

# YOUR TOWN HALL

## Medical Claims Deferred To 2010 Budget

It is almost the end of the fiscal year in town and it is now time to pay some bills. Since June the medical benefit claims have been increasing and the town decided to wait it out to see if things would balance out. Unfortunately, it did not go in their favor.

At the December 7 Township Committee meeting a resolution was voted on to payout over \$1.1M in medical claims and \$200K in workman's compensation claims for the year. The funds going to pay these claims are to be found in the 2010 budget.

Before the vote on this resolution took place there was about one hour of conversation to see if an alternative could be reached in this matter. Committeeman Sean Byrnes raised the point of waiting until the end of the year to pay out these claims, when costs were rising for the past six months. The Township Administrator, Tony Mercantante, explained that over the past several years the amount in claims would rise and fall. Last year the amount budgeted for claims was short \$500k. This amount was incorporated into the 2009 budget. During the previous year the town had over budgeted and going into this year the administration anticipated that the claims would be lower than the previous year.

During the discussion a plan to correct this type of cost overrun from occurring next year was brought up. Committeemen Short and Byrnes wanted to see some type of assurances presented at the next regular meeting to prevent this from happening again. Committeeman Scharfenberger stated that there was a plan already that was in use. Mayor Brightbill said that the town does this deferral every year and that this should not be such a big

deal. Mr. Mercantante reminded the mayor that the town does not have a shortage every year and in some years there are funds that are over allocated for this purpose. He agreed to put together some ideas as to some type of corrective action that can be implemented.

The resolution, 09-277, called for a projected \$1.1M in medical claims for the year. When questioned about existing claims that needed to be paid, the Assistant Administrator, Ed Dunn, said that he had \$600k in checks on his desk waiting to be mailed. He also said that the \$200k in workman's compensation is a real figure that will satisfy those claims up to the end of the year.

Committeeman Byrnes suggested that the Committee amend the resolution so that it reflected the \$800k that currently needed to be paid and to wait until the next meeting to get a more real figure for unpaid claims for the rest of the year. This was agreed to by the rest of the Committee members. This resolution had to be approved by at least four members of the Committee. The amended resolution was approved by a vote of 4-0, with Mr. Fiore being absent from the meeting.

The body of the original resolution is as follows:

### RESOLUTION #09-277

#### **EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION NJS 40A:4-48**

WHEREAS, an emergency has arisen with respect to Insurance Claims as a result of the increase in actual workers' compensation claims exceeding \$200,000 and the increase in actual medical claims for \$1,163,000 and no adequate provision was made in the 2009 budget for the aforesaid purpose, and NJS 40A:4-46 provides for the creation of an emergency appropriation for the purpose mentioned above, and

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WHEREAS, the total amount of the emergency appropriations created, including the appropriations to be created by this resolution is \$1,414,334 and three (3) percent of the total operating appropriations in the budget for 2009 is \$1,568,074 and

WHEREAS, the foregoing appropriation together with prior appropriations does not exceed three (3) percent of the total operating appropriations (including utility operation appropriations) in the budget for 2009,  
**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, (by no less than 2/3 of all governing body members affirmatively concurring) that in accordance with NJS 40A:4-48:

1. An emergency appropriation is hereby made for:
  - 9-01-23-220-100-200 – Insurance Group Insurance for employees in the amount of \$1,163,000
  - 9-01-23-215-100-200 Insurance Workers' Compensation in the amount of \$200,000
2. That said emergency appropriation shall be provided for in full in the 2010 budget, and is requested to be excluded from CAPS, pursuant to NJS 40A:4-53.3c(1)
3. That two (2) certified copies of this resolution be filed with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services

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## **CROSSING GUARD SALARY CONTRACT SETTLED**

On December 7, the Township Committee introduced ordinance 2009-2995 to approve the salary range for school crossing guards. The approval of this ordinance will adjust the salary range for the crossing guards during the period from September 1, 2007 through December 31, 2010. This ordinance will be voted for approval at the December 21

Township Committee meeting. A public hearing will be held before the vote is taken. The public has the opportunity to voice their concerns on this matter.

## **ORDINANCE APPROVING SCHOOL TRAFFIC GUARD HOURLY WAGE RANGE SCHEDULE FOR 2007 THROUGH 2010 AND AMENDING SALARY ORDINANCE 2003-2745**

**WHEREAS**, the Township Administrator has negotiated a proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement with the School Traffic Guard Union which covers the terms and conditions of employment for the period September 1, 2007 through December 31, 2010; and

**WHEREAS**, the wages for the School Traffic Guards require that revised hourly wages be adopted, and it has been determined by the Township Committee that it is necessary that the hourly wage range for School Traffic Guards be adopted in order to authorize the wages for these positions.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED** by the Township Committee of the Township of Middletown in the County of Monmouth, that Ordinance 2003-2745 be amended to revise the hourly wage range to: \$9.28 to \$12.71 for School Traffic Guards.

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## **NON-UNION EMPLOYEE SALARY ORDINANCE**

The Township Committee introduced ordinance 2009-2996, at the December 7 meeting to revise the salary ordinance for management and non-union employees. This revision represents a 2% increase for this group of employees and allows the Administrator to recommend this increase to the employees.

The ordinance reads as follows:

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**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2003-2751 REVISING SALARY RANGES FOR MANAGEMENT/NON-UNION EMPLOYEES**

**WHEREAS**, Ordinance 2003-2751 established certain titles and salary ranges for Management/Non-Union positions and the Administrator has recommended that a revised salary range be established for certain positions, and

**WHEREAS**, these revised ranges would enable the Administrator to recommended increases of 2% for Management/Non-Union personnel.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED** that Ordinance 2003-2751 is amended as follows:

Section 1. The annual salary ranges are hereby established as set forth in Schedule A attached and made part hereof.

Section 2. All other ordinances in conflict or inconsistent with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict or inconsistency.

Section 3. This ordinance shall be effective upon adoption and publication in accordance with the laws of the State of New Jersey

**Schedule A**

TOWNSHIP OF MIDDLETOWN  
MANAGEMENT/NON-UNION PERSONNEL

TITLE	SALARY RANGE	
	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM
TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR	\$90,000	\$156,000
POLICE CHIEF	\$89,000	\$154,000
DEPUTY POLICE CHIEF	\$85,000	\$146,000
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	\$62,732	\$143,000
DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS	\$62,732	\$121,000
MUNICIPAL ENGINEER	\$65,000	\$110,000
DIRECTOR INFO SYSTEMS	\$53,095	\$113,000
DIRECTOR, PLANNING	\$53,095	\$121,000
DIRECTOR, PARKS & REC.	\$53,095	\$113,000
TAX ASSESSOR	\$50,809	\$115,000
ASS'T TWP ADMINISTRATOR	\$50,809	\$115,000
HEALTH OFFICER	\$50,809	\$115,000
CONSTRUCTION OFFICIAL	\$50,809	\$106,000

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ASST DIRECTOR, FINANCE	\$50,809	—	\$103,000
ASST DIRECTOR, DPW	\$50,809	—	\$83,000
TOWNSHIP CLERK	\$50,809	—	\$84,000
TAX COLLECTOR	\$50,809	—	\$90,000
ASST DIRECTOR, PARKS & RECFINANCE	\$50,809	—	\$83,000
ASS'T CONSTRUCTION OFF.	\$50,809	—	\$78,000
DIRECTOR OF PURCHASING	\$37,915	—	\$75,000
COURT ADMINISTRATOR	\$37,915	—	\$82,000
JUDGE, MUNICIPAL COURT	\$33,500	—	\$60,000
MUNICIPAL PROSECUTOR	\$35,464	—	\$60,000
MUNI. RECYCLING COORD	\$35,464	—	\$70,000
DEPUTY TAX ASSESSOR	\$37,915	—	\$67,879
ASS'T DIRECTOR CDBG	\$36,000	—	\$65,000
PAYROLL SUPERVISOR	\$35,464	—	\$65,000
DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY DEV.	\$37,915	—	\$61,142
ASSISTANT PLANNER	\$35,464	—	\$61,000
ASSISTANT MUNICIPAL CLERK	\$35,464	—	\$59,000
SECRETARY TO DEPT HEAD	\$35,464	—	\$61,000
PUBLIC INFO OFFICER	\$35,464	—	\$61,000
MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST	\$35,464	—	\$61,000
TECHNICIAN MIS	\$35,464	—	\$59,000
CULTURAL ARTS CTR DIR.	\$35,464	—	\$58,000
FIRE OFFICIAL	\$33,500	—	\$65,000
WELFARE DIRECTOR	\$33,500	—	\$52,913
ADMIN. SECRETARY (CONF.)	\$33,500	—	\$58,000
SECRETARY TO MAYOR	\$35,464	—	\$51,000

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## PROPOSED SMOKING ORDINANCE

At the December 7 Township Committee meeting ordinance 2009-2997 was tabled for further discussion. This ordinance would define smoking areas in relation to entrances to municipal buildings. Township Attorney Brian Nelson read the state statute that this ordinance would be modeled after so Committee people could obtain a better idea that this ordinance would be intended to serve. It was agreed to by Committee members that this ordinance would be shelved until after Re-organization Day on January 3.

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## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were some public comments at the December 7 meeting that exhibited some interest. A few expressed appreciation of the discussion around the payment for this year's health benefit claims to be used with funds coming from the 2010 budget.

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A woman identified as Kathy L addressed the Committee for the need of a new police station. She said that she has been noticing the condition of the police station when she counsels domestic violence victims. The room she counsels in is no more than an extension of the boiler room. She also mentioned that there is too much contact between the victim and the abuser, making for an unsafe environment.

Mr. Mercantante replied to Kathy by saying that all of the township facilities have been an ongoing topic of discussion with him and the Committee. It is a very large project and could run into public opposition if it was introduced as a project. He felt that there are many people in town that think that

there are higher priorities to deal with than upgrading police facilities.

A woman from the Leonardo section, Donna Kuntz, addressed the Committee about the constant flooding problem on her property. She said that there is a storm drain in the middle of her back yard that is connected to a drainage pipe that runs under her property. It was also stated that there is a township easement on her property for the drainage pipe.

Ms. Kuntz said that she has been trying to work with the town to resolve the flooding issues for a number of years and compiled a notebook full of research that she has compiled over the years. She said that there are sinkholes forming on her property indicating that the drainage pipe is being compromised. Pictures of various conditions around her property were presented to the Committee to show what is taking place.

Mr. Mercantante agreed with the township engineers when they stated that the project to correct this problem is in process and ready to go. The only item left before work can start is funding. An application for funding was made to the federal government and the town is waiting for approval.

<p><b>To receive bi-monthly issues send email contact info to: <a href="mailto:itsourtown@yahoo.com">itsourtown@yahoo.com</a></b></p>
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