

BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

MINUTES

JULY 19, 2012 - 7:30 P.M.

MAYOR'S STATEMENT: Acting Mayor Debra Joren called the meeting to order at 7:30 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 [A] Franklin [P] Pote [P] Nehls [P] Cassidy [P]

Also present were Administrator Tom Atkins, Attorney Albert Cruz, CFO William Hance, Engineer Tom Herits, and Deputy Clerk MaryAnn Hance

There were 7 members of the public present.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. Administration & Finance - Councilman Franklin reported our Revenue reports for April and May show "red" but stated we are in good shape (these are low income months). He also reported that we did well on our Audit Report. There were only a few minor internal items to address.

There is a Bond Ordinance on the agenda tonight for a new dump truck. The one we have has come to the end of its usefulness and we will need the new one before the winter as it is necessary for snow plowing.

2. Police – Council President Joren said there was an incident with a bear sighting in Watchung on July 2nd. We were alerted by the No. Plainfield Police Department that the bear was heading toward Johnston Drive. Before our arrival the bear was sighted in the woods by the entrance of Crystal Ridge. The State's Fish and Game was contacted and the Police were informed their response time was about an hour. The bear was up a tree when they arrived- they did not tranquilize it because of the concern of it falling and hurting itself. The bear escaped and they lost sight of it after about an hour. A reverse 911 was sent out alerting people that a bear was in the area. The bear was eventually spotted in Dunellen and was finally tranquilized and safely relocated. It was stated that it was the same bear because it had a tag in each ear. Council President Joren also reported that there is a resolution on the Agenda tonight regarding the County Police Consolidation Study. This will be discussed later in the meeting. She announced Chief Wenzel is on vacation and in his absence Lieutenant Cina is filling in and doing a great job.
3. Public Works – Councilman Nehls reported John Malchow and Zach Wied have been doing a superb job of weeding and trimming all the Borough properties; the ladies room on the second floor of Borough Hall has been painted; interviews were conducted to fill a vacancy, one is on the agenda tonight and another is being considered. He said Mr. Jackson had reported that the community service participants have been cleaning the third floor of the library and performing roadside trash removal tasks. Some of the anticipated work for July includes, roadside vegetation control; pothole repairs and catch basin repairs.
4. Buildings and Grounds; Recreation – Councilwoman Cassidy reported tennis courts issues will be discussed later in the meeting. She has also requested a special meeting of the Recreation Commission to discuss fees for field use and all other fees.

5. Public Affairs:

Open Space: Councilman Franklin said there are no meetings held in the summer. They plan to take a good look at the Open Space inventory. Some properties have discrepancies on acreage and others have been developed. Borough Engineer Tom Herits will verify.

Environmental: Councilman Franklin reported the shredding event was well attended, Bulk Waste pickup the beginning of June. The County is going to try to schedule the event earlier next year.

Board of Health – No Report

6. Fire – No report was presented.

7. Laws/Ordinances – Councilman Pote reported that there was no meeting for the Laws and Ordinance Committee this month, however, one will be scheduled in August. He said there will be a discussion on the non-binding referendum tonight for the November election.

REPORTS - OTHER:

8. Engineer: Mr. Herits reported that at Tuesday’s Planning Board meeting, approval of solar panels at Bayberry School was granted. He said he has been working with NJ American Water to resolve an ongoing water pressure issue, which has been now rectified. PARSA gave the Borough a cell modem to monitor the Berkeley Heights flow, and it is working well. Councilwoman Cassidy asked if the Borough was responsible for the cost, and Mr. Herits explained it is the Borough’s responsibility.
9. Police Chief – No report was presented.
10. Fire Department: No report was presented.
11. Rescue Squad – Lysandra Plotkin reported on Saturday, July 7th, the Squad responded to North Plainfield for fireworks standby at East End School and 8 members were in attendance (no reported incidents), and on July 16th provided standby for Berkeley Heights’ Mt. Carmel Festival (no transports from this event either). She said on Tuesday night around 1:00 AM, Mike Vala and Allison Diecke responded to mutual aid into Warren for a car accident, and extrication was already in progress by both Watchung and Warren extrication teams. All patients were out of vehicle before they arrived and the passenger in the vehicle was transported to UMDNJ ALS by Warren, and Watchung transported the driver to Morristown Memorial hospital BLS. She said the Squad is seeking funding for members to attend EMS conventions in the county as well as Atlantic City, where members will be able to earn continuing credits by attending various workshops. She said in August the Executive Board will begin discussing the tree of lights event and dedication. On June 25th the squad hosted the first aid council second district meeting and Ms. Plotkin reported eighteen members of the squad attended the meeting and responded to 2 calls during that time. Call Statistics for the month: 33 total calls, Mutual Aid given: 3 to Plainfield; 3 to Warren; Mutual Aid needed- 3. Hospitals transported to: JFK – 5; Overlook – 12; Somerset – 2. Top responders – Alison Diecke – 14; Adam Wexler – 11; Denise Wilson – 18.
12. Attorney – Mr. Cruz had nothing to report.
13. Clerk – No report was presented.
14. Administrator - Mr. Atkins discussed the water pressure problem on Crestwood Drive (one house in particular) and said Engineer Herits and Fire Chief Tom Carlucci worked consistently with the water company and hopefully the problem has been rectified. If needed, in an emergency situation, fire pumpers and tankers from other towns would be called in to assist the Borough. Tax bills will be going out tomorrow and he explained that residents will have 25 days from tomorrow to pay the tax bill without interest (August 15, 2012). If paid after that date, (August 16 or later) interest will be charged.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A Public Hearing of Proposed Bond Ordinance OR:12/09 entitled "**BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE 2012 ROAD AND DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM IN, BY AND FOR THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$430,000 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO MAKE A DOWN PAYMENT, TO APPROPRIATE A STATE GRANT, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS.**" was held. Councilman Pote requested the Clerk produce an Affidavit of Publication and read the Ordinance by title. Councilman Pote moved a public hearing be held. Councilman Nehls seconded the motion and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, “aye”.

The meeting was open to the public for any questions or comments.

With no one from the public desiring to be heard, Councilman Pote made a motion to close the Public Hearing on Bond Ordinance OR:12/09 and moved the following resolution:

R1:07/19/12 Adoption of Bond Ordinance OR:12/09 - 2012 Drainage and Road Improvements

Councilman Nehls seconded the motion and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Franklin, Pote, Nehls and Cassidy, “aye”.

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NEW BUSINESS

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

Approval of the following Council minutes:
June 28, 2012

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:
Recreation Minutes - April 24th, May 23, 2012

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

- #36 - Brian Veglatte 6/29/12 Letter of resignation from his position in the Department of Public Works, effective July 13, 2012 c: M & C, TEA, BB, JR
- #37 - PSE&G 7/3/12 Notice of petitions for approval of changes in its RGGI charges, and changes in the tariff for electric and gas service c: M & C, Post

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

- R2:07/19/12 Authorize Clerk to Advertise for Bids - Janitorial Services, 2012 Road Improvement Projects
- R3: Authorizing Agreement with Recreation Director - 2011 Health Insurance Payments
- R4: Acceptance of 2011 Annual Audit Report
- R5: Approval of Corrective Action Plan
- R6: Purchases Over \$2,000. - PowerDMS, Meyer & Depew Company,
L-3 Communications Mobile-Vision Inc. (2 PO's), Bobcat
of
Central Jersey
- R7: Waive Chapter 2-25.10 - Gray's Florist & Greenhouse
- R8: Authorize Extension of Due Date for 3rd Qtr. Taxes - August 15, 2012
- R9: Supporting the NJ DOT's request to Implement 35 mph Speed Limit - Connector
Road between Park Avenue and Bonnie Burn Road
- R10: Supporting Sustainable Jersey Grant, funded by PSEG
- R11: Authorize Return of Escrow - As Listed
- R12: Authorize Clerk to Issue Raffle Licenses - Franciscan Charities, Inc.
Rawhide Rescue, Inc. (2)
- R13: Authorize Flexible Spending Plan - Supplemental Insurance Plans
- R14: Appointment to Public Works Department - Arthur Wright
- R15: Authorize Appointment of Alternate Plumbing-Code Inspector - John Bonczo
- R16: Authorize Execution of Release and Settlement Agreement - Melchionda

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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.

Report on Tennis Court Improvements - Recreation Commission / Dave Mobus

Recreation Commission member Dave Mobus reported the Commission would have to find ways to raise funds for the needed improvements. He said he has visited the courts with Borough Engineer Tom Herits and have assessed the courts to evaluate what has to be done to reconstruct or repair them. He said the courts are below grade, which causes erosion and flooding. He said he has been in contact with Weldon and another company recommended by Weldon (DeMelia). Mr. Mobus said that in

order to bring the courts up to USTA standards, the approximate cost would be \$120,000. He also stated the Commission would try to use as much of the current fencing as possible to save money.

Councilwoman Cassidy suggested that Dave get formal quotes and present all the information to the Recreation Commission and Buildings and Grounds for further discussion and recommendations.

Councilman Nehls told Dave he has done a great job getting all the information together and not to get discouraged.

Councilman Franklin asked if the courts would be separated by netting and Dave said that had not been considered at this time.

Discussion of Proposed Non-binding Referendum Question - Library Reconstruction Project (Scheduled for formal vote on August 16, 2012)

Councilman Pote suggested the wording on the Question be revised to state "renovation of the Borough Library, inclusive of a Community Center" and also to include that all will be compliant with ADA Act. He also said the Interpretive Statement should include the same wording, and the "Library Study Commission" should be changed to "Library Study Committee" and say that they would develop a plan to seek other sources for the financing of these improvements.

Councilman Pote reported the Borough does have a building fund in place today. Councilman Nehls stated there are other building projects to consider regarding the building fund.

Councilman Pote said the proposed improvements would include sizable meeting rooms upstairs and a small coffee house on the lower level, and also areas for a children's section; young adult section; and an adult section.

Council President Joren felt that a community center is not a Library and she also did not think a "coffee house" was necessarily a good idea. Councilman Pote said it would be a place for people to congregate.

The Council requested that Mr. Cruz reword the proposed referendum question as discussed and re-distribute the revised question for review prior to the August 16th meeting. It must be adopted at the August meeting in order for it to appear on the General Election ballot in November. All members of the Council present were in accord with the modified wording as discussed.

Regionalized Policing - Somerset County Study

Councilman Franklin announced the Borough is not supporting the Regionalization Study. He explained the Governing Body believes we have superior service from our Police Department with excellent response time to any and all emergencies; they follow our school buses to make sure all traffic is following the law when these buses are stopped; and considering the Borough would lose local control, all for a savings of approximately \$100 per household savings that would not be realized until after 10 years of its implementation.

Councilman Nehls stated that at the special public forum held on June 18th, the majority of our residents were opposed to this regionalization.

Attorney Albert Cruz noted that by approving this Resolution we are saying "no" to regionalizing the police department. He also requested the last paragraph of the resolution to be changed to include all Somerset County Municipalities.

Councilman Franklin moved the following resolution:

R17:07/19/12 Resolution confirming the Borough's position, not to participate in the Regionalization of the Police Departments in Somerset County

The motion was seconded by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Franklin, Pote, Nehls and Cassidy, "aye".

Proposed Bond Ordinance OR:12/10 entitled **"BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$175,000.00 FOR ACQUISITION OF A DUMP TRUCK WITH ATTACHMENTS FOR AND BY THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$166,250.00 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH FOR FINANCING PART OF THE APPROPRIATION."** was introduced.

Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be given its first reading. So ordered.

Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be adopted on first reading and directed the Clerk to publish the ordinance and notice of Public Hearing.

R18: Introduction of Proposed Ordinance OR:12/10 -8 Yard Dump Truck

Councilman Nehls seconded the motion and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye". Public hearing to be held on August 16, 2012

Councilman Franklin moved the following resolution:

R19: Authorize Execution of Employment Agreement - Dispatchers/FMBA Local 432

Councilwoman Cassidy seconded the motion and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Franklin, Pote, Nehls and Cassidy, "aye".

Councilman Franklin moved the following resolution

R20: Payment of Bills

Councilwoman Cassidy seconded the motion and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Franklin, Pote, Nehls and Cassidy, "aye".

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PUBLIC PORTION

Lynda Goldschein, Sherwood Drive, said in regard to the Library Referendum Question, she does not care for the wording regarding the \$4.2 million. She said the way it is presented, she would have to vote "no" because it seems all the monies would come from the residents, however, she is definitely in favor of the library renovation. She said she was informed that the Council is only looking for the voter's opinion of this, as this is a non-binding question. Councilman Pote advised residents will be challenged to raise funds toward the renovation. Mrs. Goldschein asked why the lights on Best Lake are not lit and Councilman Nehls told her he would look into this. Mrs. Goldschein questioned the status of the "house size" ordinance and Councilman Pote explained the Committee is working on it. Mrs. Goldschein said she thinks the Borough should use the reverse 911 to inform residents when there are road closings and Council President Joren explained that this would be an administrative/police decision. Mrs. Goldschein asked if the Borough can send a letter to the county/state about the overpass on Somerset Street as it is need of major repair. Ms. Goldschein also questioned the status of the deer hunt for the upcoming season. Councilman Franklin told her money has been budgeted in this year's budget, and explained that Deer Management company no longer exists, and the Borough's only option is to use a sportsmen's club or volunteers. Council President Joren said the Wildlife Management Committee will be making recommendations. In regard to Open Space, Mrs. Goldschein said she knows of approximately 6 1/2 acres for sale.

Seasonal Employee John Malchow addressed the Council and informed them that he will be leaving his position as of August 3rd. He has accepted a position with Titus Surveying. He thanked all for the opportunity to work for the Borough and for their compliments for both Zack and himself. Mr. Malchow said that the Traffic & Beautification volunteers deserve much praise. They do a wonderful job of maintaining our flowerbeds, and noted that on Wednesday, one of our hottest days this week, Roseanne Barr was out there weeding.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned to the Call of the Chair and to the next scheduled meeting to be held on Thursday, August 16, 2012 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

MaryAnn Hance
Deputy Clerk