

**STRATFORD BOROUGH SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2010  
7:45 PM**

ROLL CALL:

MAYOR JOHN GENTLESS  
MICHAEL SANTORO, COUNCIL PRESIDENT  
BEN ANGELI, COUNCILMAN  
HOLLY TATE, COUNCILWOMAN  
MIKE PEREZ, COUNCILMAN  
FRANK GAGLIARDI, COUNCILMAN  
DAN BOVE, COUNCILMAN - LATE  
ANTHONY COSTA, SOLICITOR  
JOHN D. KEENAN, JR., BOROUGH CLERK

The Solicitor made an opening statement regarding defeated school budget to come to Mayor and Council. If an agreement can not come, then the county Superintendent becomes involved and beyond that to NJ State Commission to Education. Several school packets have been given to Council regarding the school budget.

- Councilwoman H. Tate spoke about controlling cuts to a minimum to avoid anymore teachers cut and increased class size, and school transportation.
  - Councilman B. Angeli would not want cuts that effect education and try to decide where cuts should be.
  - Mayor John Gentless stated he hoped that both sides can agree tonight and hope there would not be any teachers cut.
  - Councilman F. Gagliardi explained the process the town had to go through during preparing the 2010 budget.
  - Councilman M. Perez stated the school system is a dire district
  - Councilwoman H. Tate stated the range is as high as \$227,000, but feels that's severe.
  - Councilman F. Gagliardi confirmed the increase for school would be about \$70.00 and with the Borough is \$40.00 equals \$110.00 per \$100,000.00 of asessed value.
  - Councilman B. Angeli suggested we agree on a figure. He agreed to \$100,000. cut.
  - The Mayor questioned Dr. Al Brown on the proposed 2010-2011 budget. Dr. Brown responded the cuts have effected forty-five (45) employees. All day Kindergarten still planned.
  - There has not been a tax increase on average of past three years. Dr. Brown spoke about the various programs that supplement the students' programs which enhances the overall education.
  - Dr. Brown also spoke of the overall grading by the NJ Department of Education. The scores all high, entitling the district as a "High Performing District". No other school in the area scores over 80. The impact of these cuts will effect this review.
  - Dr. Brown spoke of the on-going negotiations with the Union and still hoping the 1.5% give back, and if successful any further cuts would be eliminated.
- Questions relating to health care were discussed.

PUBLIC  
PORTION:

- 518 Glen Avenue, Laurel Springs resident spoke. She stated she is a junior at Sterling High School. She spoke about her experience in drama which began in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. She spoke of her accomplishments in her high school years and gave thanks to her grade school teachers.
- Kathy Tolomeo of 39 Sunnybrook Road questioned if 4<sup>th</sup> grade still has 4 teachers? Dr. Brown stated yes for 2010-2011.
- Mike Redfearn of 74 Saratoga informed how the governor pushed for residents to come out to vote no. He also explained how a piece was handed out during the week of the school elections. He explained how large class sizes would be harmful to the education

of students. He explained the changes in education of four (4) decades ago to present day and stated he moved here because of the schools. He spoke of the benefits of his taxes relating to municipal services. He urged the council to be careful and considerate when deciding on the budget tonight.

-Mr. Kay of Winding Way Road stated he is a teacher in Haddon Township for twelve (12) years. He explained that he went to this school and if the election was to be repeated today it would probably be more favorable. He spoke of how he thought the small towns on the White Horse Pike are unique and are beneficial.

-Barb Brown of Park Avenue, Laurel Springs was pleased to hear that the students are being considered as a priority. She expressed the importance with extra-curricular activities.

-Michele Shapley of Cooper Avenue questioned if there was any way to get any more money back. She expressed her concern with classroom aides going away.

-Councilman Frank Gagliardi confirmed council's request of not to increase class size and not to make any further cuts to the staff.

-Dan Ciano of Wright Avenue stated his wife teaches third grade at Parkview School and is president of Tarkill Soccer. He spoke of how council is giving an opportunity of a tax increase of \$100/year which should make everyone happy. He spoke of how this will help us get through to next year.

-Chris Gagliardi of Knoll Road asked Dr. Brown where would the cuts come from? Dr. Brown stated health benefits.

-Kris Rock of Hillside Road asked when will the cuts be coming? Kindergarten should be left full time. The Mayor responded that no staff, and no transportation. Questioned about pre-school is funded, if by the State? Dr. Brown stated there is no state funding for pre-school, it's fully paid by tax payers.

-Pam DeRemigi of Liberty Drive expressed how the school has helped her son develop of the years. She stated how sad she is to hear of the cuts.

-Lou Santoro of Oak Court spoke of why he moved to Stratford 40 year ago. He spoke of the work required to create a budget.

-Steve Easterday of Winding Way Road spoke of concern to find ways to get around the cuts to help fund the education. He asked that no cuts be made.

-Denise Sellers of 1A Sunnybrook Road expressed her concern with how important the education is in the future of the students

-John Purcell of Whitman Avenue inquired to what tax increase if budget passed? \$100.

-Kaitlin Burke of Pennsylvania Avenue asked if transportation would be cut this year?

School Bus-Administration answered no busing has been cut. She stated busing should be cut to save staff. Council explained how that affected the streets and safety in prior years.

-Dr. Brown spoke in detail all the reductions in staff including the layoffs.

-Councilman F. Gagliardi responded that administration has not been cut or addressed.

-Dr. Brown explained of reduction in administration over the prior years. He explained how \$91,000. comes from Laurel Springs for custodial services. He stated there are three (3) administrative, two (2) principals and one (1) vice-principal in the district. His job is to be sure the schools are safe and secure. The Mayor made some closing remarks and asked for the council to give them a pass.

-Diane Scheurenbrand teacher and negotiator for the union confirmed no 1.5% has been agreed upon.

Res.2010:81

Resolution 2010:81 - \$75,000. Authorized By Stratford School District Budget Line 11  
On motion of Councilman M. Santoro, seconded by Councilwoman H. Tate with all ayes  
on the roll call vote as follows:

Councilman M. Santoro	yes	Councilwoman H. Tate	yes
Councilman F. Gagliardi	yes	Councilman B. Angeli	abstained
Councilman M. Perez	yes	Councilman D. Bove	abstained

MOTION CARRIED

**RESOLUTION 2010:81**

WHEREAS, the annual budget in the amount of \$5,781,500.00 for the Current Expenses to be raised by taxation for the Stratford School District, Camden County, State of New Jersey, was presented to the voters on the April 20, 2010; and

WHEREAS, it now becomes the duty of the Mayor and Members of Council of the Borough of Stratford to set the amount for the efficient operation of the Stratford School District for the period of July 01, 2010 to June 30, 2011; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Members of Council of the Borough of Stratford agreed to certify an amount to be raised by taxation of Current Expenses in the amount of \$5,706,500.00, a reduction of \$75,000.00 to the following line:

Line	11-000-291-270	\$75,000.00	Health Benefits
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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by Mayor and Members of Stratford Borough Council, Camden County, State of New Jersey, that the total amount to be raised by taxation for Current Expenses for the Stratford School District for the period of July 01, 2010, to June 30, 2011, is hereby approved in the sum of \$5,706,500.00.

I, John D. Keenan, Jr., Clerk of the Borough of Stratford, do hereby certify the foregoing resolution was adopted by the Mayor and Council at a Special Council Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2010.

*John D. Keenan, Jr., R.M.C.*

ADJOURNMENT: On motion of Councilman F. Gagliardi, seconded by Councilman D. Bove with all ayes on the vote, the meeting was adjourned.

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John D. Keenan, Jr., Borough Clerk