

**BOROUGH OF PARK RIDGE**  
**MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING**  
**WORK SESSION**

**June 21, 2010**  
**7:30 P.M.**

Present: Council members; Maguire, Hopper, Misciagna, Council President Kane and Mayor Ruschman

Absent: Council members Maughan and Viola

Also Present: Robert Mancinelli, Borough Attorney  
Helene Fall, Administrator  
Colleen Ennis, CFO  
Kelley O'Donnell, Borough Clerk

Contingency Staffing if Layoffs and/or Reduction in work hours are required effective July 1, 2010.

**Mayor Ruschman read the compliance statement as required by the Open Public Meeting Act, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231.**

Helene Fall advised those present that Bill Beattie, Director of Operations would begin tonight's discussion.

Mayor Ruschman asked the audience if anyone present had anything they would like to say this evening. There was no one present wishing to be heard.

**Bill Beattie, Director of Operations presented with Bill Hahn, Water Supervisor, Pete Wayne, Foreman Road Department and Utility Board members; Bob Ludwig and Dr. Charlie Moore.**

- There is a potential for significant reduction of staff in the road department due to the budget crisis
  - o Transition team was put together
    - ◆ 2 Utility Board members and 2 Council members
    - ◆ Reduction of services discussed
  - o In 1985 there were 8 DPW workers
    - ◆ There was no recycling center and there were fewer roads to be concerned about
    - ◆ Over the years through attrition the staff has dropped to 6
      - The recycling center requires 30 trips per month to deliver the roll offs to the appropriate salvage yards
      - More streets in town to be maintained
  - o In 1985 there was additional staffing in Buildings and Grounds and Mechanics
    - ◆ Only one employee in each department in 2010
  - o Leaf pick up will present the largest challenge

- ◆ Picking up and carting to Orangeburg
- o Snow plowing will be very difficult especially with the longer extended storms and blizzards
  - ◆ Staff will have to be pulled back
  - ◆ Not enough employees to rotate
    - 8 trucks as opposed to 12
- o All of this is assuming we don't outsource
  - ◆ There is no money in the budget to outsource
    - Helene Fall confirmed
- o Recycling Center would have to be closed
- o With only a 3 man department, problems arise when 1 man is out sick or on vacation
  - ◆ Cannot run a department with 2 men
- o Bill Beattie stated that only the bare essentials will be done:
  - ◆ Grass cutting and maintenance of the Borough's parks, properties and ball fields
  - ◆ Line striping
  - ◆ Blacktop repairs; pot holes, berms & drainage
  - ◆ Sign maintenance & installation
  - ◆ Catch basin inspection, cleaning and repairs; including requirements for Stormwater regulations
  - ◆ Municipal tree problems, routine, emergency and storm related
- o Borough is required to have a Certified Public Works Manager
- o Borough needs a Recycling Coordinator
- o In order to accomplish the bare essentials the transition team suggests
  - ◆ No leaf pick up
  - ◆ No recycling Center/compactor
- o Bill Beattie further stated that with the 6 man crew that they have now they are constantly trying to catch up
  - ◆ They would like to do a better job
  - ◆ Just caught up somewhat with grass cutting
- o Would also recommend eliminating bi-weekly large item pick up
- o There is no way that leaves can be picked up with 4 men
  - ◆ CDL drivers are required
  - ◆ In order to operate the leaf vac a Class A license is required
  - ◆ Loaders require experienced drivers
    - Cannot use casual labor at \$10/hour
  - ◆ Many jobs require more than 1 man
- o Pete Wayne stated that there are 17 catch basins in town that are in need of repair
  - ◆ Will take the summer at least to complete
- o Bill Beattie and Pete Wayne stated that after a snow storm it takes 2-3 days to get things back to normal
- o Bill Beattie advised those present that for catch basin repair two men are required one man below and one man on top for safety reasons
- o Mayor Ruschman asked if these cut backs only needed to be implemented if the layoff plan goes into effect
- o Mayor Ruschman further asked if the Recycling Center could be open 2 Wednesdays a month

- ◆ Bill Beattie said they department could try
  - Bob Ludwig stated that the only services the Borough could forgo are the leaves and recycling center
    - ◆ Roll off driver requires more hours as they have to unload throughout the state
  - If there was more time to study and more budget information available they may be able to work out alternatives
    - ◆ They are restricted because they were given limited time to resolve
  - Mayor Ruschman questioned the residents' response if there is no leaf pick up
  - Councilman Maguire stated that the department was at 7
    - ◆ Lou Turli, Supervisor retired
    - ◆ Pete Wayne is working with the crews and picking up supervisory responsibilities
  - Bill Beattie stated that the Borough is required to have a Certified Public Works Manager and a Recycling Coordinator
    - ◆ Helene Fall stated that the Borough could enter into an Interlocal Agreement
  - Council President Kane stated that the Council had discussed how operations were going to continue with fewer people
    - ◆ The Borough needed to have a plan in place if the layoffs were implemented after 7/1
      - Council President Kane further stated that hopefully the Borough will not need to implement the layoff plan and services will not have to be reduced
  - Bill Beattie further stated that he needs Pete Wayne for his knowledge of the crews
  - Councilman Hopper stated that Montvale has a list of casual laborers that can assist with snow plowing Part time
    - ◆ Councilman Hopper further stated that in his opinion they do a good job
      - Bob Ludwig stated that there is no budget for Casual Labor for snow plowing
      - Would have to use Overtime Budget funds
      - Bill Beattie stated that the drivers would need a CDL license in order to operate the Borough's trucks
        - Bill Beattie stated that he was looking at the use of casual labor before the budget crisis hit
        - Bargaining agreements state that it has to be offered to the employees first
          - ◆ Quality of the work would not be the same as when Park Ridge employees plow
            - They are aware of the special circumstances with the different streets in town
          - ◆ Council President Kane stated that the Employee contracts probably have a clause on the number of hours an employee can work
  - Helene Fall stated that after July 1<sup>st</sup> hopefully this will have been an exercise that does not need to be implemented
    - ◆ However, if we do, we will need to meet again for more finite decisions and details
    - ◆ Councilman Misciagna stated that the negotiations are ongoing
      - Very optimistic feels progress is being made
- **Helene Fall, Borough Administrator reviewed with those present the effect of the Administrative Staff being reduced- Memo dated 6/17/2010**
  - Court – to be discussed at 6/22 meeting
    - ◆ Implementing reduction of hours regardless of whether or not the layoff plan goes into effect

- ◆ Assignment Judge approved 4 day work week
- o Senior Cashier
  - ◆ Registrar of Vital Statistics ad Secretary to the Board of Health
    - Retired effective July 1<sup>st</sup>
    - Will return Part Time
  - ◆ Borough will need to hire an additional PT employee
- o Clerk Typist
  - ◆ Shared position
    - Resigned effective 6/19
  - ◆ Borough will need to fill with Part Time; hourly position
- o Clerk Typist/Receptionist
  - ◆ 35 hours/week to 15 hours/week
    - Monday through Friday - 3 hours/day to cover lunches
  - ◆ Telephone will be on automated attendant
- o Full Time Tech Assistant
  - ◆ Return to 25 hours/week
    - No back up for Land Use Administrator
- Colleen Ennis, CFO stated that there is nothing on the Finance side that can be eliminated
  - o Payroll, collections & payments
    - ◆ Understands that we need to do more with less
      - We are at bare bones now
    - ◆ Most troubled that even now cannot spend the proper amount of time on things
- Helene Fall stated that the Borough has a wonderful staff that is trying to be compliant with the law
  - o Operation that takes the time to talk to the residents and help them
  - o What little money may be left over is going to be needed to fill with Part Time staff
  - o Audit will be coming out soon
- Councilman Hopper stated that there is a large amount of paperwork handled by the administrative staff
  - o Would it be possible to email bills
    - ◆ Colleen Ennis stated that she is looking at a couple of different solutions to make information available to the residents
    - ◆ Currently we do not accept credit cards for utility bills
      - Understands we would have to pay 2%
      - Colleen Ennis stated that tax collection is currently at 99%
    - ◆ Not many towns have opted for credit cards
      - The 2% becomes costly
    - ◆ Currently there are approximately 160 residents using ACH for tax payments
- Helene Fall stated that we are people serving people
  - o Our stock and trade is serving residents and visitors

- Need to utilize all the programs available through Edmunds
- Councilman Maguire asked the risks associated with Part Time employees
  - o Discussion that you may get someone that the schedule works for
  - o Usually require a lot of training
  - o Traditionally they don't stay around
  - o Helene Fall stated that she has seen it work successfully
    - ◆ There are some individuals that the schedule will work for
- Workforce will go from predominantly full time to predominantly part time
  - o Helene Fall further stated that moving forward will need to replace full time employees with part time to save the cost of benefits
- Discussion on the difficulty of balancing schedules with many part timers
- **8:14 pm Presentations by Public Works and Administration ended**
- **Those present took a break while waiting for the Police to give their presentation**
- **8:30 pm Chief Madden and Lieutenant Rampolla joined the meeting**
  - o Police Department memo dated June 9, 2010
  - o Chief Madden was advised to discuss functions and positions – no names
  - o Records Clerk
    - ◆ Cannot minimize importance
    - ◆ Handles walk-ins, handicap placards and paperwork
    - ◆ Department needs her to stay on as a consultant
      - Cannot do without a secretary
      - Will hire her back part time to train another part time employee
    - ◆ Department needs someone there 8:00 to 3:00
      - Minimum of 25 hours/week
    - ◆ Residents are comfortable with the hours that the secretary is there
      - Vital member of the department
  - o If the fiscal crisis resolves itself would like to see a full time person in that position
    - ◆ Chief and Lieutenant do not have the time to deal with walk ins and complete their work
  - o Council President Kane asked if there is no secretary, is there no one else to do the work
    - ◆ Chief stated that one of the police officers is learning the fire arms processing
    - ◆ Lieutenant Rampolla stated that when someone comes to the window the secretary can vet some of the process
  - o If there was no secretary the Borough would have to take an officer off the road
    - ◆ Shifts may be bare bones
    - ◆ Secretary is familiar with new and old systems and department's operations
  - o Chief Madden stated that for 2 years the department has been doing more with less
    - ◆ Department has been at 17 for quite some time
      - Services, overtime and scheduling will be difficult with 15
      - Willing to try 12 hour shifts with staff of 17

- o The Police secretary acts as Matron
  - ◆ Chief Madden explained the role of Matron
    - Current secretary would be willing to continue as Matron
    - Helps with female arrests
    - She comes out all hours of the night
    - She can assist with searches and assists with transport
  
- o Services that would be eliminated or drastically reduced
  - ◆ DARE program – with 15 officers; it is a luxury the department cannot afford
  - ◆ National Night Out – Lieutenant Rampolla stated that last year was the first and there was a huge turnout
    - Great success
    - Brought together the TriBoro towns
    - DARE officers from all 3 towns dedicated a lot of time
- o Chief Madden stated at minimal staffing they cannot do the work, let alone the extras
  - ◆ Reduced traffic enforcement with reduced staff
  - ◆ Revenues will be reduced
    - Junior officers are more productive
      - o Historically maintain that type of productivity for 5-10 years
- o Professional training necessary for existing officers
  - ◆ Mandates a lot of training
  - ◆ Chief & Lieutenant implemented squad training
    - Conduct a lot of training “in house”
  - ◆ Flourishing with less for quite some time
- o Business checks reduced to midnight shift with 15 man department
- o Vacant Home Check – presently have a vacant home card
  - ◆ Now checking every day
  - ◆ Would need to reduce number of checks with a 15 man department
- o Liaison roles would need to be reduced
- o Motor Vehicle lockouts would be eliminated unless a child was in the car
- o Police Reserves – 2 officers currently involved with training
  - ◆ Will have to cut back
  - ◆ New group of 7 reserves very valuable resource
- o Response time will increase with less manpower
  - ◆ Hopefully we won’t have to “stack” calls
    - Department prides itself on a less than 3 minute response time
- o Will have to eliminate headquarter tours for students, girl scouts and boy scouts
  
- o Overtime
  - ◆ 2008 – 18 officers
    - Overtime spent \$85,000
    - 1200 comp hours - \$90,000
  - ◆ 2009 – 16 officers
    - Overtime spent \$153,000
    - 2000 comp hours - \$160,000

- o Chief could be looking at 14 officers in the near future if layoff plan were implemented and County changes hiring process
  - ◆ With reduced staffing – snowball effect with comp time, vacation time and sick time
  - ◆ Department morale will drop with 15 man department
- o Back to basics of Police work
  - ◆ Patrol the town and respond to calls for service
- o Scheduling
  - ◆ Collective Bargaining Agreement calls for a 4/2 schedule
    - With 17 officers working out ok
    - Will not work with 15 officers
- o Department has been great by not abusing vacation time & sick time
  - ◆ Average sick time per officer – 6 to 7 days per year
    - Great work environment has led to minimal sick time
  - ◆ Lieutenant Rampolla explained the hand out distributed
    - 18 man department v. 15 man department
    - 4 man shifts, 3 man shifts and 2 man shifts
      - o Benefits of 4 man shifts
        - ◆ Quicker response times
        - ◆ Easier to handle emergencies
        - ◆ Concern that town would not be as safe as residents accustomed to
    - Chief and Lieutenant not comfortable
      - o Less supervision also a factor
- o Comp Time
  - ◆ Average of 450 hours taken since started tracking in March
    - Savings of \$30,000 average
- o Chief stated that in the PBA contract the employee has the option to take comp time
  - ◆ He further stated that never in the history of the department has the use of comp time resulted in overtime
- o Chief stated that in the past 2 years officers have been hurt in the line of duty
  - ◆ Resulted in extended sick time
- o Comp time can be carried over – maximum of 480 hours
  - ◆ Lieutenant Rampolla stated that with more staff there is the flexibility to use the comp time
- Colleen Ennis asked with a large number of the calls coming through dispatch being medically related, could the Borough handle these with a lesser paid medically trained employee
  - o Discussion on a global scale – Pascack Valley – paid paramedics
  - o Chief stated that the Police are the first responders, CPR trained
    - ◆ Police are 24/7
      - You can't guess when the calls are coming in

- Ambulance response is traditionally 10 minutes
- Chief stated that the officer who has been out on disability should have resolution in July
  - o He further stated that the department will do whatever we have to do to get us past this fiscal crisis
    - ◆ Hopes layoffs do not occur
- Chief stated that the Police Department is one of the few departments that are revenue generating
  - o Junior officers hours would be replaced with higher paid senior officers
    - ◆ Colleen Ennis attested to the fact that revenues are up
- Chief stated that minimal staffing is a real concern for the department.

**Public Work Session adjourned at 9:17 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kelley R. O'Donnell  
Borough Clerk