

BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

MINUTES

MARCH 8, 2012 - 7:30 P.M.

MAYOR'S STATEMENT: Mayor Gerald Mobus called the meeting to order at 7:31 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 was given by way of annual notice to the Courier News, Echoes Sentinel, and Star Ledger, and posted at Borough Hall.

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

ROLL CALL

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

Also present was Borough Attorney Albert Cruz and Clerk Michelle DeRocco.

There were 2 members of the public present.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. Administration & Finance - Councilman Franklin said the Finance Committee and Administrator Atkins met last Saturday and a preliminary budget was reviewed. He said another meeting will be held when Mr. Atkins returns from vacation. He said some personnel issues will be discussed. Councilman Nehls said he attended the Board of Education's budget forum meeting and announced their proposed budget is under cap.

2. Police - Council President and Police Commissioner Joren announced that today is the 6th anniversary of Officer Matt Melchionda's tragic death, and that she along with other members of the Governing Body attended the annual memorial held early this morning. She noted that also in attendance were County Prosecutor Soriano, former Chief Sean Whelan, and police Chaplain Ron Miller. Councilwoman Joren said Officer Kody Hamrah has completed his probationary term and has been recommended for permanent status. She said Chief Wenzel advised of a purse snatching, and noted Detective Anderle feels an arrest will be made soon. She noted traffic enforcement numbers are up, and that interviews for a new lieutenant are in process.

3. Public Works - Councilman Nehls said the meeting with the Mountain Drive and Edgemont Road residents went well, and noted the resolution on tonight's agenda to authorize the agreement with North Plainfield to tie into their stormwater system. He said Mr. Herits provided a very good presentation, and that he is beginning the preparation necessary to obtain the easements. Councilman Nehls projects the overall improvements that need to be done will cost approximately a half-million dollars, and the Borough will need to bond for this. He said the Committee will be meeting next Wednesday with representatives from Levin Management and consulting Engineer Lee Purcell to discuss another sanitary sewer project. Mayor Mobus said he attended a meeting at the County where the CEDS program was discussed and suggested that possibly the Borough can receive some funding from the County for a future sewer project.

4. Buildings and Grounds; Recreation - Councilwoman Cassidy announced the fence is up at Blackadar Field, as required by the JIF, and that the Department has begun the spring cleanup, getting the fields and grounds ready for Little League. She said she intends to discuss capital expenditures at the next Finance meeting.

5. Public Affairs - Councilman Franklin said he attended the Open Space Committee meeting and they discussed the Ness property and were asking for the status of the environmental investigation being performed by Maser. It was announced that it is the consensus of the group to try to preserve the barn if possible. Mayor Mobus said he is discussing the environmental concerns in his newsletter article that will be out soon, and informed Councilman Franklin that there may be asbestos and lead in some of the buildings that remain on the property, although all are boarded up. He said before anyone goes onto the the property Construction Official Ed Bennett would need to do an inspection. Mayor Mobus continued to say that there is a Ness Property Advisory Committee, who although have been

dormant the last year or so while COAH issues were on the table, will be revived soon. Councilman Franklin said the Committee intends to work on a update to the open space inventory report..

6. Fire - Councilman Black said he attended the Department meeting, and said there is approximately \$35,000. of unexpended monies from last year's bond ordinance that could be used for turnout gear and possibly used for a portion of the \$55,000. cost of the "on scene explorer" computer software for their vehicles. He announced that Warren has asked Watchung for extrication assistance when needed along Route 78, and Chief Carlucci has agreed. Councilman Black said he attended the Green Brook Flood Control Commission meeting and the upper basin was discussed. He said the Army Corps of Engineers will be discussing new plans, as they said the old plans are no longer valid. Councilman Black said he will be at the Board of Health meeting on March 28th, where discussion will continue on the proposed exclusions to the sewer ordinance. Councilwoman Joren asked if the sewer ordinance fell under the Board of Health's jurisdiction or is it a Borough ordinance and Councilman Black said he will request a clarification from Attorney Cruz. Mr. Cruz said any waivers provided to property owners would require an inspection by the Board of Health.

7. Laws/Ordinances - Councilman Pote announced "McMansions" will be the focus of discussion at tomorrow morning's Laws and Ordinance meeting. He said he is in receipt of Debra Down's letter of resignation from the Library Study Committee, and hopes that it is only a temporary absence from this committee. He said this group has been working tirelessly for four years and could use some reinforcements. He said they intend to use all available resources to inform the public of the proposed plans for the Library, so they can be knowledgeable when it comes time to vote. Councilman Pote said he had hoped to have a "model" to display, however, the engineering firm no longer does that explaining they now they do computer renderings only.

REPORTS - OTHER:

8. Engineer - No report presented.

9. Police Chief - No report presented.

10. Fire Department - No report presented.

11. Rescue Squad - Vice President Don Monetti reported a quiet month with only about 15 calls, and no mutual aid requests. He said the Squad has been successful in recruiting new members, and a few members will be attending one of the several joint training sessions to be held with Warren Township. Mr. Monetti said the Squad is excited to welcome Jessica Wexler as a new member. Mr. Monetti said Captain Adam Wexler has become a member of the Somerset County EMS Chief Officers Association, and last month Lysandra Plotkin, Rob Winston and Adam Wexler responded to an 8 patient car accident in front of Blue Star. He said Adam, Rob, and Lysandra were also the top responders for the month.

12. Attorney - Mr. Cruz had nothing to report.

13. Clerk - Mrs. DeRocco had nothing to report.

14. Administrator - Mr. Atkins was not present this evening.

Mayor Mobus said he attended the Mayor's Round Table and the topic of discussion was COAH, and commented that something needs to change in Trenton. Mr. Cruz said that last year Governor Christie abolished COAH, and the Fair Share Housing Authority challenged this and the Courts overturned Christie's executive order, adding further uncertainty on the future administration of affordable housing. Mayor Mobus also reported that Somerset County ranks 19th out of the 21 counties in the State when it comes to recycling. He also announced he attended a CEDS meeting at the County with former Mayor Al Ellis and expressed optimism with the proposed projections. Mayor Mobus said he was in receipt of a letter from Watchung Senior Grace Bell, thanking Bob Burns for his assistance in moving the Seniors from their room in the Library, to the Exempt Hall. He informed that the Exempts have agreed to house the Senior's group, which is much more accessible to them. He said the Seniors are always looking for new members, and reported that at their next meeting, "scams" will be the topic of discussion and Chief Wenzel and Warren's Chief Leffert will be the guest speakers.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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NEW BUSINESS

CONSENT AGENDA: The Consent Agenda items listed below were unanimously accepted, following a motion by Councilwoman Joren, a second by Councilman Black and upon roll call as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye".

Approval of the following Council minutes:
February 23, 2012

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:
Tax Collector's Report - January, 2012

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

- #8 - Debra Downs 2/22/12 Notice of resignation from the Library Study Committee, due to family commitments c: M & C
- #9 - Bruce Ruck 3/4/12 Email expressing concerns in regard to possible changes to the Borough's land use regulations pertaining to limiting or altering the size of homes c: M & C, TEA,

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CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS: The Consent Agenda items listed below were unanimously accepted, following a motion by Councilwoman Joren, a second by Councilman Black and upon roll call as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye".

- R1:03/08/12 Appointment to Open Space Advisory Committee - Sue Tucker
- R2: Authorizing a Shared Services Agreement Allowing Watchung to Connect into North Plainfield's Storm Drainage System
- R3: Authorize Tax Redemption - Certificate #12-2010
- R4: Authorize Tax Redemption - Certificate #2-2011
- R5: Authorize Tax Redemption - Certificate #3-2011
- R6: Authorize Tax Redemption - Certificate #4-2011
- R7: Authorize 3rd Qtr. Tax Overpayment Refund - 28 Cedar Road

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NON-CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS AND RESOLUTIONS: Items listed below will be individually addressed and acted upon accordingly. Council reserves the right to refer an item to Committee for further review and discussion.

Councilman Black read the following proclamation, on behalf of Mayor Mobus:

Proclamation - Poison Prevention Week / March 18 through March 24, 2012 (copy attached)

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PUBLIC PORTION

No one from the public desired to be heard.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:38 P.M. to the call of the Chair, and the next scheduled meeting to be held on March 22, 2012 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle DeRocco, RMC
Clerk