

MINUTES**JANUARY 31, 2018**

The Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren met in Budget Session in its offices in the Wayne Dumont, Jr. Administration Building, Belvidere, New Jersey on January 31, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Director Smith and upon roll call, the following members were present: Freeholder Ed Smith, Freeholder Jason Sarnoski and Freeholder Rick Gardner. Also attending were County CFO Dan Olshefski, Fiscal Officer Kim Francisco and County Administrator Steve Marvin.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Director Smith.

Director Smith read the following statement: "ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS MEETING OF *JANUARY 31, 2018* WAS GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT BY FORWARDING A SCHEDULE OF REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS TO THE WARREN COUNTY CLERK, THE STAR-LEDGER, AND DAILY RECORD AND BY POSTING A COPY THEREOF ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS. FORMAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN BY THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS AT THIS MEETING. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IS ENCOURAGED. IN ORDER TO ASSURE FULL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, THOSE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO WISH TO ATTEND THE MEETING SHOULD SUBMIT ANY REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE."

RESOLUTION 68-18

On motion by Mr. Gardner, seconded by Mr. Sarnoski, the following resolution was adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren at a meeting held on January 31, 2018.

**RESOLUTION APPOINTING SCOTT A. BURD TO THE POSITION OF
WARREN COUNTY PERSONNEL DIRECTOR, UNCLASSIFIED**

BE AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders appoints Scott A. Burd to the position of Warren County Personnel Director, Unclassified in accordance with N.J.S.A. 11A:3-5(l) at an annual salary for 2018 of \$101,035.00 effective February 1, 2018.

I hereby certify the above to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders in a meeting held on January 31, 2018.

Steve Marvin, Clerk of the Board

Recorded Vote: Mr. Gardner absent, Mr. Sarnoski yes, Mr. Smith yes

Mr. Olshefski said we're getting to the end of the budget process this evening. We have the Technical School here, mainly to talk about capital projects and the Sheriff is expected to come in again.

Warren County Technical School Superintendent Ed Zalewski handed out statistics illustrating enrollment. There have been 191 applications for the 2018-19 school year so far, the most they have ever had. Only 125 spots are available, so there is a desire to go to Tech. Warren County Technical School works closely with Warren County Community College with dual enrollment. For years, the Freeholders have been supporting the school's efforts to upgrade HVAC

MINUTES**JANUARY 31, 2018**

components, windows and lighting to become more energy efficient and the efforts are paying off. Mr. Zalewski provided a table of utility expenses dating back ten years illustrating an overall savings of \$1,027,169.

Mr. Zalewski then shared plans for the space becoming available at the school once the Franklin Branch of the County Library System moves out. The following programs will directly benefit: Child Development; Health Services; LPN-Postsecondary; Television, Radio and Digital and Cosmetology. While the services of an architect have not yet been procured, maps of the current and proposed layout of the school were provided. The freed up space would be converted to three classrooms to be occupied by Health Sciences, Postsecondary LPN and Child Development. The Postsecondary LPN Program is a night course and there is always a line to get in. Students have been turned away from the Health Sciences Program due to space constraints. The Child Development Program includes enrollment of pre-school children and this expansion will allow for an enrollment increase of 20 percent. This will generate \$20,000 in additional revenue as well as provide a service to the community. Each program will be accessible from the parking area and have access to a restroom without having to enter the school's main entrance.

The Cosmetology Department will stay where it is, but will be expanded. Seniors come in to get their hair done and an outside entrance will be installed for convenient access from the parking area. Classroom sizes will also increase for the TV, Radio and Digital Program and PE/Health. Mr. Smith noted that the investment the Freeholders made a few years back, installing that new bathroom for library patrons and employees, is now going to bear fruit. Mr. Sarnoski asked when the changes would be implemented. With the understanding that the precise timing of the library move is yet to be determined, Mr. Zalewski said this could be done anytime during the 2018-19 school year. The Cosmetology expansion could take place over the summer.

Taking a longer term view, Mr. Zalewski said the school would like to get a hold of the house (currently occupied by the Department of Education) one day for a Smart Home/Green Technology Program to benefit the students. He presented a list of repairs that would be required before the students could begin remodeling the house. Mr. Lazorisak said certain items have to be addressed this year including the chimney and boiler/furnace replacement. The question becomes: is it a waste of money if the future use of this building is to pursue green technology.

With the Board seemingly in favor of the capital improvements presented, Mr. Olshefski presented three options to fund the extra \$250,000 cost. Mr. Sarnoski and Mr. Smith preferred the "one-shot deal" of taking it out of remaining Warren Haven proceeds. This portion of the meeting concluded at 7:35 p.m.

Sheriff McDonald then approached the Board. Mr. Smith apprised the others that he and Mr. Olshefski had met with the Sheriff the prior day. Circumstances seemed to have changed since his Budget Session and some differences of opinion emerged. Mr. Olshefski reiterated concerns about the relatively new departmental Cap calculations. He said we have a unique situation with this department with its big increase in revenues this year. Last year, it was difficult because revenues were down. The problem with the law is that it does not allow for an average of revenue

MINUTES**JANUARY 31, 2018**

or carry-over of revenue. He had determined a ten year average of \$255,000. If it dips below that in any given year, someone will be “left holding the bag”, Mr. Olshefski said. The shortage has to come off the appropriation. It cannot be made up in local tax appropriation. It is very restrictive, but it is what it is and we have to follow it.

Specific personnel requests for the Sheriff’s Office which had changed in recent days, were discussed at length plus the cost of an additional vehicle. Mr. Lazorisak made some suggestions on reallocating certain vehicles. He advised upper management use new cars and filter the others down the fleet. A motor pool vehicle should be utilized for trips to the academy for training.

After much detailed back-and-forth, Mr. Smith summarized his position. He said administrative salaries were not going to be discussed tonight. This typically waits until after budget adoption and are addressed by the Board separately. Regarding equipment, he thought at least a portion of the transportation costs should be allocated to the Sheriff’s departmental budget. Regardless, we can’t argue with what Mr. Olshefski explained about the Cap and we can’t do anything until the labor contract is settled. Mr. Sarnoski recalled the way the Board had dealt with the Prosecutor’s Office. Here is the allocation, negotiate your contract first and what’s left over can go toward non-bargaining unit employees. “Until the deal is done, it’s not done,” said Mr. Smith.

Mr. Smith continued, “I would certainly hope that you would look to keep the County in mind and look at the broader picture here instead of just looking inside of the department because I don’t think that parochialism works for the team,” he said. Sheriff McDonald said he thought the most important asset in any business was the people (his employees). If you keep someone stagnant in a low wage for three or four years, that’s when they leave. Mr. Smith pointed out that the allocation presented by the Sheriff was going to be more at the top, not at the bottom. We’re losing the people at the bottom. Of the proposal put to him, 11 percent increases for the Sheriff and his Undersheriffs, Mr. Smith said, ‘I can’t support that... I said that the other day and I’ll say it again.’”

Sheriff McDonald continued to argue his points a bit longer, but there was no getting around the fact that his labor agreement had to be settled first. This portion of the meeting concluded at 8:12 p.m.

Alex Lazorisak spent about 20 minutes going over motor pool inventory, requests and plans with a budget plan going three years into the future. Mr. Sarnoski asked why most of the proposed new vehicles were Fords. Mr. Lazorisak said they started going in that direction a couple of years ago because it is easier to maintain the fleet with the same kinds of wiper blades, oil filters, etc. Mr. Smith requested looking into a basic Taurus instead of a Ford Fusion. Mr. Lazorisak suggested a change in procedures moving forward: individual departments should not be shopping for vehicles. He thought it best for his department to research the best pricing through State contract, etc. and buying in bulk. The Freeholders were in favor. Mr. Smith thought use of vehicle costs should be assigned to each department. He said when you have people using 40,000-50,000 miles per year for commuting purposes, that should come out of that budget.

MINUTES**JANUARY 31, 2018**

Personnel requests were reviewed. The list did not include unclassified people and two positions in the Sheriff's Office had to be put on hold as per the previous conversation about settling with the bargaining unit first.

In an effort to wrap up the 2018 budget process, the Board had a spirited discussion regarding how much to cut the tax levy. Mr. Sarnoski advocated for between \$750,000 and \$1 million. He was not in favor of cutting more than \$1 million.

Mr. Smith's position was that there had been a \$2 million infusion of Transportation Trust Fund money which citizens are paying for through the gas tax. Mr. Sarnoski said we don't know what may happen next year. We can give back next year and the year after that if conditions are warranted.

Mr. Gardner was hoping to cut \$1.5 million, the figure Mr. Smith also had in mind. In an effort to find common ground, Mr. Smith suggested \$1,250,000. Mr. Sarnoski reiterated that he was not comfortable with more than \$1 million, but he said we're arguing about how much we're cutting taxes and he reluctantly gave in.

Mr. Olshefski said there would be no issue with the Cap. He would finalize the budget and prepare introductory resolutions for the Board's February 15 meeting. "We should be doing cartwheels," said Mr. Smith.

On motion by Mr. Gardner, seconded by Mr. Sarnoski, and there being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Recorded Vote: Mr. Gardner yes, Mr. Sarnoski yes, Mr. Smith yes

ATTESTED TO:**Steve Marvin, Clerk of the Board**