BOROUGH OF WOODCLIFF LAKE
MAYOR AND COUNCIL MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING – Tice Center, 411 Chestnut Ridge Road
August 27, 2013
7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

This is a special meeting of the Mayor and Council and the notice requirements provided in the "Open Public Meetings Act" have been satisfied. Notice of this meeting was properly given 48 hours in advance of this meeting by publication in The Record and The Herald News, have been notified.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Jeffrey R. Goldsmith asked for a roll call. Council members Abene, Bae, Gadaleta and Rosenblatt were present. Council members Bader and Bloom were absent. For the Borough Attorney, Justin Santagata was present as well as Interim Administrator Thomas Richards and Acting Borough Clerk Debbie Dakin.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by Dana Cassell.

Resolution Establishing Salary of Interim Borough Administrator

WHEREAS, on August 12, 2013, the Borough of Woodcliff Lake accepted at 60-day leave of absence of its Administrator, Wolfgang Albrecht; and

WHEREAS, on the same date, the Borough of Woodcliff Lake appointed Thomas Richards as Interim Administrator, subject to further discussion or negotiation of his salary and benefits; and

WHEREAS, after such discussion or negotiation, the Borough of Woodcliff Lake has agreed to pay Thomas Richards $2,000.00 per week as salary with no other compensation or benefits;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Interim Administrator shall serve at the will of Woodcliff Lake Governing Body, as with any other administrator pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:9-136, but shall not be protected by the ninety-day (90) severance provision of N.J.S.A. 40A:9-138, and shall be paid $2,000.00 per week as salary with no other compensation or benefits.

ROLL CALL:
Introduce: Mr. Rosenblatt
Second: Mrs. Abene
Ayes: Mrs. Abene, Mrs. Bae, Mrs. Gadaleta, Mr. Rosenblatt
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Mr. Bader, Mr. Bloom

Resolution Authorizing Two (2) Temporary Electrical Inspectors

WHEREAS, the Woodcliff Lake Electrical Sub-code Official is on medical leave; and

WHEREAS, there exists an immediate need to authorize two (2) temporary electrical inspectors for the Borough of Woodcliff Lake

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Woodcliff Lake that Michael Heflich is officially acknowledged as an electrical sub-code official and Chester Czerny is officially acknowledged as an electrical inspector.

ROLL CALL:
Introduce: Mr. Rosenblatt
Second: Mrs. Abene
Ayes: Mrs. Abene, Mrs. Bae, Mrs. Gadaleta, Mr. Rosenblatt
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Mr. Bader, Mr. Bloom

PUBLIC HEARING ON POLICE DEPARTMENT CONSOLIDATION FEASIBILITY STUDY – led by Richard Brady

Dana Cassell, Woodcliff Lake, made comments pertaining to the benefits package to the police department. Would all three municipalities have the same benefits/retiree packages?

Tony Divito, Woodcliff Lake, found the study comprehensive and well prepared. He asked why there weren't more questions provided ahead of time to Matrix and asked that Mr. Brady explain who Matrix is. What was their most recent experience that they had?

Rich Brady from Matrix replied that after every draft of the study the Police Chiefs from all three municipalities gave their comments and revisions. Revisions were done.

John Glaser, Woodcliff Lake, asked the governing body what their feel was and were does this study stand with them? He also asked how the consultant was picked.

Council President Robert Rosenblatt stated that he was going to move for Referendum at this end of this meeting.

Mayor Goldsmith replied that a Referendum could not be done this year because the deadline was August 16, 2013. He also stated that this was an Open Information Session only.

Councilman Rosenblatt asked that all comments and concerns from Montvale and Park Ridge be discarded because we should do what is best for our community!

Richard Brady from Matrix replied that it was a grant from the Prosecutor's office to pay for this study and that Park Ridge was the lead agency on it.

Nick Letizia, Woodcliff Lake, asked if Woodcliff Lake would receive the same service levels as it had in the past. If it doesn't work, what will be the cost to rewind it?

Mr. Brady from Matrix stated that there were too many chiefs in such a small area.

Nick Letizia, Woodcliff Lake, asked what the tax saving per household is.

Joseph LaPaglia, former Mayor, Woodcliff Lake, gave a brief history of how we got to where we were today. He stated that Prosecutor Molinelli approached the three Mayors (Woodcliff Lake, Montvale and Park Ridge) years ago and told them that he sees an opportunity for cost savings in the three towns. He stated that it was a difficult and long process to get to where we are today. From a financial standpoint we need to move forward. We have an excellent police department but we are too top heavy. He pointed out that 35 to 40% of our budget is related to police expenses.

Josephine Higgins, former Mayor, Woodcliff Lake, stated that we need to be proactive. She questioned as to how are we going to get all three towns up to speed with Woodcliff Lake. Do the other towns know our streets, residents and how to get to specific houses and businesses? What will be the response time? What about if there is an incident at our schools, storms, floods?

John Letizia, Woodcliff Lake, read a statement (see Exhibit A).

Anthony Janicelli, Woodcliff Lake Chief of Police, had a number of issues that he spoke about (see Exhibit B) and answered any questions by the public.

Mr. Letizia, Woodcliff Lake, asked again about what happens if it doesn't work.

Dana Cassell, Woodcliff Lake, stated that he thinks that we would need to have more police on streets but fewer management staff.

Mr. Divito asked Chief Jannicelli how many emergency calls are responded to by upper personnel. Chief Jannicelli responded that our Sergeants are on the road, they do not just sit behind a desk.

Chad Malloy, Woodcliff Lake Police Officer, asked why there is listed a $270,000 savings for vacant positions. If we currently do not have those positions filled, we are not spending the $270,000.

John Glaser, Woodcliff Lake, stated that his main concern is to save the town tax money. We have an opportunity to reduces takes and maintain the same level of service.

Council President Robert Rosenblatt asked about sending out a survey to residents. This will be put on the Agenda for the September 16, 2013 Mayor and Council Meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM

Motion to close the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Rosenblatt, second by Mrs. Abene, and approved unanimously by voice call vote.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Dakin

Deborah Dakin
Acting Borough Clerk

August 27, 2013 Mayor and Council Meeting:
Matrix Police Consolidation Study Presentation:

Chief Anthony Jannicelli
Woodcliff Lake PD

- Self Fulfilling Prophecy-The study is tasked to come up with statistical information to both save money and not impact service by eliminating command staffing and middle supervising ranks. My experience with studies, (dispatch, courts) neither occur. Woodcliff Lake ends up paying more and getting less.
- Matrix plan could have as many as 5 officers on duty, (our present minimum is 2 officers/town) and as little as 3 officers in the Tri-Boro working on a 12-8 tour. This is because "study" says that 95% of the time on the 12-8am tour, officers are on "uncommitted time". This was the level of manpower in the 1950's, when we had 200 homes and businesses then. Now we have over 2,000 homes and business in Woodcliff Lake. Mr. Brady told me when confronted on this that 3 officers on a midnight shift is acceptable according to his study. This is in addition to "unnecessary" calls for a back-up officer to respond to a single unit call.
- Eliminating anywhere from 3-5 officers per town, 9-15 officers total in The Tri-Boro would have a dramatic impact during disasters such as Hurricanes Irene and Sandy.
- Efficiency and Effectiveness are not interchangeable
- This agency has not increased manpower since before 9/11, even though our responsibilities have increased, as well as both increases in homes and business over the past 12 years.
- Present manpower levels allows for some flexibility especially when we have officers out on injury. Present manpower allows comp time and switches to control overtime. These savings, if overtime had to be paid averages approximately $400,000/year.
- All officers of all ranks are sworn police officers and may be called upon to assist patrols in responding to calls. This past April I was 4 blocks away from a heart attack call, and began CPR within 90 seconds, and was instrumental with the recovery of the elderly woman, the mother of one of our residents. With the Matrix plan, I would not have existed.
- Urgent Calls- 18 min. response time is acceptable under this study. I do not think our residents would tolerate this response time.
- Study refuses to calculate the average savings to each homeowner even after I requested the study indicate it as such.
- Bottom Line- do you want pro-active community policing or re-active call to call report taking-policing. I would rather prevent a crime than have to investigate it. **The measure of success is in the lack of crime, not in how many arrests you can make. Do we want to change this? Be careful what you wish for, you may get it.**

December 29, 2011.

February 5, 2012.

March 2, 2012.

April 17, 2013.

August 14, 2013.

On each of these days, a 911 call was placed from my home. In each instance my mother was unresponsive and in need of emergency medical attention. In each instance the Woodcliff Lake Police Department was at my house in a matter of minutes running up my driveway and to my mother's second floor bedroom. While my mother's doctors have been unable to explain the causes of these "episodes", and my father and I have become too familiar with the "drill", take comfort knowing that help is just around the corner.

On December 29, 2011, within seconds after of Officer John Burns placed an oxygen mask over my mother, she started to come to. In a situation where someone cannot breathe on their own and in need of oxygen, every second is critical. The Woodcliff Lake Police Department potentially saved my mother's life that day. And while with subsequent 911 calls, my mother took much longer - up to 25 minutes to come back - the Woodcliff Lake Police Department was on-site in minutes assisting.

The efforts and contributions of the Woodcliff Lake Police Department should not go unnoticed. While we are fortunate to live in an area with a low crime rate, having rapid response in an emergency can be the difference between life and death. If we had a joint police force, I can certainly guarantee you that the police would not have been able to respond in the time they did. Covering a wider territory with fewer officers is dangerous to seniors and those in need of emergency medical attention.

I've met all the requirements for my CPA and am awaiting the State to process my license. I hold a master's degree in accounting and I am a big 4 accountant by profession. I understand the cost savings of a joint police force. I also understand the benefit of the additional cost. I'm sorry but my mother is worth more to me than $400 a year in tax savings.

What I failed to mention is that the first time we called 911 in 2011 my mother was 57 – young by today's standards with a lot of life ahead. It can be any relative at any age in need of a rapid response team. While you may not think my mother is worth $400 a year, is your husband, wife, mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter worth it?

By definition, emergencies are not planned. If you have an emergency, don't you want help to be there quickly? Or would you rather police drive across 2 towns to get to your location taking precious minutes that may be the difference between life or death?

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All days that life was made possible in part by the Woodcliff Lake Police Department. Cost savings can be made in many areas of the municipal budget. Gambling with the lives of the residences should not be an option.