

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 7:07 p.m.

Mayor Levine 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 transmitted to the officially designated newspapers, indicating that this Special Meeting would take place at the Franklin Township Municipal Complex at 7:00 p.m. on June 17, 2008. 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."

The Deputy Township Clerk called the roll.

Present: Ms. Daniel, Ms. Eberle, Mr. Glicklich, Mayor Levine, Mr. Mettler, Mr. Prasad (arrived at 7:09 pm), Mr. Sumter. Deputy Mayor Vassanella

Absent: Ms. Francois

Also Present: Kenneth W. Daly, Township Manager, Leslie G. London, Esq., Township Attorney, Virginia M. Woodbury, Deputy Township Clerk

Mayor Levine announced that Congressman Rush Holt would be holding a "Town Meeting" in the Council Chambers on Monday, July 7, 2008 from 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm.

#### **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED SOLID WASTE UTILITY**

Mayor Levine explained to the Channel 25 audience and to those present in the Council Chambers that there would be no decision made by the Township Council at this meeting. This Special Meeting is strictly for informational purposes, to present the Solid Waste Study that has been conducted by DeFeo Associates and to garner public opinion.

Deputy Mayor Vassanella reinforced Mayor Levine's statement that there would be no decision made by the Township Council at tonight's meeting. He thanked Township Engineer, Thomas Zilinek and the consultants for keeping the Public Works Standing Committee informed of their progress with the study and stated that the Township Council would probably need to make a decision by the end of summer. Reinforcing also the fact that no increase in the number of employees, no increase in pension or health benefits, Deputy Mayor Vassanella explained that if the Township did create a Solid Waste Utility, the Township would have jurisdiction over the garbage collection program.

Tom Zilinek, Township Engineer, noted that this has been an on-going discussion that began approximately two years ago. He stated that Township Council discussed the issue at the Council Retreat and decided to start soliciting proposals for setting up a Solid Waste Utility; DeFeo & Associates was awarded the contract.

#### **Presentation of the Solid Waste Study**

Wayne DeFeo, Principal of DeFeo Associates, introduced himself and Dom Datillio who were contracted by the Township of Franklin to conduct a study of the procedure of collecting solid waste and the cost associated with it, and to propose ways of improving service.

Mr. DeFeo applauded the Township for electing to do a study before contracting garbage collection to one company that would serve the entire municipality. He noted that, with the present procedure, known as "subscription service", the Township has no control over the method or pricing of solid waste pick up in the Township. Noting that the population of the Township of Franklin has probably increased by two hundred percent in twenty years, Mr. DeFeo stated that questions are raised by the residents regarding the four am collection, three different garbage companies servicing residents on the same street on the same day, disparity of

costs, etc. He stated that the garbage companies have many different kinds of collection systems in place, using all kinds of different containers. The use of automated side loader trucks has cut down on cost of operation because, he said, there are fewer injuries to the workers and only one person is needed to operate each truck. Most companies supply “carts” and, he stated, although there is a weight limit – 300-400 lbs. - it is not enforced because the “arm” is capable of picking up whatever is put into the cart. Mr. DeFeo observed that there are still “manual” pick-ups being made by some garbage companies.

Mr. DeFeo mentioned multi-family dwellings where the use of enclosures is necessary to shield the public view from an accumulation of garbage. He noted the inconvenience of garbage strikes that most people have endured at one time or another. Regarding the use of enclosures, Mr. DeFeo stated that they could be a problem because they invite illegal dumping by persons who do not know how to dispose of something so they toss it over the fence. He mentioned the fact that enclosures that were made of wood quickly deteriorated and most newer enclosures are made of cinderblock. In explaining the different enclosures being used at multifamily facilities, Mr. DeFeo noted that the Somerset County Recycling Program entails the use of another type of container for recyclable materials that is usually kept in close proximity to the garbage containers.

An increase in population density changes the dimensions of garbage hauling and because of the increase, Mr. DeFeo noted that residents begin to ask more questions; for instance, do we want four am pick-up? Subscription service means haulers can pick up any time they want, he said. In his own town, Mr. DeFeo stated, there are three different haulers picking up garbage on the same day on the same street.

Mr. DeFeo noted that the recycling program operated by Somerset County was not covered as part of this study. Mr. Daly noted that the Township pays for the recycling service supplied by Somerset County. Mr. DeFeo stated that nothing is free and, if the Township creates the Solid Waste Utility, it will be paid for by the residents.

The Solid Waste Study prepared by DeFeo Associates presented charts, tables and lists of the following information. Mr. DeFeo discussed the following information that was depicted in the slide show:

- Rates and Services offered by haulers serving residential customers in the Township;
- Rates and Services provided at private associations;
- Costs for services provided at Parkside (Housing Authority), the Board of Education and the Municipal Complex;
- Revenue from the sale of mini dump passes and appliance pick-up stickers in 2007;
- Comments obtained during the random mail/fax survey of residents;
- Summary of Cost Findings;
- Summary of Current Costs for Solid Waste Collection in Franklin Township;
- Service Options for the Township regarding the decision as to whether or not to establish a Solid Waste Utility;
  - b. Maintain Status Quo
  - c. Bid for municipal collection service
  - d. Create a Solid Waste Utility and have Utility bid for collection service

The DeFeo Associates’ report offered these conclusions and recommendations:

The report notes that multi-family units, private communities/associations, public housing, schools and public buildings are all suffering on a cost basis simply by virtue of their limited size relative to the entire Township. Each individual residence is paying a disproportionately large cost for service due to their limited size and scope of service. However, private communities/associations may experience the lowest impact on cost as they clearly benefit from the number of units being serviced by a single solid waste collection company; the cost of service at these communities is as much as 60% lower than comparable service at single-family homes.

A table of “Cost of Service Comparison: Municipal Bid vs. Private Subscription” shows among other statistics, that the Township of Franklin’s Total Annual Collection/Disposal per Unit cost is clearly 60% more for comparable service on an annual basis that residents in neighboring towns (South Brunswick and East Brunswick) pay.

The report presented a plan for Township’s consideration, spelling out the parameters of a Township wide solid waste collection system. It was noted also that the Township should consider working with the Board of Education and the Housing Authority to develop a more efficient solid waste collection system for each of these operations.

A discussion among Councilmembers and Mr. Daly followed with several Councilmembers questioning Mr. DeFeo on many aspects of the plan including bulk pick-up, willingness of residents to participate in plan, the environmental impact of changes in the number of garbage trucks on the road and the amount of damage to those roads, and the reduction of noise pollution.

Motion was made by Mr. Glicklich and seconded by Mr. Mettler to open the meeting for public discussion. Motion was carried unanimously.

John McConville, 5 Stone Leigh Way, questioned the plan to shut down the mini-dump.

Harry Weber, 115 Culver Street, noted the increase in taxes that would result in the Township’s plan to take over garbage collection. Mr. DeFeo explained that the plan does not include the Township making collections; the contract would be awarded to one garbage hauler who would be responsible for the collection of garbage throughout the Township..

John Walker, Claremont Road, noted that the population of the Township is now approximately 62,000, not 50,903 as quoted by Mr. DeFeo; the number of housing units in the Township is 20,000.

Jeannette M. DeCuollo, Blue Star Carting & Blue Star Recycling Companies, made it clear to the Council that, if they decided to go out for bid for a hauler to service the entire Township, it would be a very limited number of garbage companies that would be able to bid. Ms. DeCuollo alluded to the belief that Midco is already a “monopoly” within the Township. She mentioned several issues that she hoped the Councilmembers would keep in mind as they investigate the possibility of creating a Solid Waste Utility.

At the conclusion of Ms. DeCuollo’s remarks, Mayor Levine asked Ms. DeCuollo if she were awarded the contract to provide garbage hauling service to the entire Township, would that enable her company to purchase the equipment she now lacks to bid on the contract. Ms. DeCuollo answered that it would most likely not be a possibility, given the enormous cost of equipment – noting that, because Midco is a national company, they buy in bulk resulting in the cost of one truck being approximately \$160,000. The same truck would cost her company approximately \$210,000.

Alvin Levine, 15 Schlindler Court, thanked Mr. DeFeo for the education he received concerning the garbage industry and the many issues involved in collecting garbage. Mr. Levine noted that, although he understood the issue of the cost of operating the mini-dump as opposed to the revenue received, he hopes there is some solution to be found. He also noted that he thought combining government agencies under one contract would save money.

Jim Barrett, 30 Fairfield Road, who is a franchised partner for “1-800-Got Junk”, spoke of the dangers of curbside bulk pick up. Mr. Barrett mentioned the practice of contractors leaving their waste materials where they see other bulk materials left. He also noted the

marginalized reuse of material that should be recycled and offered his services as the solution to the Township's mini-dump problem.

Mr. Mettler moved to close the meeting for public discussion. Said motion was seconded by Ms. Eberle and carried unanimously upon voice vote.

A short discussion followed among the Councilmembers concerning the next step in their discussion of the possibility of creating a Township wide solid waste collection system. It was determined that members of Council should attend the next meeting of the Public Works Committee, provided the meeting is sunshined, to further discuss the matter.

Mr. Glicklich moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 p.m. Said motion was seconded by Ms. Danile and carried unanimously upon call of the roll.

Approved: *As Amended.*

Date: *September 9, 2008*

Brian D. Levine, Mayor

Virginia M. Woodbury  
Deputy Township Clerk