubitz feels forever grateful to the teachers that took care of his daughter at the Kingwood School, and for everything that they give and do for the students and the Community. He noted that the Township has received many letters from families that have lost their jobs, and have no health care. He feels that the school is very important to him. He feels that the \$121,000 reduction can really reduce the school budget, reduce the burden on taxpayers, and really result in no degrading to the Kingwood Township School.

There was a very lengthy discussion between the Township Committee and the Administrators from the Kingwood Township School on the cuts to be made. They did work together, and decided that \$75,000 would be the amount to reduce from the budget.

It was moved by Mrs. Niemann, seconded by Mr. Lubitz and carried to reduce the Kingwood Township School budget and to cut \$75,000 from CSA Salary.

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|------------------------|----------------|---|-----------------------|
| Roll Call Vote: | Aye | - | Niemann, Burke |
| | Nay | - | Lubitz |
| | Abstain | - | None |
| | Absent | - | None |

RESOLUTION

The following Resolution was introduced:

Resolution No. 2010 - 49 Certification of Local Tax Levy

RESOLUTION NO. 2010 – 49

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF
THE TOWNSHIP OF KINGWOOD, IN THE COUNTY OF
HUNTERDON AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY, IN REGARD
TO CERTIFICATION OF THE LOCAL TAX LEVY FOR THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE KINGWOOD TOWNSHIP
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the Kingwood Township School District presented to voters at the annual school election held on Tuesday, April 20, 2010 a question concerning the tax levy requirements for the said Board of Education for the General Fund for the ensuing school year (2010/2011) in the amount of \$5,247,767; and

WHEREAS, the voters of the Township of Kingwood defeated the General Fund question by the following votes:

225 ayes 547 noes

WHEREAS, the said Board of Education transmitted the Budget for the 2010/2011 school year to the Township Committee of the Township of Kingwood on April 21, 2010; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of Kingwood thoroughly reviewed the Budget and related information as presented by the Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, a joint meeting of the representatives of the Kingwood Township Committee and said Board of Education was held on May 4, 2010 to discuss the Budget as submitted by the Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, careful consideration has been given by the Township to the information received from said Board of Education and the discussion which ensued, with a view toward providing a thorough and efficient system of education in the school system of said Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of Kingwood, in the County of Hunterdon and State of New Jersey and Board of Education have agreed to the following reductions in the tax levy totaling \$75,000; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Clerk is directed to certify by May 19, 2010 to the Hunterdon County Board of Taxation, the Hunterdon County Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education of the Kingwood Township School District, the Kingwood Township Tax Assessor and to any other parties required by law to receive such certification, that the amount of \$5,172,767 is necessary to be raised by taxation for the General Fund, for the ensuing school year 2010/2011:

11-000-230-100 \$75,000 CSA Salary

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be forwarded by the Township Clerk to the persons and/or departments herein named, for certification purposes.

It was moved Mrs. Niemann, seconded by Mr. Lubitz and carried to adopt the foregoing Resolution.

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|------------------------|----------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Roll Call Vote: | Aye | - | Lubitz, Niemann, Burke |
| | Nay | - | None |
| | Abstain | - | None |
| | Absent | - | None |

Kingwood Township Hazardous Mitigation Plan

Joseph Zdrodowski was present to discuss the update on the Hazardous Mitigation Plan for the Township. He distributed a handout, which he briefly reviewed and commented on various items during the process. He stressed that it would be important to hold a public comment time. He suggested posting a notice that the plan is available at the Township building, and that maybe this will eliminate people just sending responses that don't mean anything. The Township Committee agreed to Mr. Zdrodowski idea of researching a little more about advertising and review time. The plan would be to hold the public comment at the July Township Meeting. Joseph Zdrodowski answered several questions from the Committee members. There was a very lengthy discussion of ideas to possibly move things along. Mr. Zdrodowski noted that he will contact Congressman Holt's office, and ask how it would be best for the Committee members to get a letter to FEMA.

E-mail from resident

Deputy Mayor Lubitz reported on an e-mail received from a resident regarding damages made by an 18 wheeler.

There were several questions and comments from the audience. Mayor Burke announced that tonight was a special meeting, and the Committee members were only taking comments on two specific items listed on the agenda. He noted that any other comments can be made at the Township Committee's regular meeting on May 13, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Lubitz, seconded by Mrs. Niemann and carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:10PM. **All** voted **Aye** on **Roll Call Vote**.

Respectfully submitted,

**Cynthia L. Keller, RMC
Deputy Clerk**