

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
TOWNSHIP OF FRANKLIN, COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY
MAY 17, 2005**

The Special Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Franklin, County of Somerset, New Jersey was called to order by the Mayor at 7:02 p.m.

The Deputy Mayor read the following statement: "In accordance with Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, Public Law 1975, be advised that adequate notice of this Special Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Franklin, County of Somerset was made by the posting on the bulletin board at the Municipal Complex and by faxing to the officially designated newspapers, a notice indicating that the Special Meeting would take place at the Municipal Building at 7:00 p.m. on May 17, 2005. In addition, a copy of this notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the Office of the Municipal Clerk."

Everyone present participated in the salute to the flag.

The Township Clerk called the roll.

Present: Ms. Ashley-Williams (via conference telephone), Ms. Danile, Ms. Eberle, Mayor Levine, Deputy Mayor McKenzie, Mr. Regan (recused himself), Ms. Ritchie, Mr. Sumter

Absent: Mr. Chivukula

Also Present: Kenneth W. Daly, Township Manager, Louis N. Rainone, Esq., Township Attorney (arrived at 7:15 p.m.), Andrew Hodulik, Auditor and Ann Marie McCarthy, Township Clerk.

2005-06 DEFEATED SCHOOL BOARD BUDGET

Mayor Levine announced there are two (2) sign-in sheets for the public discussion portion of the meeting. The blue sheets are for those who are in favor of *No Reduction* to the School Budget. The yellow sheets are for those who are in favor of a *Reduction/Substantial Reduction* to the School Budget.

Mr. Regan recused himself from the discussion and action to be taken on the school budget because his wife is a teacher in the school system and does not want to create a conflict of interest. He stated that even though he is on the Financial Oversight Committee he had not participated in any discussions with the Board of Education of the Financial Oversight Committee regarding this matter. At this time, Mr. Regan left the meeting.

Ms. Danile reported that she, Mayor Levine and Deputy Mayor McKenzie met as the Financial Oversight Committee to discuss the school board budget. Ms. Danile announced there is no formal report from the Financial Oversight Committee regarding the school budget. She commended the Board of Education for an excellent job in providing a competitive education for the Township's children. She stated that it is not Council's intent to make reduction to the school budget that would sacrifice what is essential to provide a quality education to the Township's children. She reported that there was not any consensus among the members of the Financial Oversight Committee as to an amount to be reduced in the school budget. She referred to a working document used by the Financial Oversight Committee that gave a preliminary reduction of \$1.8 million. The Committee reviewed possible reductions to coaching stipends, a flex-nurse, speech teacher, secretaries, guidance counselors, utility overhead, savings in health insurance and capital reserve.

Deputy Mayor McKenzie stated that possible reductions, such as the \$1.8 million included in the document posted on the Taxpayers United in Franklin's website was not agreed upon by the Financial Oversight Committee and was not formally recommended to Council.

Mayor Levine stated that the school budget was defeated in April and was turned over to Council for review and recommendations by Council as required by law. He stated that the Bond question on the ballot was not subject to reversal by Council. He stated that the way school budgets are funded is unfair and concurred that other funding alternatives are needed. He stated that Council was to review the school budget and determine if the school budget was to be adjusted or not.

Eva Nagy, President of the Board of Education, made a presentation to Council supporting the 2005-06 School Budget. She reported that much of the increase to the school budget is a result of the new high school that would be opening in September. Ms. Nagy, on behalf of the Board of Education, opposed the proposed \$1.8 million in reductions and stated reasons why each reduction could not be made.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Upon motion by Ms. Danile, seconded by Deputy Mayor McKenzie, the meeting was open for discussion. Said motion was carried unanimously upon call of the roll.

The following members of the public spoke in favor of *Reduction/Substantial Reduction to School Budget*:

Philip Kramer	429 Canal Road
Harry Weber	115 Culver Street

The following member of the public spoke neither in favor of a reduction or no reduction to the School Budget:

Jon MacIvor	160 DeMott Lane
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The following members of the public spoke in favor of *No Reduction to the School Budget*:

Lydia Buonaguro	275 Longwood Lane
Tony Buonaguro	275 Longwood Lane
Patti Brewer	2060 Amwell Road
Kim Thorne	8 Barker Road
Michel Bickford	5 Ins Court
Nancy Dorvil	33 Rue Chagall
Grace Evans	38 Crown Road
Ronald Jordan	4 Buell Street
Elizabeth Henry	6 Buell Street
Rachel Warzala	67 Emerson Road
Jessie Lindsay	255 Berger Street
Gary Brill	17 Winston Drive
Naomi Nierenberg	24 Beverly Avenue
Dianna Gomez	4 Farley Drive
Phyllis Beals	6 Alma Court
Harold Reiss	200 Berger Street
Pat Kryzak	16 Ashley Court
Stephen Levine	171 Stone Manor Drive
Bonnie Martin	306 Cedar Grove Lane
Johnny Allen	7 Mustang Trail
Vaseem Firdaus	269 Bennetts Lane
Lori Gross	15 Richmond Drive
Lisa Freda	4338 Route 27
Sharry Tibbitt	30 Gallop Lane
Rozalyn Sherman	529 Rosecliff Court
Karl M. King	33 Castleton Avenue
Joe Coronato	59 John E. Busch Avenue

Rick Black	29 Margaret Drive
Maddy Michaylin	107 Bennington Parkway
Brian Bonanno	303 Astor Drive
Cara Holzer	25 Franklin Street

Deputy Mayor McKenzie moved that the public discussion be closed. Said motion was seconded by Ms. Ritchie and carried unanimously upon call of the roll.

Upon motion by Ms. Danile, seconded by Mr. Sumter and carried unanimously upon voice vote, the meeting was recessed at 9:17 p.m.

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor McKenzie, seconded by Ms. Danile and carried unanimously upon voice vote, the meeting was resumed at 9:50 p.m.

At this time, Ms. Ashley-Williams asked for a moment of silence in memory of the two (2) children that died in a fire early Friday morning and for the recovery of the family of the children. Mayor Levine led a moment of silence.

Motion – Reduce School Budget by \$1.2 million

Ms. Danile reported that the Financial Oversight Committee is recommending reducing the school budget by \$1.2 million. She expressed the Committee's desire that the Board of Education implement the suggested reductions. She commended the Board of Education for the outstanding job they do in educating the children of Franklin Township. She expressed the Committee's desire that the Board of Education consider the reductions recommended by Council from non-essential areas.

Ms. Danile made a motion to reduce the 2005-06 School Board Budget by \$1.2 million. Said motion was seconded by Mr. Sumter.

Ms. Ritchie asked if the proposed \$1.2 million reduction was the recommendation by the Financial Oversight Committee. Ms. Danile replied it was the recommended agreed to by Council. Mr. Rainone clarified that Council, as a whole, did not meet during the recess to discuss the proposed reductions to the school budget. Ms. Ritchie stated she was not involved in the discussion and she values the opinion of the subcommittee. Deputy Mayor McKenzie asked for the Mayor's opinion of the proposed reduction. Mayor Levine stated he would make his comments, as always, after all Council members.

Ms. Ashley-Williams stated she is not in support of the motion. She stated that the problem is not with the Board of Education, it is how the school budget is funded. She stated that the Township approved a new high school in 2001 and now it needs to be funded. Ms. Ashley-Williams stated she would support no reductions be made to the school budget, but would compromise with a \$500,000 reduction to the school budget.

Mr. Rainone explained that the reductions made by Council need to be made in specific line items. The following line items compose the proposed \$1.2 million reduction:

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Reduction Amount</u>
	School Sponsored Cocurricular Activities	
11-401-100-500	Supplies and Materials	40,000.00
	School-Sponsored Athletics	
11-402-100-106-01	Salaries of Teachers	34,479.00
11-402-100-600	Supplies and Materials	5,000.00
	Health Services	
11-000-213-104-12	Salaries	67,620.00
11-000-213-105-12		25,010.00

11-000-216-10	Other Support Serv. Student Related Salaries	67,620.00
11-000-218-104-12	Other Support Serv. Student Regular Salaries of Other Professional Staff	67,620.00
11-000-218-800	Other Objects	10,000.00
11-000-221-102-12	Improv. Of Instruction Services Salaries of Other Professional Staff	40,000.00
11-000-221-320	Improv. Of Instruction Services	10,000.00
11-000-222-105-12	Educ. Media Svcs./School Library Salaries	23,819.00
11-000-240-105-12	Support Servs. – School Admin. Salaries	36,050.00
11-000-252-100-12	Admin Info Tech Salaries	46,000.00 36,050.00
11-000-261-610	Req. Maint. For School Facilities General Supplies	10,000.00
11-000-262-110-13	Other Operation & Maint of Plant Salaries-Cust/Sec.Guard/Lunch Aides	85,840.00
11-000-262-620	Energy	250,000.00
11-000-291-270	Employee Benefits Health Benefits	180,000.00
11-000-262-620	Capital Outlay Capital Outlay–Transfer to Capital Projs.	200,000.00

The motion *failed* as follows upon call of the roll:

<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Danile	Ashley-Williams		Chivukula
Levine	Eberle		Regan
Sumter	McKenzie		
	Ritchie		

Motion – Not to Reduce School Board Budget – Leave As-Is

A brief discussion ensued regarding not reducing the school budget at all. Mr. Sumter disagreed stating, that they should cut the “fat” out of the budget and that it would not hurt the children in doing so. Ms. Eberle stated that this is a special year and that next year would be different. She stated there are different expenses from one year to the next. She stated she would support no reduction to the school budget.

Deputy Mayor McKenzie moved not to reduce the 2005-06 School Board Budget. Said motion was seconded by Ms. Eberle and *failed* as follows upon call of the roll:

<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Ashley-Williams	Danile		Chivukula
Eberle	Levine		Regan
McKenzie	Ritchie		
	Sumter		

A discussion ensued regarding how much to reduce the school budget and by which line items. Ms. Ashley-Williams suggested reducing the budget by \$500,000.00. A brief discussion ensued regarding which line items should compose the proposed \$500,000.00 reduction.

Resolution #05-232 Reduce 2005-06 School Budget by \$500,00.000 & Certify Amount to be Raised by Taxes

Upon motion by Ms. Ashley-Williams, seconded by Deputy Mayor McKenzie, the following resolution was adopted as follows upon call of the roll:

<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Ashley-Williams	Ritchie		Chivukula
Danile	Sumter		Regan
Eberle			
Levine			
McKenzie			

WHEREAS, the legal voters of the School District of the Township of Franklin, in the County of Somerset and State of New Jersey, at an Annual District Election Meeting conducted by the Board of Education on April 19, 2005, defeated, disapproved and rejected the Budget of the said Board of Education for the School Year 2005-06 of those voting; and

WHEREAS, as a result of such rejection of said Budget, the legal obligation devolved upon the Governing Body of the Township of Franklin pursuant to Revised Statute 18:22-37 to certify to the Somerset County Board of Taxation the amount or amounts which it determines necessary to provide a thorough and efficient system of schools of said district for the school year beginning July 1, 2005 and ending June 30, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the voters rejected the following:

1.	General Fund Tax Levy	\$91,490,075.00
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WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Franklin, Somerset County, after considering and reviewing the budget of the Board of Education as originally proposed is of the opinion that said budget, item 1 above, should be reduced by \$500,000.00 of various General Fund appropriations, and that the amount included in this section in the resolution is deemed to provide a thorough and efficient system of school and education in said district for the school year 2005-06;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Franklin, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, that the Franklin Township Board of Education Budget Tax for the 2005-06 School Year be reduced as follows:

A.	General Fund Tax Levy	\$90,990,075.00
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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following amounts are required to provide a thorough and efficient system of school and education in the district for School Fiscal Year 2005-06 and that the following total sums are to be raised by taxes to support the 2005-06 Budget:

GENERAL FUND	\$90,990,075.00
DEBT SERVICE	\$ 5,547,740.00

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Franklin that the attached detailed sheet of taxes for the 2005-06 Board of Education Budget and the 2005 Tax Levy are presented as necessary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this resolution be delivered to the Somerset County Board of Taxation and the Franklin Township Board of Education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that attached hereto is a list of accounts and proposed reduction in said accounts, which list is incorporated herein and made part hereof:

**SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED REVENUE INCREASES
AND APPROPRIATION DECREASES**

APPROPRIATION DECREASES:

Account Name: Support Services – School Administration - Salaries
Account Number: 11-000-240-105-12
Item(s) Adjusted: New Secretary II SGS
Total Amount: \$36,000.00

Account Name: Admin Info Tech - Salaries
Account Number: 11-000-252-100-12
Item(s) Adjusted: New Computer Tech - \$46,000.00
New Secretary II - \$36,000.00
Total Amount: \$82,000.00

Account Name: Req. Maint. For School Facilities
Account Number: 11-000-261-610
Item(s) Adjusted: General Supplies
Total Amount: \$10,000.00

Account Name: Other Operation & Maint. of Plant
Account Number: 11-000-262-620
Item(s) Adjusted: Energy
Total Amount: \$250,000.00

Account Name: Employee Benefits
Account Number: 11-000-291-270
Item(s) Adjusted: Health Benefits
Total Amount: \$122,000.00

TOTAL APPROPRIATION DECREASE: \$500,000.00

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor McKenzie and seconded by Ms. Danile to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 p.m. The motion was carried unanimously upon voice vote.

Brian D. Levine, Mayor

Ann Marie McCarthy, Township Clerk

Approved:

Date: