

**Clifton Heights Borough Council  
Meeting Minutes  
November 16, 2010**

**Present:**

Anthony Casadei, Council President  
Edward Martin, Council Vice President  
Betsy Berry, Councilwoman  
Harris Resnick, Councilman (Arrived Late)  
Jane Tumolo, Councilwoman (Arrived Late)  
Leona Papale, Councilwoman  
Mario Alpini, Councilman  
Robert Penjuka, Councilman (Arrived Late)

**Others Present:**

Joseph Kelly, Mayor  
Frank Catania, Borough Solicitor  
Tony Tartaglia, Code Enforcement/Borough Manager  
Walt Senkow, Chief of Police

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Prayer Led By Mayor Kelly**

**Presentations by the Mayor:**

The Mayor presented a check for \$500 to the Williamson Trade School on behalf of the citizens of Clifton Heights and the members of Borough Council for a job well done on the work they completed at the Borough's municipal building. He presented the check to Mr. Tomlinson and 4 of his students.

Councilman Alpini mentioned Clifton Heights' resident Mike Wink as being an unsung hero of the project. He said that he was a former graduate of Mr. Tomlinson's program at Williamson and had a chance to bid on the job and instead offered the idea of contacting the Williamson Trade School to see if they would be interested in doing the work.

Mr. Tomlinson thanked Council and said that they appreciate donations since it is a Free School with 3 year scholarships.

Mayor Kelly called up Fire Chief Jim Kneass and State Representative Nick Micozzie.

Chief Kneass presented a plaque to Representative Micozzie on behalf of the Clifton Heights Fire Company naming him an honorary fire fighter.

Mayor Kelly presented the keys to the Borough to Representative Micozzie. He also presented Representative Micozzie with a plaque naming him an honorary citizen in recognition of all he has done for the Borough of Clifton Heights.

Mayor Kelly made an announcement on behalf of the Clifton Heights Fire Department announcing that they would be joining the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Toy Truck Parade sponsored by 92.5 WXTU and the Children's Abuse Prevention Effort. He said that this is the 9<sup>th</sup> year that the Fire Company has been involved in the event and that they are reaching out to the community to ask them to assist in collecting toys for the event. The Fire Company will be accepting unwrapped toys through December 4<sup>th</sup>. Donation checks can be made out to the

Clifton Heights Fire Company. The Fire Company will load up all the toys on the morning of December 5<sup>th</sup> and head to WXTU and proceed from there to the Wachovia Center where they will begin to build a Toy Mountain. With the help of the community, the Fire Company was able to collect & raise \$3,000 worth of toys in 2009, and they hope for an even more successful event in 2010.

President Casadei called the 1<sup>st</sup> person signed up for public comment.

Councilman Resnick asked if he could make a motion that they meet with the Police Chief so that they could work together to avoid layoffs.

President Casadei said that they could address that after they close public comment and open up the general meeting items.

### **Public Comment:**

Lynn Amey, 21 Windsor Lane, said that she was there to talk about the proposed police layoffs. She said she wanted to know who on Council proposed this idea and who is going along with it.

President Casadei said that it must have been at Thursday's caucus meeting but that he was not there. He said that maybe someone else could expand on it. He said that he is 100% for the Police.

Councilman Resnick said that he could expand on it. He said that they were discussing numbers and that he also believes that they have an excellent police department. He said that he judges the police force on more than just the statistics and that they go above and beyond. He said that his concern as a Councilperson is that the State of Pennsylvania provides numbers for the pension funds each year and Clifton Heights' pension fund is unfunded by \$1.9 million. He said that it is no one's fault, but that when they look at this year's budget even with a ½ mill increase, they are facing a deficit in 2011 of \$478,000. He said that when you start looking at numbers, the biggest item by far in the budget is the Police Department. He said that he lives here and understands full well that if police protection is decreased, he would suffer like everyone else. He said that he doesn't know and is open to any ideas to try and save money on the budget.

Mrs. Amey asked if there was any consideration taken to non-emergency personnel cutbacks as opposed to the Police Department.

Councilman Resnick said that when he looks at the budget, there are areas where you can cut a few dollars but that the Police Department is where the majority of the money is directed. He said that he is open to all suggestions and would be happy to sit down with Chief Senkow to see how they would be able to save some real money. He said that they are what is known as a distressed community, which affects everyone. He said that last year, the real estate taxes were the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest in the County, which makes a difference when people go to buy a house. He said that he is scared when he looks at the numbers.

Mrs. Amey said that she has been a resident of the town for over 20 years and she supports the Police Department through and through and she doesn't believe that that is where they need to make cuts.

President Casadei said that he wanted to make one point. He said that when he is referencing the Borough as having the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest Real Estate taxes in the County, he is referencing the percentage. He said that their assessments are low, which is where that comes from.

Councilman Resnick said that he understands that, but that people who are having trouble selling their houses in the town are faced with the reality of people only looking at the percentage as opposed to the assessment.

Councilman Martin said that it is true about the assessments and high taxes scaring people away but what would really scare them away would be an excessively high crime rate, which Clifton Heights does not have.

John Senkow, 332 Prospect Ave., said that he is also a former police officer in the Borough for 18 years. He said that the city has slowly crept into the County and town. Drug issues and crime have increased. Police officers in the area have been shot. He said that the worst place that we can afford to have budget cuts is the Police Department. He said that we would put the Officers and residents in harm's way if we started to cut back. He said that we could probably use more officers at this point because they are lacking in specialization in certain areas. He said that obviously someone brought up some kind of police layoff, and he would like to know what kind of research was done before that, like what kind of money would be saved, what crime statistics were looked into, traffic patterns, accident investigations, etc. He asked if there was any research put into any types of grants or funding that could possibly be obtained. He asked if they looked into layoffs in the trash department and highway departments or cutting back attorney's fees, solicitor's fees, engineer's fees, etc. He said that he thinks that it is kind of offensive that some of the Council members in this room voted to have a police officer laid off.

All of Council stopped him and informed him that no such thing happened.

Mr. Senkow said that they discussed and agreed in private.

Council again informed him that nothing of the sort happened.

President Casadei said that nothing had happened in private and that the Councilperson who had brought up the idea explained where he was coming from with that idea.

Councilman Resnick said that he did not bring it up as anti-police, he said that he was floating the idea of more part-timers.

Mr. Senkow said that was absurd and that the Police Department was the last line of defense. He said that more part-timers would be against the contract rules, and the Borough negotiated that contract and should know that. He said that the Police Department is under budget and asked for confirmation.

Councilman Martin confirmed that the Police Department was under budget.

Mr. Senkow said that he respects their positions and knows that they are trying to do a good job for the Borough, but he thinks that this measure would be a big detriment to our community and our police officers. He said that he thinks that we have the finest Police Department in Delaware County. He said that if they vote to have a police officer laid off, it would be unacceptable and he would want to know who voted for it.

President Casadei said that all votes take place here in public, so he would know. But he continued that there would be no vote on it because what happened on Thursday night was just people talking. He said that it got out to the public, but that he wouldn't be supporting any kind of police layoff.

Councilman Alpini asked to address Mr. Senkow. He said that he would know that this is something that is of great concern to him because he is the father of a police officer. He said that officers are usually shot at by career criminals who are released after police do all the hard work. He said that he had mentioned areas where they were short-staffed and that him and his brother would know more about this than he would. He asked if there was any way that they could possibly work in conjunction with other towns to help share the load with certain officers who specialize in particular areas.

President Casadei said that has nothing to do with what is going on and is something that they could possibly look into in the future if they'd like.

Councilman Martin said that the Police Department is coming in under budget for the year. He said that the Mayor, Chief Senkow and himself, as Chairman of the Police Committee, worked diligently on this.

Bill Wassell, President of Clifton Heights Business Association, said that at the other night's meeting it was said that there are officers in this town making \$90,000-\$100,000/year. He asked if that included overtime hours and said that it must.

Councilman Resnick read the salaries had had with him and said that those numbers were with overtime.

Mr. Wassell said that overtime would be from giving out tickets, making arrests, having to go to Court hearings, etc. He said that to him it would seem that an officer who is making arrests and doing a better job would be the officer making more money because he has to work more.

Councilman Resnick said that one of the problems is that when a full-time officer calls out sick, they cannot replace him with a part-time officer. They have to go to another full-time officer and only when another full-time officer is not available is when a part-timer will be brought on.

Mr. Wassell asked if that was common throughout the County.

Councilman Resnick said that he was not sure.

Mr. Wassell asked if the average salary was on par with surrounding Towns & Boroughs.

Councilman Martin said that having checked into that on a cursory level; that is about the norm.

Mr. Wassell reiterated that they were also under budget so that it couldn't be a money thing.

Councilman Resnick said again that he respects the Police Department and what they do.

Mr. Wassell asked what the dollar value would be for the town and its people and what they are worth and what the officer is worth if they are doing their job and putting their life on the line everyday.

Councilman Resnick said that he has been in this town since 1986. He said that as Real Estate taxes continue to rise, senior citizens can't afford to pay so they sell. He said that they then have a hard time finding buyers because of the Real Estate taxes, so there has been a huge shift in the general makeup of who is living in the house with more renters coming in. He said that, although there are exceptions, renters do not tend to keep up their properties as well as owner occupied properties. He said that is why he pushed hard to try and get an earned income tax.

Mr. Wassell said that he understands all that but that there has to be other avenues where they can save as opposed to the Police Department.

Councilman Resnick said that he is happy to look anywhere, but when he looks at the budget the biggest chunk by far is the Police Department.

Mr. Wassell asked how far in debt we were.

Councilman Resnick said that the pension fund debt is \$1,910,602.

Mr. Wassell asked how long it has been that.

Councilman Resnick said that it varies with the stock market, and that they do an actuarial study every two years.

Joe Lombardo, 33 W. Baltimore Ave., said that as a business owner in the town, he has his life professionally and personally invested in this town. He said that when you hear things like cutbacks in the Police Department, he thinks that is a very serious topic. He said that he just wanted to make sure that Council

knows that himself, as a business owner and member of the Clifton Heights Business Association is very concerned when things like that are discussed.

Councilman Martin said that there is a lot of sentiment that is going around tonight, and he said one big item they should be aware of is the demoralization of their Police Department by even discussing this topic.

President Casadei said that in response to everything tonight that apparently on Thursday night something was said and was taken out of context. He said that it never was discussed, it was only brought up and that is as far as it went. He said that there is no vote that they are having tonight. He again said that they have the best Police Department around.

Councilwoman Papale said that she was there on Thursday night. She said that what was going on there was a brainstorming session. She said that ideas were being thrown out there because they were presented with a budget, and they have a job to do as Council members for the Borough of Clifton Heights to watch the budget. She said that they hear from a lot of people that they do not want taxes increased or this or that. She said that as a group they all have different ideas on things that they need to look at – all departments included. She said that this was just thrown out there as an idea, a brainstorm. She said that nothing was voted on or decided on. It was just ideas being thrown out there to see where it went. She said that unfortunately in this case, it went out there and just snowballed. She said that it is great to see everyone here in support of the Police, which is absolutely right because the Police do a great job. She said that they should have this kind of support at every meeting that they have when they give awards out. They should have the same type of support then. She said that it is unfortunate to say that when they give awards out to Officers, they do not have this kind of response from the residents or the businesses. She thanked everyone for their support and encouraged them to always be so supportive. She reiterated that they hadn't voted on anything and they would be looking at all areas.

Chief Walt Senkow, 30 S. Springfield Rd., said that he has been with the Department for 30 years and is entering his last year of service and will be retiring at the end of December 2011. He said prior to him becoming Chief 10 years ago, the Police Department was understaffed. Thus, the community was not being serviced properly. There was no investigator and hundreds of files were being put away every year without being investigated. He said that between himself and his predecessor, Ron Berry, they fought tooth and nail to have an investigator put back on the force. He said that he is proud to say now that they have the best one in the County in Tim Rockenbach. He said that he is not here to debate but when the community has experienced a lack of police services in the past, the last thing that anyone wants to see is that it ends up going backwards again. He said that even the discussion or innuendo was hurtful. He said that no one came to him and asked him if there was a way to save any money in the budget. He said that a line has to be drawn somewhere, and he hopes that the community has drawn that line tonight. He said that there are plenty of other departments that can be looked at for cuts.

### **Meeting Minutes:**

A motion was made by Councilman Martin to accept the meeting minutes as presented; seconded by Councilwoman Tumolo; and carried unanimously by a roll call vote of 8-0. (Resnick – yes, Alpini – yes, Berry – yes, Martin – yes, Penjoke – yes, Tumolo – yes, Papale – yes, Casadei – yes.)

### **Mayor's Report:**

Mayor Kelly said that he works closely with the Chief as Mayor. He said that everything that was said tonight is true; the Borough does have the best Police Department in Delaware County and the Borough does have money problems. He said that he's not sure how this all snowballed when what was being discussed was a half mill increase on the proposed budget. He said that they are all aware of the unfunded pension and that they are working within the guidelines of the State to handle that. He said that he's not sure how that turned into a discussion of reducing any departments – sanitation, police, etc. He said that all of the departments are under their proposed budgets for the 2010 calendar year, which allows them to not cut into the fund balance. He said that next year's ½ mill increase will help them to reduce the pension gap. He said

that a ½ mill increase is 10 cents a day or \$36.50 for a year on an average assessment of \$80,000. He said that Real Estate taxes were mentioned as a reason why people aren't buying homes, but another reason could be that they do not have thriving business or commercial areas and that they are trying to work on that. He said that no one is buying homes in this economy. He said that he didn't agree with the thinking that people were concerned with the percentages that they were paying for taxes but instead concerned more with the actual amount of tax that they will be paying. He thanked the community for their support and said that all of the departments will continue to do their jobs.

### **Police Report:**

President Casadei said that 41 cars were written up – ticketed or abandoned – in the last month.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Berry to approve the police report; seconded by Councilman Martin; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

### **Fire Report:**

A motion was made by Councilman Martin to approve the fire report; seconded by Councilwoman Papale; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

### **Code Enforcement Report:**

A motion was made by Councilwoman Berry to approve the code enforcement report; seconded by Councilman Martin; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

### **Treasurer's Report/Bill List:**

A motion was made by Councilman Martin to accept the treasurer's report and pay the bills as money becomes available; seconded by Councilman Alpini; and carried unanimously by a roll call vote of 8-0. (Resnick – yes, Alpini – yes, Berry – yes, Martin – yes, Penjuke – yes, Tumolo – yes, Papale – yes, Casadei – yes.)

### **Manager's Report:**

Tony Tartaglia said that the 1<sup>st</sup> order of business would be the preliminary budget that represents a ½ mill tax increase, the majority of which would go towards the reduction of the Police Pension Fund deficit for the following year. He said that they are increasing past the minimum municipal obligation, which is anticipated at \$186,000 and going to \$286,000. He said that this would offset some of the debt that Councilman Resnick was referring to. He said that he would tell them that the fact that they are funded down below where they should be is representative of every municipality in Delaware County. He said that they are working with Tom Anderson and I&R in order to reduce the deficit. He said that the steps that they have suggested and the ½ mill tax increase is going to start them back to a fully funded pension. He said that he is asking Council to vote on the preliminary budget that he provided to them on Thursday night and pass it, so that they can publish it.

A motion was made by Councilman Martin to accept the preliminary budget and have it on display for the mandatory 30 days prior to adoption in December; seconded by Councilwoman Berry.

Councilman Alpini asked if that was with or without that ½ mill increase.

Councilman Martin said that the budget they were provided with Thursday night included the ½ mill increase, so they were voting on a preliminary budget with the ½ mill increase.

Councilman Alpini said that the budget that was given to him and explained to them by their accountant was that they could actually move forward without the ½ mill increase. He asked if he understood that correctly, that they could make it through this year without the ½ mill increase.

Ms. Leitzell said yes but that would result in the budget having approximately a \$500,000 deficit. She said that the danger with continually doing that is that within a year, they won't have any cushion at all and taxes would have to be raised significantly to meet the ongoing obligation.

Councilman Alpini said that they could make it this year without raising the taxes though.

Ms. Leitzell said yes, they could make it through this year but then next year they would have to multiply that because the deficit this year would be \$500,000 and next year the deficit will probably be \$600,000. She said that if you don't do anything this year, you will have to do something next year on a bigger scale. She said you would just be pushing it off a year.

Councilman Alpini said that cutting into that fund balance for the year would give us a full year to look into cutting expenses ahead of next year's budget so that perhaps we could move forward with no increase again. He said that as he understands it, they could get through this year and then their choice would be to cut expenses before next year's budget so that they won't have to raise taxes next year either.

Mr. Tartaglia said that if they look at the budget in front of them, they took the anticipated money from the ½ mill tax increase and slashed every other department's budget and added \$100,000 to the Police Pension Fund's obligation to offset the debt. He said that if they do not move forward with the ½ mill tax increase, there is no way they put the money in the Police Pension Fund that is represented in the budget. It would be further underfunded. He said that the choices were to either pass the tax increase or not have the money to put into the Police Pension Fund.

Councilman Alpini said that he was asking Ms. Leitzell if the budget could pass, including the extra \$100,000 for the Police Pension Fund, without the ½ mill increase.

Ms. Leitzell explained that there was enough cash if that is what he was asking. She said that there was enough cash to cover the \$500,000 loss, but if you continue to do that it is not fiscally prudent or the correct way to do things. She said that you will arrive at a point a year from now where you do not have a cushion left and you have no cash and in order to meet ongoing expenses, you will have to raise taxes significantly more than the ½ mill that is being discussed. Ultimately, it will catch up with you. She said that everyone has looked at this with a very sharp pencil to date, and that the biggest number in the budget is salaries. So if there is going to be a cut, the only place really where you can do that is salaries at this juncture. She said that she is only talking about the departments that are in the general fund, not the other departments.

President Casadei said that the salaries are set by unions. He said that is why a lot of towns are in trouble because they do not raise taxes enough, and then all of a sudden they need to raise it 10% because they are in a hole. He said that they do not want to get in a hole, so they need this 4% to stay out of the hole.

Councilwoman Tumolo said that they would all like to say that there is no tax increase and that they have discussed this for hours on end.

President Casadei said that as far as taxes go, he believes he is the only one at the table who is retired and doesn't receive a paycheck. He said that of course he doesn't want a tax increase, but that it has to be done.

Councilman Penjuka asked if in raising the ½ mill if they would have to raise it again next year.

Ms. Leitzell said it is possible. She said that they would have to look at what the minimum municipal obligation will be for the Police Pension Fund because that is the biggest factor. She said that because Council has been keeping a sharp pencil and has been extremely fiscally responsible over the last 6 years, they have come in below budget and created a cushion that has allowed the Borough to not have to raise taxes

as much as it needed to because money was there to cushion deficits. She said that eventually the fund balance will be depleted, while right now they are solvent and in good shape. She said that they have been using the fund balance over the last couple of years in order to avoid precipitous tax increases and have a balanced budget each year. She said that revenues and tax assessments go down and that has been a problem in the Borough and throughout Delaware County.

After questions and discussions, the motion was carried by a roll call vote of 4-4, with the Mayor casting the tie-breaking and deciding vote in favor of accepting and posting the preliminary budget as presented with the ½ mill increase. (Resnick – no, Alpini – no, Berry – yes, Martin – yes, Penjoke – no, Tumolo – yes, Papale – no, Casadei – yes, Mayor Kelly – yes).

Mr. Tartaglia said that they need authorization for I&R, who is their consultant for the Police Pension Fund to issue a Request for Proposal for custodial services. This will allow them to advertise and take bids for the year starting January 2011.

A motion was made by Councilman Martin to authorize I&R to issue a RFP for custodial services; seconded by Councilwoman Berry; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Mr. Tartaglia said that he needed a motion to authorize General Code to proceed with the codification project starting in 2011 with the proceeds from the Code Department paying for the project.

A motion was made by Councilman Alpini to authorize General Code to proceed with the codification project; seconded by Councilman Resnick; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Mr. Tartaglia said that they needed a motion to authorize Ms. Leitzell to issue a Request for Proposal for Lockbox services starting in 2011.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Berry to authorize Ms. Leitzell to issue an RFP for 2011 Lockbox services; seconded by Councilman Martin; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Mr. Tartaglia said that his final item in front of them was the proposal for a \$1.8 million bond issue. He said that the numbers were in front of them to show what the bond would cover - paying off the existing bond, building fund, design & engineering services, etc. He said that he would need a motion to authorize Ms. Leitzell to put this into action.

A motion was made by Councilman Martin to authorize Ms. Leitzell to issue a proposal for a \$1.8 million bond issue; seconded by Councilwoman Berry.

Councilman Alpini said that he would like to give this Council a chance to discuss the bond issue further.

Councilman Martin said that they have been discussing the bond issue for months.

Councilman Alpini asked why it had to happen tonight.

Councilman Martin asked Mr. Tartaglia if he could explain.

Mr. Tartaglia explained that they have had this issue on the docket for the last two months. He said that the Finance Committee had reviewed it and recommended that this bond issue be put into place. He said that they need to refinance and they need to do it quickly because the rates are beginning to climb. He said that they have the opportunity to take their total debt, which is about \$70,000 or \$80,000 payable per year to approximately \$125,000, so they will be nearly doubling the amount of cash that they have for capital projects but only increasing payments by roughly 40%. He said that it does not make sense to not refinance this debt. He said that the majority of the items he read off are mandatory. He said that it has to be done now before the rates turn over, and they end up paying more in interest for no reason whatsoever.



Councilman Alpini asked why the original bond they were discussing was \$2.5 million.

Mr. Tartaglia said that what they voted on in the past was an authorization to repay the Borough if this municipality voted on a bond issue as large as \$2.5 million. He said that the Finance Committee, through their work, has reduced the amount of money that we are going to take by eliminating some of the capital projects and some of the expenses. He said that the recommendation of the Borough's Finance Committee, who has met for 4 months in a row, is to go for a \$1.8 million bond issue.

After questions, the motion was carried by a roll call vote of 5-3. (Resnick – no, Alpini – no, Berry – yes, Martin – yes, Penjucke – no, Tumolo – yes, Papale – yes, Casadei – yes.)

**Engineer's Report:**

J.P. Kelly announced that the Road Program is substantially complete and they are currently working through the punch list.

President Casadei said that they did a great job on the corners.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Berry to accept the Engineer's Report as presented; seconded by Councilwoman Papale and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

**Old Business:**

Councilman Penjucke said that he did check into the signs and he did check in with the Mayor. He said that the signs were put up as they voted on. He said that reflection would come out if or when they ever light them up. He said that the signs won't reflect from the ground up, they have to reflect on them.

**New Business:**

No new business.

**Ward Reports:**

**First Ward:**

Councilman Resnick reminded residents that the Boy Scouts would be in this weekend for their food drive collecting food from roughly 10am-1pm. All donations are welcome.

Councilwoman Papale had nothing to report.

**Second Ward:**

Councilman Alpini had nothing to report.

Councilwoman Berry had nothing to report.

**Third Ward:**

Councilman Martin said he had nothing to report on the ward, but that he wanted to reiterate as the Chairman of the Police Committee that they came in under budget for the year. He also added that they had the most horrendous year ever weather-wise. He said that the Police Department was acting as traffic signals when the tornado hit. He said that the Sanitation & Highway Department dealt with almost 6 feet of snow that fell during the winter storms and also came in under budget. He said that with all that overtime, they still came in under budget so obviously the departments are working very hard.

Councilwoman Berry said that they work very hard as part of the Finance Committee every month to try and figure what they can cut and what they need.

Councilman Martin pointed out that Councilwoman Berry, Councilwoman Tumolo and Councilwoman Papale comprise the Finance Committee and that they deserve credit as well for working on the numbers.

President Casadei had nothing to report.

**Fourth Ward:**

Councilman Penjuka had nothing to report.

Councilwoman Tumolo thanked everyone for coming out.

Mayor Kelly said that he forgot to mention as part of his announcements that on Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup> starting at 6pm, the Business Association, the Clifton Heights Recreation Board and the Clifton Heights Fire Company would be lighting the Borough Christmas tree at the Fire Station. He said that there would be refreshments for the kids and Santa would be there for pictures and that the Police would be doing the fingerprinting again. He thanked everyone for their support of this event and its continued success and said that he hoped to see everyone there.

**Closing Public Comment:**

Chief Walt Senkow said that he apologized for getting a little emotional earlier. He said that he would like the members of the audience to be aware of a few things. He said that when they are out doing traffic up by Lombardo Funeral Home, they are reimbursed for those hours. He said that when the Officers are on the street giving tickets under the "Click It or Ticket" program, they are reimbursed by PENNDOT for that. When road construction is being completed and traffic is being directed by Officers, they are being reimbursed for that. He said that over the last 3 years, almost \$60,000 in grant money has been brought into the Borough to help pay for equipment and training for the Borough's police officers. He said that when you hear those salary figures, there is a large portion of that that has been reimbursed. He said that from issuing a traffic citation, they get a total of \$12.50 of that money after all is said and done on a ticket for \$109.50. He said if the Officers write a lot of citations and go to Court, the overtime for going to Court on those citations is reimbursed.

Fred Rich, 82 Chester Ave., said that they are going to increase the taxes another ½ mill. He asked what the millage rate is right now.

President Casadei said that he is using the same speech he has been using for the last 11 years.

Mr. Rich said that it is 11 ½ mills going to 12 mills. He said that is basically the highest tax millage rate in all of Delaware County. He said that the Borough of Brookhaven has a tax millage rate of 4.6.

Mayor Kelly asked what their assessed valuation was.

Mr. Rich said that he didn't know.

President Casadei said that he doesn't want to know that because that would answer his question.

Mr. Rich said that for comparable towns, they are by far the highest millage rate. He said that his second issue was the bond. He said that they are applying for an additional \$1.8 million. He said that in 2003, they applied for a \$1 million dollar bond and that they still owe \$650,000. He said that they never used that money, so for the last 7 years they have been paying \$38,000 in interest a year and not using the money.

### **Solicitor's Report:**

Mr. Catania said that he had 2 items for Executive Session. The 1<sup>st</sup> item would be the Kent Mills property. He said that they have notified the Court that they would like a hearing. The 2<sup>nd</sup> item would be a labor matter.

Councilman Resnick asked if there was a hearing date yet.

Mr. Tartaglia said that he saw Judge Perfetti yesterday and notices went out that the hearing date would be Monday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 1pm.

A motion was made by Councilman Martin to accept the Solicitor's report; seconded by Councilwoman Berry; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

### **Closing Public Comment Continued...**

John Senkow, 332 Prospect Ave., said that he is a little confused because the accountant mentioned earlier that they were solvent and Councilman Resnick said that the Borough is almost bankrupt.

President Casadei said that if they do not raise taxes, then they will be facing an issue where they are bankrupt.

Mr. Senkow asked if they had any tax dollars that were out on the street and hadn't been collected.

President Casadei said that it was an issue that they were working on.

Mayor Kelly explained that on February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, the delinquent Real Estate taxes are turned over to the County. He said that Delaware County takes on that responsibility and adds their fees on to it. He said that they work out payment plans and other payment methods and periodically pay the Borough when they collect. He said that they just recently paid the Borough about \$38,000 in delinquent taxes collected recently. He said that all municipalities turn their delinquent taxes over to the County as their collection agency.

Mr. Senkow said that he had heard there was probably \$300-400,000 out on the street in uncollected taxes.

Mayor Kelly said that he might be close, including fees.

Mr. Senkow asked if the Borough does not have the right to collect it.

Mayor Kelly said that the Borough has the right to collect delinquent sewer and trash fees, but the taxes are turned over to the County for collection.

President Casadei said that they are working on it.

Councilwoman Papale said that is very good point because that is an area that they probably need to focus on.

Bonnie Callahan, 235 Woodbridge Rd., said that Councilman Resnick had mentioned an earned income tax for the residents of Clifton Heights. She asked how the ½ mill increase vs. the earned income tax would affect the residents.

Councilman Resnick said that he voted against the ½ mill increase. He said that the earned income tax would not affect pension or social security.

Mrs. Callahan said that as a homeowner whose husband has been laid off for a year and a half, would an earned income tax go against her salary.

Councilman Resnick said yes.

Mrs. Callahan asked if this would affect her husband's worker's compensation salary.

Councilman Resnick said no, only earned income.

Mrs. Callahan asked if she makes \$80,000 a year how much extra she would be paying.

Councilman Resnick said \$800.

Mrs. Callahan said \$40 as opposed to \$800.

Councilman Resnick said that as she heard, the ½ mill tax increase doesn't solve the problem. He said that they have a \$397,000 deficit, so they will have to come back again and raise millage.

Mrs. Callahan asked if Upper Darby Township has twice a week tax collection. She said that Clifton Heights has some of the best services offered and she would rather pay \$40 more a year and \$40 more a year next year to continue with all of the services that are offered in Clifton Heights because two blocks over is Upper Darby, and they can't compare. She said that she would take the millage increase over the earned income tax.

President Casadei said that no research has been completed on the earned income tax, but if they do institute it they could stand to lose half of that to the Upper Darby School District who could lay claim to the EIT.

Rita Granato, 312 E. Baltimore Pike, said that she has lived in Clifton Heights for almost 20 years. She asked if there was any way that they could bring businesses in and redevelop the business district to create a greater tax base.

Mayor Kelly said that they have been working on that for years and that is what part of that bond is for.

Ms. Granato said that it would be possible to increase the bond issue then since the interest rates are so low.

Councilman Martin said that is true, but they thought it was financially responsible to go with the \$1.8 million.

Ms. Granato said that she agrees with everyone else and does not want to see the police force cut at all. She said that they do a great job.

**Adjournment:**

A motion was made by Councilman Martin to adjourn; seconded by Councilwoman Berry; and carried unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly A. Duffy  
Clifton Heights Borough Secretary