

Finance Committee Notes, 1/4/11

Present- Rich, Shute, Malek, Hamtil

Absent- Bergenfeld, Van Saase, Hoyer

Township Budget: New CFO Tom Karro joined the group. Discussion of the recent debt rating downgrade by Moody's and how to reverse it. We need to raise our surplus level.

Various possible methods to accomplish this were discussed:

PILOT program for solar projects- Shute reported that Mark Pfeiffer @ LGS indicated that the only PILOT programs allowed in NJ were for redevelopment projects. Hamtil to check with his accountant who thought otherwise. Shute to write letter to Sen. Doherty to see if Legislation could be introduced.

Letter should also address real estate transfer fees, which are currently shared by the county and the state. Municipality should also share.

Water Company Property Tax. Current tax of about \$25K/year seems low since most WAT residents do not benefit. Need to check other water supply taxes to compare.

WAT might consider hiring a consultant to audit our commercial tax assessments.

Liquor License. WAT only has one, and it is inactive. Need to look at status and restrictions, and also investigate the possibility of adding one or more additional licenses that the Twp. could auction off.

Utilize open space trust fund to service Calton debt, which could free up over \$200K/year. Capital expenditures, health insurance and pension could likely be used to offset the effect on the cap, but Trenton has not made final determination for 2011.

Local License fee for businesses, including home-based. Need to check with dept. of Treas. to see if Twp has authority to impose such a fee.

SHREC: Need documentation of \$30K/yr lease payment in order to include in 2011 budget. Lease agreement in process.

School tax deferral, WAT currently defers 9.8% of school tax liability to next year, whereas up to 50% is permissible. Surplus balance may be positively impacted by deferring more.

Mr. Karro left the meeting at this point.

Municipal Property Solar Array: Will revisit after SHREC project is finalized.
Possibility to revisit the idea and send out RFP for 1-2 MW array in addition to SHREC.

Federal incentives extended for 2011.

Ziegenfuss Solar Project: 2 hearings held thus far, 3rd part later this month.
Property Tax revenue still uncertain.

Garbage and Recycling: Refurbished trash truck in use. Need plan for recycling going forward.

Police: Informal discussion with Delaware Twp. in process. Idea to operate separate Police depts. Under combined schedule should be looked at. WAT is currently looking at 2 new hires and Delaware 3 new hires. Can new hires be minimized by combining schedules for support?

Financial Plan Element of Master Plan: Shute distributed another version of commercial/industrial properties, but noticed that United Water was not on list because in residential zone. Need to merge 2 versions for full list.

Other Old Business: None

New Business: None

Next meeting: Tuesday, Feb. 1, 7:30

Submitted by Hal Shute – 1/5/11