

Oceanport, New Jersey  
April 2, 1992

**REGULAR MEETING:** The regular meeting of the Oceanport Mayor and Council was held on April 2, 1992 at 8:00 P.M.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councilpersons Clark, Terra, Filippone, Miller, Taylor, Wolfe and Mayor Cavanagh.

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Borough Clerk, Patricia L. Varca and Borough Attorney, Francis A. Margalotti.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mayor Cavanagh led the audience and members of the Council in the flag salute.

As copies of the minutes from the regular meeting held on March 19, 1992 had been made available for review by the Governing Body, Councilman Miller moved to waive the reading of same and approve the minutes as submitted by the Borough Clerk. It was seconded by Councilman Taylor and unanimously approved by Council.

Mayor Cavanagh then opened the meeting to the public for any comments or questions regarding the 1992 municipal budget and pointed out that our Borough Auditor, Mr. Robert Hulsart is with us tonight as well as Chief Joyce in case there are any budgetary questions that he cannot answer or comments regarding the Police Department.

As no one from the public wished to be heard on this subject, Mayor Cavanagh closed the public hearing.

Mayor Cavanagh stated he wanted to make several comments on the budget and had several posters to explain some of the numbers, but first wanted to say that in his discussions with our auditor, Mr. Hulsart has stated on several occasions that there are a variety of items that are still uncertain in terms of revenues that we may or may not be receiving, since those amounts have not been finalized by the State yet, so the numbers we are talking about tonight are only projections.

Mayor Cavanagh explained that there are two parts to every budget, one being what you spend and the other what you collect, and he showed that in 1991 the Borough expended \$2,488,669 within the cap and in 1992 we will be spending \$2,564,825 with the difference there being approximately \$76,000 which means our cap expenses have gone up 3% from last year to this year and felt that it fairly keeps pace with inflation and is a respectable type of number. Mayor Cavanagh stated that the cap set by the State is 4-1/2% and we have available almost \$111,000 and are approximately \$36,000 below what we are allowed to spend within our authorized cap.

Mayor Cavanagh then discussed the general revenue portion of the budget which is what we collect and what is available and pointed out that there is a substantial difference between the difference that we have available to us from last year to this year and part of that is a substantial reduction in our interest income, which comes about primarily as he discussed last year, as the State begins to take the 1/4 of our prepaid taxes and this is the second year of that program, but after the first year, although we were allowed to add it in as an item of revenue, we lose the ability to draw interest on it, which caused the substantial drop in the interest. He also stated there were a variety of other revenues that dropped from last year to

this year and the surplus that we have available is substantially less because we had to make up for what we had originally estimated to be an available number, which was approximately \$205,000 in interest income and came in less than that as a result of losing the money and of course, the drop in interest rates and if you add those two factors together, we had a large reduction. He stated that last year we had completed our budget, held our public hearing and sent it off to Trenton for approval and several months later, they decided to place that item in the budget as revenue and we did not get the budget back to review it again, so they just inserted that money into our budget.

Mayor Cavanagh further explained we have had a reduction in building, as have most towns, which reduces revenues even further as well as a loss in our rateable base as a result of tax appeals etc. and gave as an example, the Monmouth County Tax Board of Appeals last year total tax reduction were 1.5 million; NJ Tax Court of Appeals total amount of reductions a little over \$1 million and the Concurrent Computer Corporation appeal, which is spread out over several years, but that was also a substantial reduction. He stated that will cost the Borough approximately \$73,000 in tax reductions and/or refunds.

Mayor Cavanagh stated that shows a revenue difference of \$421,000 divided by \$46,000, which equals one penny on the tax rate equals approximately nine cents which is only from the loss of revenues.

Mayor Cavanagh then showed a comparison of the tax rate from 1990 to the projected 1992 rate and stated that the municipal rate in 1990 was \$.316 and the total tax rate for that year was \$1.86; 1991 the municipal rate was \$.175 and the total rate was \$1.78, which was due to the infusion of money, primarily the \$567,000, the rate went down approximately 45% and he stated at that time to the residents at the budget hearing that some where, some time we are going to have to make up that number; 1992 projected municipal rate is estimated as being \$.271 and the total tax rate projected to be \$1.90. He stated you can look at these numbers in one of two ways and stated you could say it is up \$.12 from last year or \$.04 from two years ago; you can say the municipal rate is up \$.09 or almost \$.05 lower than it was two years ago and either way is accurate, but that is why numbers can be confusing.

Mayor Cavanagh commented that the bottom line is that the municipal tax rate, even with this calculation and the revenue adjustment that we have to make is going to be 14% less than it was two years ago and the total tax rate would be 2.2% higher than it was two years ago. He stated that he did not feel that this result is one that would make people quarrel over and the immediate result of this year is probably something that people would say should have been stabilized, and he does not disagree with that statement, but we were not given that option.

Mayor Cavanagh stated that the numbers he has given tonight is the best he can say but that number can move downward and could also move upward if the revenue picture is changed. He stated we will not be adopting our budget tonight and our Auditor has stated that we will have to amend the budget and it will probably not be finalized until May or June of this year.

Mayor Cavanagh commented that for the last nine years he has said that to analyze any municipal budget on a one year basis makes very little sense and you have to take several years and step back and take a look, because any budget can spike in one year and then settle out.

Mr. Hulsart commented that when the Legislature decides on what they are going to do, then the Division of Local Government Services must analyze what is going to be done and then review approximately 550 municipal budgets, so it is going to be at least June and possibly even later.

Mayor Cavanagh stated that insofar as the numbers are concerned, hopefully next year we will not have the aberration that we had last year or this year and that will slow down. He felt that the fairest way to look at this is to look at the two year picture, because if someone had said to him two years ago, would you take that as a two year picture, he would have said yes. He stated the Council is not happy with the result in the current year for the obvious reasons, but we have looked at it and said if our job is to control spending and we can bring in a budget where the rate of expenditure is equal or less than the rate of inflation, then we are approaching this in a responsible position, although he does not think anyone is enamored with the result for the current year. He also asked the reporters in the audience to please emphasize, if they are going to report on the change, to make sure that they report about what the increase is in spending, because he does not want the people to get the conception that this kind of a number has occurred in the spending and he wished someone would give him nine cents on the tax rate and say spend it because there are a lot of things we could be doing. He advised the public that we have kept our expenditures to a 3% rise and you cannot do too much better than that.

#### CLERK'S REPORTS:

1. Police report for the month of MARCH, 1992 and a copy will be posted on the Bulletin Board.

#### COMMITTEES:

**COUNCILMAN CLARK:** Councilman Clark advised that the "cut it and leave it" program that he spoke of at the last meeting has recently begun and we have received the packages wherein we will send samples of soil to Rutgers and it will be analyzed and the Rutgers Extension Agent will advise us of the various things to do with the lawns with the amounts of fertilizer, lime, fertilizer, frequency of cutting, etc. He continued they will visit each of the sites at the beginning and end of the growing season.

Councilman Clark stated that the obvious reason we are participating in this program is to reduce the amount of environmental hazards that go from the lawn into our water system.

Councilman Clark reminded the businesses that recycling reports are due this month for the first quarter.

Councilman Clark also advised that we are presently preparing the tonnage grant report for last year's recycling report.

Councilman Clark announced that Brian Klieberg will be awarded his Eagle Scout this Sunday, April 5, 1992 at 1:00 P.M. and he invited anyone from the public who wished to attend.

**COUNCILMAN TERRA:** NO REPORT.

**COUNCILWOMAN FILIPPONE:** Councilwoman Filippone reported that 157 people have registered for the Health Screening that will take place on Saturday morning and once again she wanted to thank all the volunteers for the help they have given her because without their tremendous help she could never have this program and they will all be back on Saturday morning to help out again.

Councilwoman Filippone advised we have licensed 72 dogs during the month of March for a total to date of 410 dogs and she also stated that there have been 72 reported cases of rabies in Monmouth County as of March 27, 1992 and we have been predicting this for some time and unfortunately, it has come to pass and the public must be aware of this and make sure they stay away from any animals that are acting strangely. Councilwoman Filippone also publicly thanked Marilyn Nester for giving the Council a push several years ago to license cats.

**COUNCILMAN MILLER:** Councilman Miller reported that last Thursday night he attended the 23rd Annual Monmouth County Recreation Commissioner's banquet and at that meeting, Sal Gentile, a member of our Recreation Committee, received a service award for over 400 hours of recreational service to the Borough Recreation Committee.

Councilman Miller advised that we have received the parks repair list from John Kerwin, Recreation Director and he and Councilman Wolfe will go around and review the repairs that need to be made and the list is very small this year, which is due to the excellent job done by the Public Works Department.

Councilman Miller announced that at the last work shop meeting, our Borough Engineer, Tom Rospos, advised the Council that we have been approved to receive the Infrastructure Grant from the State for some \$64,000 which will complete the Phase II mapping for the Borough and if you notice any large white crosses on the streets, they are being used for the planes that are doing the aerial survey to get their markings.

Councilman Miller reported that the Drug and Alcohol Alliance group will be getting the program started again and there will be a couple of meetings scheduled in May on the 20th and 27th at the Maple Place School and the time and agenda is to be determined in the near future.

**COUNCILMAN TAYLOR:** NO REPORT.

**COUNCILMAN WOLFE:** Councilman Wolfe advised that on Monday, Mr. Giordano the Public Works Superintendent, contacted him regarding a storm drain that was plugged up at Itaska Place and he contacted the Fire Department to see about getting a firetruck to the site to see if they could clear it out otherwise we would have to hire a private contractor. He contacted Stu Briskey, 1st Assistant Chief of the Oceanport Fire Department and on Tuesday morning, a firetruck driven by Buddy Brocklebank came to the site and worked with the Public Works Department and were able to clean up the blockage and he thanked Stu Briskey and the Fire Department for their cooperation and to Buddy Brocklebank for his time in helping out the Borough and saving the Borough at least \$1,200 for this work.

**R-92-37** Councilman Wolfe asked the Clerk to read resolution R-92-37 amending the 1992 temporary budget, after which he moved to approve same. It was seconded by Councilman Taylor and unanimously approved by Council.

**MAYOR CAVANAGH:** Mayor Cavanagh advised that our present Tax Collector will be leaving the employ of the Borough in the next two weeks and we have prevailed upon our former Tax Collector, Ida Lancaster, to come back on a part time basis to assist especially since May 1 will be here shortly.

Councilman Terra moved to appoint Ida Lancaster as the Acting Tax Collector and Searcher of Tax Liens effective April 13, 1992 until such time as we can make a formal appointment of a replacement. It was seconded by Councilwoman Filippone and unanimously approved by Council.

Mayor Cavanagh stated that we just adopted a resolution amending the 1992 temporary budget and everyone heard our Auditor tonight say that the temporary budget may be in force longer this year than the permanent budget, if it is not approved by the end of June. Mayor Cavanagh continued that he has said for years that so much of what we do up here is circumscribed by what happens in Trenton and dictated to us in a sense, by what we are subservient to, that he hopes that his point is getting across. He again stated that there is no one sitting on the dais that is pleased that there will be a tax increase this year and as he said earlier, we were able to keep our spending at a 3% limit and when you do that, you should be able to produce very little tax implications to the residents, but again, because this is a year of adjustment from last year, really much of that is not under our complete control.

Mayor Cavanagh stated that the Chief of Police is sitting in the back and he acknowledge that there is rarely a day that goes by that we don't talk about something that he could use or that makes sense, or that ought to be done that he does not argue about the cost of and there are times when the Chief becomes justifiably frustrated. He stated we on the dais try to be as conservative as possible with the taxpayers dollars and the Chief does his job very well and tries to run a professional department and the point he is trying to make is that we do our best and we do not spend the taxpayers money lightly.

Mayor Cavanagh thanked Council President Miller for filling in for him while he was away last week.

Mayor Cavanagh then opened the meeting to the public to make any comments they might care to.

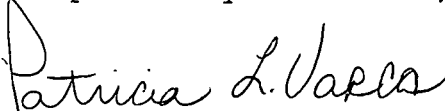
As no one from the public wished to be heard, Mayor Cavanagh closed the public portion of the meeting.

Councilman Wolfe moved to approve the bills listed on the Voucher Register dated April 2, 1992. It was seconded by Councilman Miller and unanimously approved by Council. TOTAL 1991 VOUCHERS PAID THIS MEETING \$341.20. TOTAL 1992 VOUCHERS \$47,945.14. TOTAL 1992 VOUCHERS PAID THIS MEETING \$10,364.33. TOTAL 1992 OPERATING FUND \$58,309.47. TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNT \$199.50. TOTAL TRUST ACCOUNT \$2,543.21. TOTAL DOG REGISTRY ACCOUNT \$152.40. TOTAL MONEY MARKET ACCOUNT \$165,000.00. TOTAL GENERAL LEDGER-MIDDLE DEPT. INSPECTION AGENCY \$308.50. TOTAL GENERAL LEDGER-MARRIAGE LICENSES \$50.00. (SEE VOUCHER REGISTER)

At 8:28 P.M. Councilwoman Filippone moved to adjourn into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter and PBA negotiations. It was seconded by Councilman Miller and unanimously approved by Council.

At 9:00 P.M. Mayor Cavanagh called the meeting back to order and Councilwoman Filippone moved to adjourn the meeting until the next regularly scheduled meeting to be held on April 16, 1992 at 8:00 P.M. It was seconded by Councilman Clark and unanimously approved by Council.

Respectfully submitted,



PATRICIA L. VARCA  
BOROUGH CLERK