

March 17 Finance Advisory Committee

Present: Fisher, Shute, Van Saase, Malek, Hoyer(left early), Rich(arrived late)
Absent Hamtil, Bergenfeld

Feb. 17 meeting notes, review and revise:
No changes.

Review of public vs nonpublic meeting discussion:
Shute related Open Public Meetings Act exemption for advisory committees and discussion with Township Committee. It was agreed that Finance Committee meetings will remain closed for now.

Discussion of NJ budget address by Gov. Christie, impact on W. Amwell:
No numbers yet, but March 16 Budget address by Gov. Christie left little doubt that sizable cuts in state aid were coming. Estimated cut of 20% of aid, which would be about \$240K

Status of Township Budget process:
Waiting for aid numbers from state. About \$165,000 deficit assuming flat aid.

Township budget history and breakdown:
No update, Shute accepted task to provide numbers.

Township Property Options:

Update of solar coop project, upcoming meeting:
Discussed Coop, meeting on 3/22, Fisher to attend.

Municipal Cemetery:
Malek reported on a discussion he had with his son-in-law, who is a funeral director.
Pluses:
Township owns land and most equipment necessary.
Minuses:
Low current demand, especially for non-denominational cemeteries, although trend is toward these types.
More cremations being performed, and only 1/3 of these use burial plot.
Start up costs are fairly large.
Once committed to this land use, cannot change.
Estimated Fees:
Burial Plot-\$1000-\$1200
Cremation Plot-\$400
Grave Openings-\$800-\$1200
Foundations for headstone: \$500

Zach found a RFP for a new military cemetery near Washington's Crossing Park.
Estimated costs for excavation and other site work was \$10M-\$20M

Renewable energy project:
It was agreed to continue pursuing this in parallel with Coop project.

Subdivision option:

Shute discussed possible 8 lot subdivision using clustering ordinance with access from Hills of Hunterdon. Sale of 10 acres could bring in \$1M to 1.5M depending on market conditions and lot status when sold.

Regional Recycling Center:

Resident suggestion; committee thought public resistance would be considerable.

Status of other ideas from Feb. meeting:

No updates

Police Study Group:

Township Committee has formed a new committee to investigate all options for police department.

New business:

None

Next meeting date:

4/22/10

Submitted by Hal Shute 3/29/10