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From: "Lynne Eckardt" <midfarm@bestweb.net>
Date: Wed Nov 16, 2005 12:34 pm
Subject: SE Town Board Work Session 11/10/05

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Hi All,

As I have been editing you will not find my comments- if anyone wants them just e-mail me and they're all yours-

Last Thursday night, November 10th, the Town Board held a Public Hearing on the 2006 budget followed by a Work Session. Below please find my recap of the proceedings.

Councilmen Dick Honeck, Paul Johnson and Town Attorney Willis Stephens were all suffering from headaches and popped aspirin- Gosh, was it something I said?

This was a fairly benign meeting unless you were the owner of 'Playscape', a business that has been shut down since May due to the lack of a C/O. More on that below.

A highlight was Supervisor Dunford playfully asking the attorney for 'The Campus' when the town would be receiving their 'big check' (\$850,000). Ha, Ha. 143 Houses later- the Town gets 850 K and all we get are these lousy increased school taxes. Tee-shirt to follow-

As always the comments are mine and mine alone. They reflect my caustic take and whatever insight and sanity I have left after three years of regular meeting attendance. I've edited rather heavily on the Budget Public Hearing as I was the only resident to ask questions and they're not all that interesting. Although I am partial to the budget presentation- or lack there-of.

PUBLIC HEARING: 2006 Budget

Supervisor Dunford stated that town management positions would receive a 5% raise and that property taxes would decrease this year by 1%. He then opened the Public Hearing:

I asked the following questions:

Given that the Town might sue the DOT over Route 22 is the \$133,000 budgeted for Town Attorney Stephens and Charbonneau enough?
Answer: Yes.

On the Landfill closure- I asked how the money (\$24,000+) would be spent.
Answer: Test Borings and to pay Special District's Manager Michael Levine.

Will there be a Town-wide Newsletter in '06?

Answer: Yes- spring and fall.

Certiorari Settlements: Were there any rough estimates of the cost of these settlements for '06- especially in light of the Highland's assessments doubling.

Answer: Didn't anticipate anything large and it would be a few years until The Highlands settlements are reached- if at all.

Contingency Fund: Why has the Contingency Fund jumped so much (from \$58,000 to \$150,000).

Answer: Two vehicles will be purchased at around \$25,000 each.

Presentation of the Budget: Why was the budget not presented in a public forum?

Answer: It doesn't have to be. Although it was done that way last year it's not necessary.

Follow Up: I asked for Town Counsel's opinion. Mr. Stephens said he didn't have the law in front of him- I asked that he follow up as I would ask about it next Thursday.

The Public Hearing was closed.

Work Session:

1. Help America Vote Act-

This was moved to the end of the meeting. The Town needs to pass a resolution to turn over control for districting to County Board of Elections. The Town Clerk advised against doing this right now.

2. Playscape

The owner of Playscape was upset as her business has been closed since May due to a lack of Certificate of Occupancy. Her business has been open for about six years and she doesn't feel her business is being treated equally as others in the same building are operating without a C/O. It appears that the entire building is in violation.

The building is under review by the Planning Board but this item has been taken off the agenda several times. The new owner (I believe that this may be a rental with option to buy) of the building says he's had problems securing the services of his engineer- Paul Lynch of Putnam Engineering as everyone is so busy.

It was said that the building owners were Jordan Berkman and John Pertrillo. There was some talk about the possibility of a temporary C/O but no solution was found.

3. Supervised Lifestyle Sewer

Taken off agenda

4. Wetland Ordinance Violations

It was discussed that those not in compliance should be fined. No names mentioned.

5. Campus at Fields Corners- Sewer and Water Works Corporation

Supervisor Dunford asked attorney for the project, Dan Richmond when we'd be getting our big check.

Permission is needed from the Town Board to set up a Sewer and Water works corporation. Rates will need to be set by Town Board. The Board asked where the ten acres would be that will be deeded to the town. This will be put on the November 17th agenda.

6. Landfill Closure Application

A resolution adding Supervisor Dunford's name to the application is necessary at the old application still has Supervisor Zutell's name on it.

That's it from here- as always please feel free to e-mail me with any questions or comments that you may have.

With Best Regards,
Lynne Eckardt

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