

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG**  
**JANUARY 1, 2012 -REORGANIZATION MEETING**  
**12:00 Noon**

**OPENING STATEMENT:** Mayor Gerald M. Mobus called the Reorganization meeting to order at 12:05 PM and made the following statement: Under the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., notice of the time and place of this meeting has been posted and sent to the Echoes Sentinel, the Courier News and the Star Ledger by way of annual notice.

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG and MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN, SERVING HOME AND ABROAD**

**INVOCATION**

The Invocation was given by Reverend Barbara Peters, Wilson Memorial Church.

Mayor Mobus welcomed the dignitaries who were present: Senator Thomas Kean, Assemblyman Jon Bramnick, Assemblywoman Nancy Munoz, Freeholder Pat Walsh, former Mayor Albert Ellis and North Plainfield Mayor Michael Giordano.

**OATH OF ALLEGIANCE AND OFFICE**

Stephen L. Black - Councilmember

Senator Thomas Kean administered the Oath of Office to Stephen Black as his daughter Heather held the Bible and sons Cameron and Stephen stood by his side..

Karen A. Cassidy - Councilmember

Senator Thomas Kean administered the Oath of Office to Karen Cassidy as her daughter Alexandra held the Bible and her son Robert stood by her side.

**ROLL CALL**

Joren [ P ] Black [ P ] Franklin [ P ] Pote [ P ] Nehls [ P ] Cassidy [ P ]

Also present were Administrator Thomas Atkins, Borough Attorney Albert Cruz, Engineer Thomas Herits, and Clerk Michelle DeRocco.

There were approximately 101 members of the public present.

**OATH OF ALLEGIANCE AND OFFICE**

Mayor Mobus administered the Oath of Office to Fire Chief - Thomas Carlucci, Sr. as his wife Madeline held the bible and his sons Thomas Jr., Stephen and Christopher stood by his side.

Mayor Mobus administered the Oath of Office to Assistant Fire Chief - Peter Martino. as his son Mario held the Bible, and his wife Rosebud and children Angelo, Bianca and Siena stood by his side.

Mayor Mobus administered the Oath of Office to Rescue Squad Captain - Adam Wexler, as his wife Jessica held the Bible.

Mayor Mobus administered the Oath of Office to Rescue Squad First Lieutenant - Richard Young, as Squad President Lysandra Plotkin held the Bible.

**NOMINATION FOR COUNCIL PRESIDENT**

Councilman Black nominated Councilwoman Joren for the position of Council President, with a second by Councilman Franklin. Nominations were closed and the motion carried unanimously on roll call.

**NOMINATION FOR LIAISON TO PLANNING BOARD**

Councilman Franklin nominated Councilman Pote for the position of Liaison to the Planning Board, with a second by Councilman Black. Nominations were closed and the motion carried unanimously on roll call.

**RESOLUTIONS**

The following resolutions were unanimously adopted on roll call, with offering and seconding as indicated:

		<u>Offered</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
<u>Abstain</u>			
R1:	Adoption of Rules of Order	Black	Franklin
R2:	Designation of Official Newspapers	Nehls	Joren
R3:	Designation of Depositories	Pote	Cassidy
R4:	Appointment of Officials - Joren 1-year term / Attorneys	Cassidy	Franklin
R5:	Appointment of Officials - 1-year term / Professional Services, Fire Officials	Black	Nehls
R6:	Appointments - Boards, Committees, Commissions	Joren	Black
R7:	Re-establish Petty Cash Funds	Nehls	Joren
R8:	Temporary Budget	Franklin	Cassidy
R9:	Payment of Property Taxes and Establishing Payment Procedures	Pote	Franklin
R10:	Authorize Borough Attorney to file Tax Joren Appeals and Petitions on behalf of the Borough for 2012	Franklin	Pote
R11:	Appointment of JIF Commissioner and Alternate	Cassidy	Black
R12:	Authorizing the execution of agreement for the services of James F. Hurley Insurance Agency Corp. As Professional Risk Management Consultants	Joren	Nehls
R13:	Authorize 2011 Budget Transfer	Pote	Franklin
R14:	Payment of Bills	Franklin	Pote

**APPOINTMENT OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

Mayor Mobus announced the following Councilmanic Committees:

**Administration & Finance**

Franklin - Chair  
Pote, Cassidy

**Public Works**

Nehls - Chair  
Joren, Black

**Laws & Ordinance**

Pote - Chair  
Joren, Franklin

**Buildings & Grounds**

Cassidy - Chair  
Black, Nehls

**Public Affairs**

Pote - Chair  
Black, Cassidy

**Police**

Joren - Chair  
Pote, Franklin

**Fire**

Black - Chair  
Nehls, Cassidy

**Special Liaison to Rescue Squad**

Nehls

**RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEE SERVICE**

Mayor Mobus recognized the following employees on their employment milestones:

25 Years:

Loretta Shpunder, Deputy Court Administrator

15 Years:

William Kelly, Police Sergeant/Detective  
Arthur Holzheimer, Police Officer  
Andrew Hart, Police Sergeant

10 Years:

Michael Bouchard, Police Officer  
David Melchionda, Police Officer  
Helder Peixoto, Police Dispatcher  
Joseph Nicasro, Plumbing Inspector

**MAYOR'S ADDRESS**

Mayor Mobus thanked all the volunteers who serve on the Borough's Boards and Commissions for their service, and also to the Borough's staff for their support during his first year as Mayor. He welcomed Councilman Black and Councilwoman Cassidy as they begin their terms for the next

three years. He said 2011 was the year of the weathers - blizzards, droughts, hurricanes, a snow storm in October, and even an earthquake! Mayor Mobus said one of the challenges the Borough faced this year was multiple bear sightings, and when we reached out to the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife for assistance were told to "shoo" the bears, or that a CD on what to do when you see a bear was available if we wanted it.

Mayor Mobus said the Borough has seen several changes this year. Police Chief Tim Wenzel who just finished his first year in this position is doing a great job. He said Ray Murray has filled the position of Tax Collector, vacant after Catherine Park's retirement. Jessica Rutihauser is doing a wonderful job as our new Assistant Treasurer, replacing Paula Heilman who retired after 25 years of service. When long time Clerk/Administrator Laureen Fellin retired in June, it took two people to replace her. The Borough hired Tom Atkins as part-time Administrator who served the Township of Scotch Plains for 28 years, and Michelle DeRocco moved up to fill the Clerk's position and is doing a wonderful job.

Mayor Mobus said it was his pleasure to go to Trenton with Emergency Service volunteers Fire Chief Skip Bell, Emergency Management Coordinator Gary Greves, and Rescue Squad Captain Adam Wexler, when their valiant efforts during Hurricane Irene were honored by Governor Chris Christie. He personally thanked these men for constant updates during the hurricane, enabling him to provide current information to many residents who were without power for a great length of time. Mayor Mobus also thanked Assemblyman Bramnick and Senator Tom Kean for their assistance during the storm, as they were able to get the power companies moving a little faster in our direction.

Mayor Mobus said next year he is looking for the school boards to submit fiscally responsible budgets, and he will be looking for additional ways to share services. He advised that this year, upon the retirement of Court Administrator Pamela Steves, an agreement was worked out with neighboring Mayor Mike Giordano of North Plainfield, to share a Court Administrator. He happily reported that this has been in effect since September, and working well and saving money for both towns.

Sustainable Certification is another goal the Borough is looking to attain, Mayor Mobus explained, saying Watchung was only 40 points short this year and should be achieving this soon. He said the Borough continues to keep up with changing technology and is saving \$6000. this year with a new payroll company that makes our payroll reporting computerized instead of submitting it manually. He thanked Engineer Tom Herits for attaining many grants for the Borough, enabling us to repair and improve many roads, and as he continues applying for grants - we hope to near completion of the Borough's goal to sewer the entire town.

Mayor Mobus said the 911 Memorial Committee is working diligently on a new memorial for the piece of World Trade Center steel we received, and he would like to see this completed and ready for our 911 Ceremony if possible. He said he also looks forward to the official dedication of the Texier House as our new Historical home.

Last but not least, Mayor Mobus said he is looking forward to working with all of you, and reminded residents he is always available for them, and that his number is listed in the phone book. He wished all a happy and healthy New Year.

## **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Council President Joren said she has great admiration of the Borough's Public Works Department and all of our Emergency Service teams, after seeing them in action during Hurricane Irene, and again, during the October snow storm. She said they all did an incredible job. She thanked all of the Boards and Commissions for their volunteerism and dedication, and wished all a happy and healthy New Year.

Councilman Black said he is looking forward to working with Chief Carlucci and Assistant Chief Martino. He said the volunteer membership in the Fire Department is at a possible all-time high which is kudos to the Borough and says a lot about its members. He also commended the Bor-

ough's Rescue Squad and thanked them for all that they do throughout the year for the Borough. Councilman Black thanked all for their support in his re-election and said he is looking forward to the future.

Councilman Franklin wished all a happy New Year, and said his colleagues make a great team. He recognized the dedication of the Borough's volunteers and said without them the Borough would not be able to operate. He said the Borough is proud of their hard working and understanding staff, who all have worked for the past 2 years with no wage increase, furloughs, and increased deductions in their salaries. Councilman Franklin said he is praying for a better year. He said each year the Borough's task of providing a reasonable and responsible budget is more and more challenging due to state mandated caps and lost State aid. He said Watchung is a well managed town financially and our Auditor, Bob Swisher, assures us we are doing well.

Councilman Pote thanked Councilwoman Joren, Councilman Franklin, and Attorney Albert Cruz for their assistance in making his transition this past year to Laws and Ordinance Chairperson a smooth one. He thanked the members of the Library Study team for the hundreds of hours they have put into the final preliminary design plans for Library renovations, and he said he anticipates the final plans to be ready by March. Councilman Pote said he wants all residents to be able to make an informed decision on the Library's future. He thanked Planning Board Chairman Don Speeney and member Tracee Schaefer for their assistance in the Master Plan revision, and explained that this protects the bucolic nature of our town. He thanked all of the Borough's employees and said our volunteers are amazing. He commended Mayor Mobus on a great "first year" and wished all a happy New Year.

Councilman Nehls thanked everyone for coming today, and said it is his hope that 2012 is a more prosperous year. He thanked the Public Works Department for all that they do, and thanked the Borough's employees. He said the residents need not worry, they are in good hands. Councilman Nehls thanked everyone for their support.

Councilwoman Cassidy said it is an honor to again serve the residents of Watchung as her appointment to the Council last year was truly a gratifying experience. She thanked her family and friends, and her running mate Steve Black for their support throughout the election. She said mother nature had not been kind to us last year and hopes that 2012 is a better year and she is looking forward to it.

## **PUBLIC PORTION**

Diddy Addario, Rock Avenue, said on behalf of Barbara Diem and the Historical Commission, she would like to thank the Governing Body for their support throughout the year, especially Councilman Pote who had worked tirelessly for the Commission. She wished all a happy 2012.

Mary Mobus, Washington Avenue, extended an invitation to all to join her and Mayor Mobus for refreshments back at their home after the meeting, and said the refreshments included the Mayor's famous seafood chowder.

## **BENEDICTION**

The Benediction was given by Reverend Barbara Peters, Wilson Memorial Church.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned to the call of the Chair at 1:10 P.M. and to the next scheduled meeting of January 12, 2012 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle DeRocco, RMC  
Clerk