



PRINCETON
MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF PRINCETON
MINUTES • APRIL 18, 2016

Special Meeting

Main Council Room

7:00 PM

400 Witherspoon Street, Princeton, NJ 08540

I. STATEMENT CONCERNING NOTICE OF MEETING

The following is an accurate statement concerning the providing of notice of this meeting and said statement shall be entered in the minutes of this meeting. Notice of this meeting as required by Sections 4a, 3d, 13 and 14 of the Open Public Meetings Act has been provided to the public in the form of a written notice. On April 14, 2016 at 3:35 p.m., said notice was posted on the official bulletin board in the Municipal Building, transmitted to the Princeton Packet, the Trenton Times, the Town Topics and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

II. ROLL CALL

The Municipal Clerk then called the roll.

Present for Council: Mayor Lempert, Councilwoman Butler, Councilwoman Crumiller, Councilwoman Howard, Council President Liverman, Councilman Miller and Councilman Simon.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Mr. Dashield, Administrator, Mrs. Monzo, Deputy Administrator, Mr. Kiser, Municipal Engineer, Ms. Webb, Chief Financial Officer and Ms. Britton, Esq, Mason, Griffin & Pierson.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The audience participated in the pledge of allegiance.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Liverman announced that there will be a Host Liability Forum on May 18, 2016, 7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M., Main Meeting Room, 400 Witherspoon Street.

Ms. Butler said that there will be a meeting on May 3, 2016, 7:00 P.M. with the consultant to discuss Mary Moss Park.

Mr. Simon said that there will be a 4th Annual Stonybrook Millstone Watershed Association Stream Cleanup Project on April 24-25, 2016, 9:00 A.M. to 3:15 P.M.

Mayor Lempert announced that Robert Kiser, Municipal Engineer, has been named the American Society Civil Engineer of the Year for the State of New Jersey.

V. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

There were no comments from the audience.

VI. REPORTS

Ms. Howard said that oral arguments are being heard by The Supreme Court of the United States regarding Immigration Reform.

Ms. Crumiller said that the first Complete Streets meeting was held earlier today.

Mayor Lempert thanked all staff who worked to make Communiiversity a success. She also said that the deadline to receive applications for the Princeton Youth Advisory Committee has passed and all applications that have been received are currently being reviewed.

Mr. Dashield said he will be at the meeting with Princeton University on Friday, April 22, 2016 to discuss an exciting opportunity to collaborate on a project entitled "Big Thinking". He said that he will report back to Mayor and Council with further details after the meeting.

VII. WORK SESSION**2016 Council Goals & Priorities Status Update, 1st and 2nd Quarter**

Mr. Dashield updated the Mayor and Council on 2016 Council Goals and Priorities for the first and second quarters.

Ms. Howard said that the Civil Rights Committee was working toward proactive education and outreach and that they are being careful not to prejudice anyone's legal rights.

Mr. Simon said that he was concerned about what he was hearing regarding the Civil Rights Committee, stating that he was not complaining about the process, but that the process felt incomplete.

Ms. Howard said that it was a goal to get a Civil Rights ordinance adopted by Council.

Mr. Liverman said that this was a great beginning and the ordinance was better than nothing. He said that having nothing is much worse.

Mr. Simon said that in regards to Affordable Housing, they are committed to continuing discussions after litigation is completed.

Ms. Howard said that in regards to an Earned Sick Leave policy, work on a proposed policy is ongoing and the subcommittee was making steady progress.

Mr. Miller said that in regards to the Municipal Wi-Fi system he noted that our municipality is too small to be of interest to the Google system.

2016 Budget Discussion

Mr. Dashield reviewed with the Mayor and Council a power point presentation regarding the 2016 Municipal Budget.

He said that parking enforcement was on track to increase revenue and that a reduction of \$300,000.00 in the proposed budget would have a service level impact.

Mr. Simon asked if we should be more conservative in our approach to budgeting.

Mr. Dashield said that one option in amending the proposed budget would be to keep surplus at its current level, giving us time to develop strategies to increase revenue opportunities.

Mr. Miller suggested that we reduce services, increase taxes and review revenue sources.

Mr. Dashield said that there has not been enough analysis done and that he would like more time to look at the budgeting trends.

Mr. Simon said that there was no consensus on the Citizens Finance Advisory Committee (CFAC). In 2015 projections vs. 2016 taxes, the wrong tax collection rate was used. Mr. Dashield said that this was the previous way that we were doing the analysis and projecting taxes.

Ms. Howard asked if a decision amending the proposed budget had to be made now noting that she was not prepared to make a decision.

Mr. Simon suggested that we approve or amend the budget on April 25, 2016.

Ms. Butler asked how Mr. Simon would reduce the budget by \$300,000.00 Mr. Simon responded that it would depend on Councils' priorities and that we haven't had that conversation in a public setting.

Mr. Simon said the first priority is Access Princeton. He said that we were told that the new department would be neutral in regard to salary and wages but that has not been the case. He said that this was not a criticism to the staff of Access Princeton and the work that they have done and hoped that there would be openings elsewhere in the organization for the employees.

Ms. Butler said that she agreed with Mr. Simon in regards to Access Princeton and that she did not see the deliverables.

Ms. Monzo said that Access Princeton offers citizen engagement, transparency, efficiency, and interaction through social media, See Click Fix, and a central point of contact at Monument Hall. She said that Access Princeton was the formal work order system to the municipality.

Ms. Howard said that she was concerned about cutting Access Princeton from the municipal budget. She states that Access Princeton is the "customer service" for the municipality. Ms. Howard asked how we can optimize Access Princeton in the municipality.

Mr. Dashield suggested using the employees to help Historic Preservation with the Witherspoon-Jackson Historic District.

Mr. Liverman said that he was not in agreement with cutting Access Princeton.

Ms. Butler said that she shares some of Mr. Simon's concerns and would like to hear more about optimization.

Mayor Lempert said that feedback was universally positive about Access Princeton.

Ms. Butler said that she felt that it was a duplication of services.

Mr. Simon said that he was not proposing the full elimination of Access Princeton.

Ms. Butler said that she was happy to recognize that the office of Historic Preservation would need assistance. She said that Mr. Simon makes a good point but is not sure what a viable solution for Access Princeton would be. Ms. Butler said that it was crunch time for the 2016 municipal budget and asked where we were going to find \$300,000.00 worth of services. She noted that Council was currently sitting on thousands of dollars' worth of new chairs.

Ms. Howard proposed a hiring freeze and a freeze on purchasing new equipment.

Mr. Dashield said that we would have to make decisions based on which positions and vacancies not to fill.

Mayor Lempert asked Mr. Dashield why Council was just hearing about the surplus issues now. Mr. Dashield said that it was due to concern about surplus projections.

Mr. Miller said that he was concerned about where surplus is going and the overall analysis process.

Scott Sillars, Chair of the Citizens Finance Advisory Committee said that \$300,000.00 represents $\frac{1}{2}$ of one percent and that is nothing. He said that Council needs to look at other revenue options. Mr. Sillars said that it would behoove us to move the tax rate up a bit and split the difference. He said that trying to cut a department is not the right way to do it. Mr. Sillars also suggested that the 2017 municipal budget be introduced by February of next year.

Mr. Simon asked what is the practical impact on the state deadline if we do not adopt the 2016 municipal budget at this meeting. Mr. Dashield said that it will affect the best practices checklist and may result in a reduction of State Aid.

Mayor Lempert asked how accurate we have been on our projections and are we confident in them.

Mr. Simon said that it depends on what our priorities are. Mayor Lempert said that she is concerned about the process; that it feels haphazard and that we do not have all the information in front of us. She said that we need to be sensitive about who is watching us and she suggested that Administration come back to Council at the Council meeting with recommendations.

Ms. Howard said that she was not prepared to fully address the issues as presented tonight and asked if each department's budgets are being reviewed.

Ms. Crumiller said that she thought that Ms. Howard was exactly right.

Mr. Liverman said that we need to look at ways to increase revenue and that Council needs to have more information in front of them to make decisions.

Mr. Simon said that this is a work session on the budget and asked what people thought would happen.

Mayor Lempert suggested that they take a break from the budget discussion to address other items on the agenda. Council would come back to the budget discussion tonight after the other items were finished.

VIII. ORDINANCE INTRODUCTION

- 1. 2016-25 An Ordinance By Princeton Amending The “Witherspoon–Jackson Historic District” And Amending The “Code Of The Township Of Princeton, New Jersey, 1968”

The Mayor read the proposed ordinance by title.

Motion – to introduce

RESULT:	INTRODUCED [5 TO 0]	Next: 5/23/2016
MOVER:	Jo Butler, Councilwoman	
SECONDER:	Jenny Crumiller, Councilwoman	
AYES:	Howard, Crumiller, Miller, Butler, Simon	
RECUSED:	Liverman	

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. 16-112 Appointments, Boards and Commissions

Motion – to approve resolution

RESULT:	ADOPTED [5 TO 0]
MOVER:	Jo Butler, Councilwoman
SECONDER:	Heather Howard, Councilwoman
AYES:	Howard, Crumiller, Miller, Butler, Simon

RETURN TO BUDGET DISCUSSION

Mr. Dashield reviewed with Council three budget options: 1. Move forward with the proposed budget as is with a \$957,000.00 or 2.99% tax increase. 2. Decrease the surplus by \$300,000.00, with an impact of \$40.00 per average household. 3. Find \$300,000.00 in reductions or reduce the surplus by \$150,000.00 with the remainder to be raised in taxes.

Mr. Dashield suggested that Council consider option #3 so that we may move forward with the budget process. He suggested that an amendment be made to the budget of \$150,000.00, decreasing surplus by \$150,000.00 and increasing taxes by \$150,000.00. Mr. Dashield also proposed another work session for further discussion and for direction from Council for preparation.

Mayor Lempert and Ms. Butler suggested looking at current fees and potentially raising them.

Mr. Simon said that the municipality will need the fees next year as there are capital reserves which are quickly being depleted.

Mr. Miller suggested increasing taxes by \$150,000.00, drawing down on reserves by \$150,000.00 and ask that staff find an additional \$150,000.00 within their budgets.

Mr. Dashfield said that if Council would like an additional Work Session to discuss the municipal budget he would need direction from Council regarding areas that should be reviewed.

Ms. Crumiller said that there needs to be clear direction and analysis of necessity concerning the hiring of new employees.

Mr. Simon said that a hiring freeze would have a drastic impact on services.

Ms. Howard said that we need to go through a more rigorous review when hiring new employees.

Mr. Simon said that he was not completely signed on to the majority plan of a proposed amendment and that he will vote against this budget. He said that we need to sharpen pencils and get serious in looking for reductions. Mr. Simon said that Council has to be clear about their choices.

Ms. Butler reminded Council that we have taken on a number of initiatives that increase the budget.

Council will continue to address budget issues at an additional Work Session meeting.

X. CLOSED SESSION: NEGOTIATIONS/LITIGATION

1. 16-113 Resolution: Closed Session

Motion – to approve resolution

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Lance Liverman, Council President
SECONDER:	Patrick Simon, Councilman
AYES:	Howard, Crumiller, Miller, Liverman, Butler, Simon

2. Negotiations: Requests for Proposals, Municipal Attorney

3. Litigation: Knapp Vs. Borough of Princeton, et al: discussion of lawsuit

4. Litigation: Fields et al. v. Princeton University et al. tax appeals, Tax Court Docket Nos. 10656-2011, 5904-2014, and 7556-2016: discussion of lawsuit

The above referenced items were discussed by the Council.

Mayor Lempert and Ms. Howard recused themselves from the Princeton University tax appeal discussion.

Mayor Lempert and Ms. Howard then returned to participate in the discussion regarding Knapp v. Borough of Princeton and the Request for Proposals for Municipal Attorney.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 p.m.

Linda S. McDermott

Municipal Clerk
