

A CONFERENCE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ORANGE TOWNSHIP HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 29 NORTH DAY STREET, ORANGE, NEW JERSEY, ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2012 AT 7:14 PM.

1) ROLL CALL	PRESENT	ABSENT
Hon. Hassan Abdul-Rasheed (West-Ward)	___X___	_____
Hon. Elroy A. Corbitt (At-Large)	___X___	_____
Hon. Linda Jones-Bell (East Ward)	___X___	_____
Hon. Edward B. Marable, Jr. (South Ward)	___X___	_____
Hon. Rayfield Morton (At-Large)	_____	<u>Arrive @ 7:15pm</u>
Hon. Donna K. Williams (At-Large)	_____	<u>Arrive @ 7:15pm</u>
Hon. Tency A. Eason (North- Ward)	___X___	_____
Council President		

ALSO PRESENT

Shinell Smith, Deputy Clerk	___X___	_____
Hon. Eldridge Hawkins, Jr., Mayor	___X___	_____
Marvin T. Braker, City Attorney	___X___	_____
Dwayne D. Warren, Legislative Research Officer	___X___	_____
Valerie Jackson, Acting Deputy Director of Admin.	___X___	_____
Shirley Bailey, Clerk's Office	___X___	_____

PLEASE STAND FOR A MOMENT OF SILENCE

SPECIAL NOTICE: Please be apprised anyone wishing to discuss Agenda or General Items shall sign one (1) book. There will be two (2) columns in the book, one (1) for Agenda Items and one (1) for General Issues. Each person signing the book will check Agenda Items or General Issues. If they check only Agenda Items or General Issues, they will be allowed to speak for five (5) minutes. If they check General Issues and Agenda Items, they will be allowed to speak for ten (10) minutes.

- 2) The Deputy Clerk announces that the requirement of N.J. S.A. 10:4-9 et. Seq., "Sunshine Law" has been met. A notice of this meeting was sent to the *Star Ledger* and published in *The Orange Transcript* on July 14, 2011, posted on the Bulletin Board in City Hall and filed in the Office of the Municipal Clerk.

3) **MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION**

Presentation by- Citizen Budget Advisory Committee

Council President Eason recognized the Citizen Budget Advisory Committee

Christopher Jackson, Harold Johnson and Robert Mitchell were the presenters for the CBAC. The CBAC prepared a comprehensive presentation (via PowerPoint) and handouts were provided as it relates to their finding and recommendations for the TY2011 budget. Please see a copy of the said documents in Clerk's Office or look to the City's website.

Council President Eason recognized Councilwoman Williams

Councilwoman Williams asked if the CBAC had any suggestions as it relates to the purchase of copiers and or computers.

CBAC member Mitchell in response stated that it had not been addressed in their report and deferred to Bruce Meyer. Mr. Meyer echoed that it had not been addressed in this report. However, in the past he has suggested to Council that this is something which shouldn't be pieced mailed together but integrated into one system.

Council President Eason recognized Valerie Jackson, Deputy Business Administration

Ms. Jackson stated that she appreciates the suggestions of CBAC. However, we will need an IT professional to tell us what we need to streamline a program which will aid in effective and efficient work performance. She stated that we have a new software program being utilized by the City that deals with government efficiency and it was paid for through grant funds.

Councilwoman Williams encouraged the next CBAC to work with our IT director who has great ideas as to how we can work more efficiently. She also advised that they dialogue with the IT committee as suggested by Councilman Abdul-Rasheed as well. This way we can have a handle on things before we do them where they can't be undone.

Council President Eason recognized Councilman Abdul-Rasheed

Councilman Abdul-Rasheed thanked the CBAC for their presentation. He stated that he asked Dwayne Warren, LRO to draw up a resolution, which speaks to extension of the CBAC membership from one year to two years.

Council President Eason thanked the CBAC for their presentation and apologized for the delay in allowing them to present.

4) RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES

The resolutions and ordinances to be presented at tonight's meeting are listed on the attached Regular Meeting Agenda. If any Council Member wishes to discuss any resolution or ordinance, it may be discussed at this time.

Council President Eason recognized Councilwoman Williams

Councilwoman Williams asked Ms. Jackson to refresh her memory with respect to ordinance 2-2012 as it relates to the revaluation.

Ms. Jackson stated that there were two companies that responded. The experience, reputation, knowledge of urban communities, ability to attend meetings, qualifications of personnel, timely completion and proposed bid amount translated into a point scoring for evaluation of the two firm. It was taken into consideration by Lou Childress, Assistant City Attorney and the Tax Assessor who worked together with evaluating the two firms based on their responses. The end evaluation resulted in Appraisal Systems being chosen as the company to perform the City's appraisals, based on the point system. She stated that they're bid was selected based on a difference of one point.

Councilwoman Williams asked Mr. Braker if we had to use Appraisal Systems or can we go back out for bid based upon unsatisfied tax payers.

Mr. Braker stated that his office has not received complaints based on this current selection of Appraisal System but has received them in the past, as he had given clarity as to respond to Councilwoman Williams inquiry.

Council President Eason recognized Councilman Marable

Councilman Marable stated that he's not sure if this can be characterized as a complaint but he expressed his issues relative to his home and had never gotten a response.

Councilwoman Williams stated that she is in favor of the reval. However, what guideline will be put in place to assure the residents that this company will do it's suppose to do.

Ms. Jackson stated that we can assure that they work closely with the Tax Assessor, adhere to the appointment schedules and post the property online as they mentioned previously so that the home owner can monitor the process.

Mr. Braker stated by law the Tax Assessor is to monitor all complaints and residents should raise any questions relative to the company. It is rare that you get the perfect vendor but there are processes in place to help address the residents concerns. They can also have an informal sit down with the appraisal company to express their concerns.

Councilwoman Williams stated, if the funds are set aside and this is voted up, how long before the reval will take place.

Ms. Jackson in response stated that this is only an ordinance in first reading and a timeline has not been established. After the ordinance is voted up then we will proceed from there.

Council President Eason asked if we can go out for another bid before moving forward with Appraisal Systems. She stated that she wasn't pleased with their service either.

Ms. Jackson stated that the funds associated with this bid are tied to the ordinance.

Mr. Braker stated that we can go back out for re-bid but neither of these companies are perfect as there had been concerns. He stated that this bid was done on its on merit based on new solicitation as to what we placed in the news paper and received responses to. This company was based on their criteria now and what they've presented to us today not what had taken place four years ago.

Council President Eason stated that it appears that we have already chosen appraisal systems because the money is tied to them as per Ms. Jackson.

Ms. Jackson stated, before you approve the company you have to appraise the funds.

Council President Eason recognized Councilman Abdul-Rasheed

Councilman Abdul-Rasheed stated that he will not vote in favor of this company in the immediate future. The Council is not bound to voting for any company whether it's tied to funds or not.

Councilman Abdul-Rasheed asked if the money could be used for the appraiser be put to better us to hire code enforcement or public works employees.

Mr. Braker replied, no.

Councilman Abdul-Rasheed asked Dwayne Warren, Legislative Research Officer if it was mandatory that this ordinance be voted on this night.

Mr. Warren in response stated if this body does not approve this ordinance the administration cannot move forward with the contract.

There was further discussion as it relates to the same. Lastly, Ms. Jackson stated that the bids were made in good faith. Mr. Warren stated that the contract has not been accepted but there is a period in which you can evaluate the bids. Mr. Braker stated in response to Councilman Morton that a letter was forwarded to the Council as per a contract to be submitted to the Council and those funds were said to be attached to this particular company. Mr. Braker stated that you reserve the right to reject bids but you cannot cancel a bid at any time. Mr. Warren echoed Mr. Braker's sentiment.

Councilman Marable asked if we want a revaluation at all. He stated that the difference in price is fifty-five thousand dollars and there is no need to split hair there. He then inquired as to whether or not Council would want to embark on this process and if so will they do the do diligence to make it better. Lastly, he stated that he will be voting in favor of this ordinance.

Council President Eason stated that she is not in favor of this ordinance. She stated that there should be further research done before settling for this particular company.

Councilwoman Williams stated that she is favor of this ordinance and the reval. She stated that she would rather move forward while there is control over the situation unlike it had been in the past when the reval forced upon them.

Council President Eason recommend that Council first do a forum so that the public has the opportunity to express themselves as it relates to the same. She stated that there should be transparency before starting the process.

Ms. Jackson stated that the Administration is not married to Appraisal Systems. She stated that this funding to appropriate the funds which needs to be done before we award a contract.

Mr. Braker stated that the purpose of the contract's law is to be fair and not to show favoritism. He stated that solicitation must be evaluated on its own merits.

Councilman Morton stated that we are reserving money for a certain company which traps us.

Mr. Braker stated that we're not trapped but we will have to start the process all over and do the same for any other company.

Councilman Abdul-Rasheed stated with respect to the bill list, on page two, 102-999 for City Connections, is this relative to channel 35.

Ms. Jackson stated that this payment is relative to our web host for www.ci.orange.nj.us.

Ms. Jackson stated in response to Councilman Abdul-Rasheed that Mr. Baraff is responsible for the content and City Connections is responsible for the web site.

Councilman Abdul-Rasheed stated that Mr. Baraff is the director of City Connections.

Ms. Jackson replied, yes.

Mr. Braker stated in response to Councilman Abdul-Rasheed's inquiry as it relates to the Rothenberg case, there will be some other bills forthcoming that he has issues with so they will not be paid until his inquiries have been satisfied.

Councilman Abdul-Rasheed asked for the support of the Council with extrapolating the bill for PSE&G until they fix the lights in our City.

Council President Eason recognized Calvin Bell, Director of Public Works

Mr. Bell stated that he does not have the status as to when the lights will be fixed but he will follow up with Ms. Jackson.

Mr. Braker suggests that Council reach out to the Board of Public Utilities if they want a quick response as to remedy this situation.

Ms. Jackson stated that she will have a meeting with PSE&G and give them a chance to respond to the outages before taking their payment off the bill list.

Councilwoman Williams asked what the Enterprise rental car used for.

Council President Eason recognized John Rappaport, Police Director

Director Rappaport stated that this is a one month lease for the police department and it was approved by the prosecutor's office. The money was taken out of the municipal fortune fund and is of no cost to the City.

There were some conversations as to hand checks that are on the bill list. Ms. Jackson stated that hand checks need the Council's approval; although they have already been paid.

Ms. Jackson stated in response to Councilwoman Williams with respect to the Transit grant we are looking at grants that offer a buffer for bike trails across 280. It is a grant that will be shared between Orange and East Orange.

5) MOTION TO ADJOURN

Council President Eason entertained a Motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Corbitt

Voice Vote

SECOND: Morton

ADJOURNMENT: 8:43pm

**Dwight Mitchell, RMC
Municipal Clerk**

**Tency A. Eason
Council President**

MINUTES APPROVAL

Passed on February 7, 2011

Conference and Regular Meeting January 17, 2012

Councilwoman Jones-Bell cannot vote because she was not present.

Council President Eason entertained a Motion to adopt.

Motion to Adopt: Corbitt

Second: Williams

The roll call by Municipal Clerk was as followed:

Yeas: Abdul-Rasheed, Corbitt, Morton, Williams and Eason

Nays: Marable

Abstentions: None

Absences: None

Council President Eason ruled the Motion was carried by Five Yeas, One Nays, No Abstentions and No Absence.