

Fairness In Taxes Meeting Minutes 8-1-14

Board Attendance: Leo Burke, Bill & Sheila Hartranft, Michael Hinchman, Dale Nicholas, Vic Staniec & Jim Tweed

Meeting opened by Michael Hinchman with Pledge Allegiance at 3:00 P.M.

Education Report - Vic Staniec

- Pete Madden officially resigned his position on the School Board. There were 5 applicants for his slot who were all interviewed and asked the same questions, after which the Board went into Executive Session and unanimously appointed Greg Whelan.
- For the November election there are four candidates for three open seats, Joe Clark, Cecilia Gallelli Keys, Dale Braun and Michael James. Tiffany Prettiman has decided not to run.
- Repairs for the High School HVAC system, estimated at \$2.9m are scheduled to be completed before the start of the school year. When asked about the litigation involving the previous contracted, Vic explained that litigation would have been more costly than settlement and the original specs for the job may have been wrong.
- The dome on the High School is in need of repair, estimated at \$15k. The original cost was \$26k
- There is a bond issue in the works for more secure school entry. As it is now, the Primary School's foyer is too small and needs to be enlarged; there is no foyer in the High School; the Middle School is fine.
- Tom Oves, School Board President is getting an expert to recommend repairs to the Terrazzo floor in the High School. It may actually not be "real" terrazzo.

Additional Discussion - Michael Hinchman

- There is was some discussion as to whether part time property owners should be able to vote in municipal elections. There were pros and cons. Jim Tweed recommended having a debate on this issue and draft a resolution giving our membership the opportunity to say "yes" or "no" in order to get a consensus. He feels it should at least be debated and prepare a motion as to whether to go forward to present at the September meeting.
- A member in attendance commented on the effective utilization of City manpower, specifically police and fire. Also commented that in Medord, they cut 2 officers from their force and crime actually went down. Felt that in a town the size of Ocean City they could consolidate two fire houses.
- Vic asked about the 6th street parking and possible variance to be decided on August 13, 2014. Michael stated that he contacted Ken Jones, Zoning Officer. Mayor Gillian's father owns the property in question and that they were only seeking a temporary mercantile license for 90 days to accommodate summer vacationers and felt it was all done properly.
- One questions asked was who is eligible for tax rebates in NJ? As far as anyone knows, it is only for permanent residents of 10 years.
- Czar Engineering submitted design plans for the 29th Street fire house. Original cost was \$93k was reduced to \$80k. Bob Bakish submitted a bid for \$63k; did not get the job; confirmed "the fix is in".
- Michael noted that Dotti McCrosson is handling loans for the City, but also works for O.C. Home Bank. Is this appropriate. Unable to get answers on this issue. Michael is willing to go to the State, if necessary for regulations; Bill Hartranft offered to help with this effort.
- Wind farms have been approved by the State for Atlantic City and Ocean City. Oil drilling off our shores also approved.

Additional Discussion Cont'd

- There was some discussion about the disorganized planning of events, i.e.; Summer Seafood Fest, Summer Block Party, etc. as well as the lack of appropriate signage, especially for visitors. It was also commented that a restaurant that wished to have a private party, could close, serve by invitation only and for that occurrence could get around the “no BYOB” issue.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 P.M.

Next meeting scheduled for Friday, September 5, 2014.

Respectively submitted by:
Sheila Hartranft, Secretary