

# ORANGE COUNCIL MOVES ON THREE ITEMS

**BY WALTER ELLIOTT**

**ORANGE** : The City of Orange is officially on its Transitional Year 2011 municipal budget as of 7 p.m. Nov. 14.

The TY2011 budget, which is Orange's July 1-Dec. 31 spending plan, was approved by the council at its Nov. 14 meeting. Orange's elders also voted to table a resolution appointing city crossing guards as additional parking violation enforcers and abolished the Orange Police Department Auxiliary.

TY2011, which is roughly half of the city's \$56 million 2010-11 Fiscal Year, was approved by a 6-1 vote. Their vote came after City elders held a special 6 p.m. public hearing and prior to their usual 7 p.m. conference and 8 p.m. regular meetings.

City council members usually hold their public meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of the month. This set of sessions was held on a Monday night, however, to accommodate those city officials who planned on attending the annual New Jersey State League of Municipalities convention at Atlantic City Nov. 15-18.

The public hearing allowed city residents and stakeholders to comment or ask for clarification of TY2011. This and the council's vote were the last steps in a process of Orange's changing its budgetary

calendar.

Both the council and members of Mayor Eldridge Hawkins, Jr.'s administration have agreed to create TY2011 as a transitional budget. The six month plan bridges the FY2010-11 budget, which was approved earlier this year, and the coming Calendar Year 2012 Budget.

Orange has been running on monthly temporary or emergency appropriations since July 1. The monthly allocations are drawn from one-quarter of the 2010-11 budget's reserve. City elders, for example, approved a \$7.576 million appropriation Oct. 18.

Orange, East Orange and Irvington have either completed or about to complete their FY to CY budget transition. Elders of these three "Local Talk" towns have decided that going to a Jan. 1-Dec. 31 timetable would be easier for taxpayers to read and may also yield some cost savings.

The three towns are moving away from a July 1-June 30 fiscal year calendar that the State of New Jersey operates on. Municipalities have depended on the Governor and State Legislature's decisions on various grants and financial aid on or before June 30. New Jersey state law requires that the legislature approve and the governor sign a balanced budget on or before 12:01 a.m. July 1.

The states, for the record, depend on grants and aid from a federal budget which runs on a Nov. 1-Oct. 31 budgetary year.

Council President Tency Eason, Vice President Donna Williams and members Elroy Corbitt, Linda Jones-Bell, Edward Marable, Jr. and Rayfield Morton approved TY2011. West Ward Councilman Hassan Abdul-Rasheed dissented.

All seven council members meanwhile agreed to rescind their Resolution 198-2010, which established the Orange Police Department Auxiliary a year ago last August.

The OPD Auxiliary force would be made up of volunteers who would be trained for particular public safety tasks. The volunteers, who would receive free training and uniforms, would assist OPD officers in crowd control and/or disaster relief.

The latter application would also place them under supervision of Orange's Office of Emergency Management. The OPD Auxiliary would be similar to colleagues found in East Orange, West Orange, Montclair, Maplewood, Newark, the Essex County Sheriff's office and Nutley.

The above comparison and vocational description comes respectively from [citizencops.gov](http://citizencops.gov) and Mayor Hawkins page on [ci.orange.nj.us](http://ci.orange.nj.us).

Hawkins, or the city Webmaster or another official, has apparently taken that OPD Auxiliary page down as of Nov. 22. The six-year West Orange Police Department officer, who is currently on leave, has also resigned from OPD Auxiliary effective Nov. 11.

The mayor has been OPD Auxiliary's only member in the last 15 months. Hawkins, in one published report, said that the Essex County Police Academy has not held a new class in the last 15 months. Police Director John Rappaport has meanwhile said that he has received up to six auxiliary resumes from citizens.

The OPD Auxiliary's abolition does not affect the department's Special Police force.

City council members, with South Ward Councilman Marable dissenting, agreed to table Resolution 308-2011 into Dec. 6. The resolution would authorize and appoint the city's school crossing guards as parking enforcement officers.

The guards' proposed doubling as parking ticket writers has been mulled and revised at least twice in recent months. The current resolution makes the resolution pursuant to negotiations with the Orange Municipal Employees Bargaining Association as well as stipulating that ticket writing is to be done before or after crossing duties.