



TOWN OF DOVER
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
July 18, 2011 7:00 PM

The Caucus Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen was held in council chambers, 37 N. Sussex Street, Dover, New Jersey.

Mayor Dodd called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

All joined in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and prayer was given asking for guidance and strength to do what is right for our town and our citizens.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Aldermen Delaney, Poolas, Picciallo, Timpani, Romaine, Blackman, Downs and Mayor Dodd

Absent: Alderman Visioli

Also present were Attorney Pennella, Administrator Close and Clerk Verga

Clerk Verga stated adequate notice was given to the official newspaper.

BUDGET PRESENTATION

Mayor Dodd commented that the purpose of the special meeting is for public hearing and discussion on the town's 2011 Municipal Budget.

David Evans, John Mooney from Nisivoccia & Company and Kelly Toohey, Chief Financial Officer were also in attendance.

Mayor Dodd explained that the average home, in the Town of Dover, assessed at \$290,025 will see an increase of \$9.42 per month. Pension costs, health insurance and debt service are factors that are beyond the town's control and make up 94% of the increased amount. The budget is compliant with the levy and 2% caps. He noted that without these factors the town would have probably seen a zero percent increase.

Mayor Dodd continued to discuss the difficult task involving the budget; everyone has to do more with less. Mayor Dodd introduced Auditor, David Evans

David Evans provided the public with a brief description of the budget process. He noted that the process of the public hearing is to fulfill the town's statutory requirements.

Administrator Close commended the finance committee for their hard work.

Alderwoman Romaine expressed that the budget process was long and arduous and the committee reviewed the budget multiple times to see what could be carved out without impacting the services in town. She explained about the reduction in property values and explained we were \$25,000,000 in a hole with tax ratable base.

PUBLIC HEARING

DANIEL MARTINEZ - 57 Spring St – Mr. Martinez wanted to know if there are any cuts, layoffs, firings specifically of the police department in the 2011 budget.

Mayor Dodd read a prepared statement and expressed that he's unable to comment due to ongoing labor contract negotiations and expressed that the town is civil service which is regulated by the State of New Jersey, for that reason the Town of Dover does not have the authority to implement any layoff or reorganization plans on its own, a plan would have to be submitted to the NJ Civil Service Commission for approval.

Daniel Martinez and Mayor Dodd continued to have a discussion on the hiring and firing process.

Alderman Poolas wanted to know who prepared the legal statement read by the Mayor. Mayor Dodd clarified that the statement was prepared with the help of the labor counsel, who has been hired by the town.

Dialogue on the layoffs and the adoption of the budget continued.

Alderman Timpani wanted clarification when the budget would be adopted. Mayor Dodd noted that the budget will be adopted at a later date due to ongoing negotiations.

JIM MULLIN – 150 Ann Street – Mr. Mullin asked if a presentation was prepared for each line item in the budget. Mayor Dodd noted that it was not anticipated since it’s never been a part of the public hearing process. Mr. Evans explained the purpose of the special meeting. Mr. Mullin wanted to know why the budget wasn’t posted on the website. It was noted that the budget is posted on the website once it has been adopted. Mr. Mullin suggested that it be posted for residents to view prior to the hearing. The suggestion was noted. Mr. Mullin asked about several line items, which included clarification on the minimum library appropriation, health insurance charges, police and firemen charges and analysis of compensated absence liability. Mr. Evans provided Mr. Mullin with a detailed explanation on each question.

(REV.) JOHN HABECKER – 61 Baker Ave – Rev. Habecker asked the board members to reconsider the possible lay offs. He provided positive feedback on the police department as well as his concerns with the layoffs.

DANIEL MARTINEZ – 57 Spring St – Mr. Martinez, also, expressed his concerns with the layoffs and praised the police department on the recent arrests and recent collaboration with Latino community leaders.

EDWARD CORREA – 88A E. Blackwell St. – Dialogue continued on the budget between Mr. Correa and Mayor Dodd. He wanted to know what the town would do with the savings from the layoffs since the current budget shows a full staff. Mr. Close noted that savings would be prorated in the future. Mr. Correa read a prepared statement, advocating for the Dover Police Department.

Alderman Poolas asked if the special meeting was called with the purpose on voting on the budget. Attorney Pennella noted that it’s for public hearing and provided an explanation on the adoption process. Alderman Poolas wanted to know if the board needed to vote on the adjournment; he was told “no”.

Alderman Timpani wanted to know the deadline to adopt the budget. Mr. Evans noted that there is no time frame for the adoption, only that you must wait the twenty-eight (28) days from the date of introduction to adoption. He explained that adoption should be wrapped up as soon as possible to have the August tax bills sent out. Conversation continued between board members and attorney regarding the budget process.

The administrator has recommended adjourning the municipal budget due to pending negotiation issues.

Mayor Dodd expressed his respect to the administrator and police department and noted that Town of Dover is committed to doing everything possible that they can, to make it a win-win situation for everyone. He noted that the board has an obligation to the tax payers and employees, so it’s appropriate to take all the time that is needed. Mayor Dodd will respect the Administrator’s request to not call a vote on the Municipal Budget.

JIM MULLIN – 150 Ann St. He wanted to know the numbers of employees stated in the proposed budget. Mr. Close noted that the budget document includes reduction in employees.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Adoption of the 2011 Municipal Budget

**Motion to adjourn made by Mayor Dodd at 7:59 p.m.,
and duly seconded by Alderwoman Romaine passed by the following voice vote.**

Ayes: Aldermen Delaney, Poolas, Picciallo, Timpani, Romaine, Blackman, Downs and Mayor Dodd

Nays: None Absent: Alderman Visioli Abstained: None

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret J. Verga, Municipal Clerk