

**BOROUGH OF MEDFORD LAKES  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
MAY 10, 2001**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Medford Lakes, New Jersey, was held on the above date in Oaks Hall Council Chambers beginning at 7:30pm. Mayor Casey presided. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Mayor Casey read the Statement of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. This is to announce that adequate notice in the form of Notice of Meetings was (1) posted on the Administration Building bulletin board, (2) mailed to The Central Record, Medford, NJ, (3) mailed to the Burlington County Times, Willingboro, NJ, (4) mailed to the Courier Post, Cherry Hill, NJ, and (5) filed with the Municipal Clerk. Advance written notice of this meeting was mailed to all persons who requested such notice according to the Clerk of the Municipality.

Answering Roll Call were: Mayor Timothy S. Casey, Councilman Joseph A. Aromando, and Councilman Gary F. Woodend. Also present were Manager Julie Keizer and Solicitor Vogdes.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mayor Casey asked residents to hold any questions about the building projects until after the presentation. There were no other public comments at this time.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Councilman Aromando made a motion, seconded by Councilman Woodend, to pay the bills listed on the Bill List.

VOTE TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS

Ayes: Casey, Aromando, Woodend

Nays: None

Motion carries

**PRESENTATION OF MUNICIPAL FACILITIES PLANS**

Mayor Casey advised those present at Vaughan Hall about the process which led up to tonight' meeting, starting with the need for renovation at the current site. Architects were selected: Holberg & Adison for the Department of Public Works complex, and Ragan Design Group for the Oaks Hall project.

Rick Ragan and Diane Heck gave a detailed description of the project design for Oaks Hall. They explained the design and how they arrived at it, while conforming to ADA, AOC and DOC standards. Eighteen feet have been added to the Police Department side of the building. She gave a detailed description of the project and explained the need for each area in the renovation. Slides showed renderings of all four sides of the proposed building. She advised drivers would still be able to drive around the building, but it was not a good idea from a safety standpoint. The grassy area in front of the department will be converted into parking spaces.

She also addressed a proposal to move the Police Department to the DPW complex. By keeping it at its present location, the Borough avoids Pinelands and Wetlands codes, and grant money is available for a renovation project. Mr. Ragan added that moving the police department to the DPW site would reflect higher costs in order to meet AOC and DOC requirements for new construction. It will save the Borough money to have the Police Department stay at its present location.

Mrs. Heck advised the public that Tom Heck, the building inspector, would not allow use of the current Oaks Hall facility for another winter, due to its very poor condition.

The total proposed cost for the Oaks Hall renovation project is \$950,000.

Next, Paul Adison gave a presentation on the design and floor plan for the DPW renovation project. The complex was originally built as a riding academy, was next used as a storage facility, and finally upgraded to its present office and garage use. Some walls are still insulated with straw. He explained the need to have all the Borough's vehicles under cover, which would most likely extend their life span. Slides showed renderings of all four sides of the proposed building. He also showed the proposed EMT building, which is a garage-like, block structure.

The total proposed cost for the DWP renovation project is \$640,000.

The time frame for the completion of the two projects is nine months for each, following the breaking of ground.

Julie Keizer, Borough Manager, discussed finances. She stated that, following the meeting with the public, the next step would be for Council to introduce a bond ordinance, in the amount of \$1,8 million, which would cover the cost of both the Oaks Hall and DPW projects. It would then go to a public hearing, and would finally be adopted. She added that this is a good time to secure a long-term bond.

Manager Keizer next explained grant funding which might be available to offset the cost of the project. She explained that more money is available for renovation projects than for new construction. Money could be available from: 1) Community Development Block Grant, which is a Federal grant to help bring buildings up to code. It must be applied for in July, and the Borough would know by December of any money granted to the Borough. 2) Historic Preservation Funding, which is money from Federal Cultural Grants; 3) Special Legislative Grant, through the State Legislature. Council urged residents to write or phone their legislators to ask for available money. 4) ADA Compliance Grant, which is sponsored by both Federal and State funds. These grants make money available up front, and could be used to pay down the bond debt in chunks when received.

Mrs. Keizer explained to the public that the offices would have to be re-located during the renovation. The Borough has rented trailers from Evesham Township for one dollar. They are in very good shape and only need new carpeting to make them functional. DPW has assured her they have the ability to move the trailers from Evesham and install them at the DPW site. Total cost for the move and set-up should run between eight and ten thousand dollars.

Bob Stewart, Borough Auditor, explained the impact on the tax schedule. The interest rate today is 4.3%. For a home in Medford Lakes, with an average value of \$150,000, this would represent a tax increase of \$123.49 per year for 12 years, at which time the debt would be paid off. This figure would be reduced by any interest earned while the bond money and grant money were in the bank during the building process.

All three councilmen addressed the public. Mayor Casey stated he felt Council had come to the public with plans and figures that are in the best interest of the residents, and are the most cost effective. Councilman Woodend stated he is pleased with the designs and renderings, although there is still a need to finalize the plans and get the money. Councilman Aromando stated the public had been given large amounts of information from what has been a good initial effort. He urged the public not to be hasty, and to give Council as much input as possible.

### **QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD**

Joanne Tregressor, 6 Minnetonka Trail, asked about the addition of 18 feet to the police department, which would block her driveway, which exits onto Cabin Circle. Diane Heck advised her they would work together to find a solution. Ms. Tregressor also asked if they had considered drainage or excavation. Rick Ragan advised her the building would be raised four inches, with re-grading toward her property.

Robert Bowell, 108 Onondago Trail, asked about the addition of six bay windows across the front of Oaks Hall, whether they were for storage or just for appearance sake. Ms. Heck advised him the second level would contain a storage facility with a balcony, which looks into Oaks Hall. The balcony would be above the common entrance.

Ned Steele, 127 Lenape Trail, asked how the building would be heated. Mr. Ragan stated it would continue to use the split system now in place.

Scott Long, 216 Hunters Road, asked if the entire building would be demolished. Ms. Heck advised him Oaks Hall would be saved and renovated, but the manager's side and the police side would be torn down. She also discussed the log exterior, which will be log siding, with endcaps which give the appearance of a full log structure. There could also be ornamental chinking.

Don Thistle, 117 Wagush Trail, asked what percentage of the \$1.8 million cost of the project could be offset by grant money. Manager Keizer stated she felt 25% of the cost was a reasonable assumption, but she hoped for even more.

Councilman Woodend stated he felt Council should bond the \$1.8 million at this time, while the rates are so low. He added the Borough could pay down the load in lump sums if and when the grant money comes in.

Floyd Lins, 185 Algonquin Trail, asked about the amount being bonded. Mr. Stewart explained the cost of the renovations was approximately \$1.6 million, with the additional amount to be used for fees, furniture, moving costs, etc. He added the Borough is in good financial condition now, and has only seven years left to pay off an existing debt.

Mayor Casey advised the public that, at some time in the near future, the Borough might have to bond for the purchase of a new trash truck, which could run between \$100,000 and \$150,000. The cost for the truck could possibly be rolled into the bond under discussion, and Council could discuss this at the next regular meeting.

Bill Burns, 74 Pequot Trail, asked Council to give out information as to where residents could write their legislators to request grant money. Mayor Casey stated the information could be made public in the Colony News and also on the Borough's web site, [www.MedfordLakes.com](http://www.MedfordLakes.com).

Rob Hanold, 45 Natchez Trail, advised residents not to e-mail their legislators, but to write or call instead. He also commended Council for the work they had done, was happy to keep part of Oaks Hall, and gave his 100% support for the projects.

Dick Harrison, 92 Nantucket Trail, stated it was time to stop thinking about the project, and to start doing something.

Joe Doyle, 139 Meeshaway Trail, stated he has lived in Medford Lakes for 40 years, and he agrees it is time to do something about the problems. He also asked if the DPW renovation would eliminate parking spaces. Mr. Adison stated there would still be seven to nine spaces available.

Ned Steele, 127 Lenape Trail, asked about the height of the bay doors and if they would accommodate new and larger trucks. They will.

John Sedarat, 195 Cayuse Trail, asked about the cost projection if the police department were moved to the DPW site. Mr. Ragan advised him it would cost an additional \$225,000. Sedarat stated he wanted to put the building project to a public referendum vote, before passing a bond ordinance for the total amount. Mayor Casey advised him he was not in favor of a referendum, stating the majority of the public wanted to move forward with the project, as indicated by a poll taken approximately two years ago. He added the earliest a referendum vote could be put before the public would be November, which delayed the start of the projects into the winter months. Also, he stated interest rates are favorable now, and no one could be sure what they would be like in November.

Bob Stewart stated the cost per household of \$123.49 did not include operating expenses, which would hopefully drop due to a more efficient building.

Mr. Sedarat asked if the financial information was available on the website, Mayor Casey stated some was available now and more would be added as quickly as possible. Mr. Sedarat asked how these renovation projects would impact other Borough projects. Mayor Casey answered that the Borough was building a capital surplus, and one capital project, the Beach Drive Dam, had been revised. Originally, the Borough anticipated having to replace the dam at a cost of \$1 million. However, it has been determined the dam only needs repairs. There are no other huge capital projects in the future, with the exception of the aforementioned trash trucks.

Bill Burns, 74 Pequot Trail, asked how residents could be assured that any grant monies received would be used for the renovation project and not for other things. Mayor Casey explained the strict regulations which govern grant monies. He added that the Borough could borrow the \$1.8 million at a current rate of approximately 4.3%, and hold it until needed, while earning as much as 5.6% in interest.

Mr. Cahill, unknown address, asked how the renovation projects would impact other projects, specifically the lakes restoration and repairs to Vaughan Hall. Mayor Casey advised him these are Colony projects, not Borough responsibilities.

**Council will introduce the Bond Ordinance at the May 24, 2001, meeting, with the Public Hearing scheduled for the June 14, 2001, meeting.**

At this time, Council invited residents to come forward to examine the diagrams and plans presented by the two architectural firms.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Councilman Aromando made a motion, seconded by Councilman Woodend, to adjourn the meeting at 9:10pm.

VOTE TO ADJOURN

Ayes: Casey, Aromando, Woodend

Nays: None

Motion carries

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Keizer, RMC  
Borough Clerk