

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG**

**RE-ORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES**

**JANUARY 1, 2013**

**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, Freeholders Pat Walsh and Bob Zaborowski, County Clerk Brett Radi, Sheriff Frank Provenzano, Rocky Hill Mayor Ed Zimmerman, County Republican Chair Al Gabora, former Mayor Albert Ellis and North Plainfield Mayor Michael Giordano.

**OATH OF ALLEGIANCE AND OFFICE**

Thomas Franklin - Councilmember

Senator Thomas Kean administered the Oath of Office to Thomas Franklin as his wife, Lynn, held the Bible.

Debra S. Joren - Councilmember

Senator Thomas Kean administered the Oath of Office to Debra Joren as her father Jack Penn held the Bible and daughter Sara Beth daughter stood by her side.

**ROLL CALL**

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

**OATH OF ALLEGIANCE AND OFFICE**

Fire Chief - Thomas Carlucci, Sr.

Mayor Mobus administered the Oath of Office to Fire Chief - Thomas Carlucci, Sr. as his parents stood by his side.

Assistant Fire Chief - Peter Martino (not present)

Rescue Squad Captain - Adam Wexler

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

Rescue Squad First Lieutenant - Rich Young (not present)

**NOMINATION FOR COUNCIL PRESIDENT**

Councilman Franklin nominated Councilman Pote for the position of Council President, with a second by Councilman Nehls. No other nominations were made. Nominations were closed and the motion carried unanimously on roll call.

### **NOMINATION FOR LIAISON TO PLANNING BOARD**

Councilman Pote nominated Councilman Nehls for the position of Liaison to the Planning Board, with a second by Councilman Franklin. No other nominations were made. Nominations were closed and the motion carried unanimously on roll call.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

The following resolutions were 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	Joren	Nehls	
R2: Designation of Official Newspapers	Pote	Nehls	
R3: Designation of Depositories	Cassidy	Franklin	
R4: Appointment of Officials - 1-year term / Attorneys	Franklin	Black	Joren
R5: Appointment of Officials - 1-year term / Professional Services, Fire Officials		Nehls	Black
R6: Appointment of Judge - 3-year term	Pote	Nehls	
R7: Appointments - Boards, Committees, Commissions		Pote	Black
R8: Re-establish Petty Cash Funds		Black	Franklin
R9: Temporary Budget	Franklin	Black	
R10: Payment of Property Taxes and Establishing Payment Procedures	Joren	Black	
R11: Authorize Borough Attorney to file Tax Appeals and Petitions on behalf of the Borough for 2013	Black	Franklin	Joren
R12: Appointment of JIF Commissioner and Alternate	Nehls	Black	
R13: Authorizing the execution of agreement for the Services of James F. Hurley Insurance Agency Corp. as Professional Risk Management Consultants	Cassidy	Black	

### **APPOINTMENT OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

Mayor Mobus announced the following Councilmanic Committee appointments:

Administration & Finance  
 Franklin, Chair  
 Black, Cassidy

Public Works  
 Nehls, Chair  
 Franklin, Joren

Laws & Ordinance  
 Joren, Chair  
 Pote, Cassidy

Public Affairs  
Cassidy, Chair  
Black, Pote

Police  
Pote, Chair  
Joren, Nehls

Fire  
Black, Chair  
Franklin, Nehls

Special Liaison to Rescue Squad - Black

## **RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEE SERVICE**

Mayor Mobus acknowledged the following list of employees, and thanked them for their service to the Borough and residents:

35 Years: Walter Niegisch, Rescue Squad

25 Years: Gene Mc Allister, Police Sergeant  
Robert Faust, Police Sergeant  
Kenneth Sausville, Fire Department

20 Years: Dan Lorimor, Police Sergeant

15 Years: Bill Kelly, Police Lieutenant  
Art Holzheimer, Police Officer

10 Years: David Melchionda, Police Officer  
Michael Bouchard, Police Officer  
Helder Peixoto, Police Dispatcher  
Joseph Nicastro, Plumbing Sub-Code Official  
Adam Wexler, Rescue Squad

5 Years: Francis Linnus, Planning Board Attorney  
Melanie Savulich, Rescue Squad

## **MAYOR'S ADDRESS**

Mayor Mobus said in July of 2011, the Borough of Watchung and the Borough of North Plainfield agreed to share the position of Court Administrator. This resulted in a savings of \$41,000. He and North Plainfield Mayor Michael Giordano continued to seek ways to share services, and he was proud to announce that on December 27, 2012, he signed a contract with the Township of Green Brook and the Borough of North Plainfield to share additional personnel within the Court. He thanked Mayor Giordano and his Administrator Dave Hollod, Green Brook Mayor Jerry Searfoss and his Administrator Kelly Cupit, and of course, our Administrator Tom Atkins for putting this shared service agreement together. He vowed to continue to look for additional ways to share services to save money for the Borough.

For approximately two (2) years the County and the municipalities in Somerset County reviewed options to consolidate police services, with most of the towns involved choosing not to participate. Mayor Mobus said this proposal was not the best for our Borough.

In November of 2012, a referendum question was brought to the residents, seeking their input on the future of Watchung Library. Sixty-five (65%) of the voters came out, and voted against the construction of a new building. He thanked Steve Pote and the Library Study team who literally spent years researching, seeking options, interviewing architects, and for putting together a comprehensive proposal. He said the Borough is very aware of the importance of a Library, and will follow through with "Plan B."

Mayor Mobus said the Borough's emergency service teams continue to amaze him. Not only during their daily operations, but through catastrophic events - they are always there for us: the

Fire Department, the Police Department, the Rescue Squad, and the Office of Emergency Management.

On December 28, 2012, the Borough lost four (4) of its finest to retirement: Lt. Bruce Egnasko, Sgt. Gene McAllister, Sgt. Bob Faust, and Officer Ron Lacaillade, taking a total of over 100 years of experience with them. We wish them the best of luck and good health in their retirement. One of these positions has already been filled, and three more are pending, as well as promotions.

There is a renewed interest in tennis in Watchung, and the Recreation Commission will soon be making a recommendation, and Mayor Mobus said he is very optimistic that weather permitting, tennis courts will be back for this summer.

Watchung has a very active Senior group, and is up and running at its new home, the Firemen's Exempt Hall. This location is most accommodating, as it allows for ramp access if needed. He thanked the Firemen for sharing this facility, and said the Seniors are most appreciative. Mayor Mobus said this is a great group of people and he enjoys dropping in to visit with them, especially when they have their pizza parties.

In regard to Superstorm Sandy, Mayor Mobus thanked the Public Works Department for having the streets opened quickly during the storm; the Fire Department for answering over 100 calls during the storm and manning the Department round the clock for 7 days; the Police Department who while responding to the normal calls for assistance had to deal with the closing of two major roads: Hillcrest Road and Valley Road; the Rescue Squad who made hundreds of "well visits" to senior residents or residents who were dealing with health issues; Gary Greves - the Borough's OEM Coordinator who was available 24/7, was all over town, and took care of all the submittals to the County Emergency offices and FEMA; Borough Clerk Michelle DeRocco who was here every day helping wherever needed; and the office staff led by Administrator Tom Atkins, and Clerk Michelle DeRocco, along with Deputy Clerk MaryAnn Hance, Linda Monetti, CFO Bill Hance, and Assistant Treasurer Jessica Rutishauser who handled over a thousand calls in the office. During this disaster, Mayor Mobus deputized Skip Bell to assist Gary Greves and act as liaison to the utilities - PSE&G and JCP&L - his assistance was invaluable. The AAR (After Action Review) was facilitated by Steve Pote, and thanked him for putting together a comprehensive synopsis and a "to do" list for the future. Mayor Mobus also thanked Council President Debra Joren and Administrator Tom Atkins for participating in the AAR, and said a lot was accomplished but there is a lot of work that still needs to be done.

Mayor Mobus said for the second year in a row, Halloween was postponed leaving many children disappointed. Four days after Sandy hit, Mayor Mobus said with the help of Linda Monetti, Jessica Rutishauser, Michelle DeRocco; Chief Wenzel and the PBA; Rescue Squad members Adam Wexler and Denise Wilson; he was able to put together a "trunk or treat" in the Police Department's parking lot. He said approximately 70 families participated and this event was a great success.

Mayor Mobus thanked the entire Council for a wonderful year and said he is looking forward to the same in 2013, and wished all a happy New Year.

## **PRESENTATION - EMERGENCY SERVICES / Superstorm Sandy**

Mayor Mobus presented plaques to Chief Carlucci for the Fire Department; Captain Wexler, for the Rescue Squad; Chief Wenzel for the Police Department; Bob Burns for the Public Works Department; and Gary Greves for the Office of Emergency Management Department, and expressed the gratitude of the Governing Body for their efforts before, during, and after Superstorm Sandy.

Mayor Mobus called forward and presented Special Deputy Skip Bell a proclamation, commending his service to the Borough during Superstorm Sandy. (Proclamation attached)

Chief Wenzel said with everyone being thanked for their service to the Borough, there was one person who's services were not recognized and that was Mayor Mobus, who had to make some tough decisions during this disaster. He said he was available 24/7 and attended every meeting, offering support to all emergency services.

## **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Council President Pote wished all a happy New Year, and said it is an honor to serve the residents of the Borough. He said the new year brings a busy and aggressive agenda. He said he is looking forward to working with Chief Wenzel, and is very proud of all the Borough's employees and volunteers. He said he looks forward to a productive year.

Councilman Black wished all a happy New Year and thanked the residents for their support. He commended all of the Borough's emergency service teams, saying they all "rose to the occasion" during Sandy, noting that the Fire Department was manned 24/7 throughout the storm and the aftermath. He said we have a team of great people. He thanked all on behalf of his family, and said it is an honor to serve as Councilman.

Councilman Franklin wished all a happy New Year from the Franklin family and thanked everyone for their confidence and for his re-election to serve the Borough. He thanked the Borough's employees, volunteers, and his colleagues for the good camaraderie.

Councilwoman Joren said today was all about thank you's and thanked her family, her father, and her daughter, Sara Beth, for being her sounding board. She said 2012 was a tough year, with the 2% budget constraints, and 2013 will be even tougher. Councilwoman Joren said the Borough's departments, employees, and volunteers worked together to help our residents, and each other during Sandy, and thanked all for their assistance.

Councilman Nehls said he was very proud to work with this Council, and thanked Steve Pote for stepping up. He said he has been very lucky to Chair the Department of Public Works. He thanked the men in the Department for going out on Christmas eve to salt the roads to ensure safe driving throughout the Borough. He wished all a happy New Year.

Councilwoman Cassidy said Watchung is a very special place to live, and she is very proud to be a member of this Council. Moving forward, she said there is a lot to do. She thanked Councilwoman Joren for serving as Council President for the past two years, and she was outstanding. She wished everyone good health and happiness in the New Year.

#### **PUBLIC PORTION**

Diddy Addario, Rock Avenue, thanked the Mayor and Council for their support throughout the year, on behalf of the Historical Committee.

Mary Mobus, Washington Drive, wished all a Happy New Year and invited all to join her and Mayor Mobus to their home afterwards for refreshments that will include some much needed homemade chicken soup.

#### **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 10, 2013 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle DeRocco, RMC  
Clerk