

# BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

## MINUTES

JANUARY 10, 2013 - 7:30 P.M.

**MAYOR'S STATEMENT:** Mayor Mobus called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. 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**

Pote [ P ] Black [ P ] Franklin [ A ] Joren [ P ] Nehls [ P ] Cassidy [ P ]  
Also present were Administrator Tom Atkins, Attorney Albert Cruz, Clerk Michelle DeRocco, and Deputy Clerk MaryAnn Hance.

There were 4 members of the public present.

#### **REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:**

1. Administration & Finance - In Councilman Franklin's absence, Administrator Tom Atkins reported negotiations are underway with Police for the new contract. He will also be meeting with Tom Franklin and CFO Bill Hance for preliminary budget reviews, all budgets were submitted by December 28<sup>th</sup>. He and Councilman Franklin will be reviewing letters received from citizens regarding delinquent tax payments, most centered around the US Mail delivery after Super storm Sandy. Councilman Tom Franklin asked that these letters be reviewed and put into various categories.

2. Police - Council President Pote noted the tragic drowning of a 26 year old in the Watchung Lake. He complimented the police department and the County Prosecutors on their professionalism throughout the process from beginning to the actual recovery.

3. Public Works / Buildings and Grounds - Councilman Nehls reported that the Public Works Department has been working on storm debris cleanup and approximately 60-64 streets have been completed as they continuing to work with the three contractors the Borough has on call to assist with the cleanup.

Mayor Mobus said he will be speaking with another contractor tomorrow. The Public Works Department will now be concentrating on removing the larger trees that are being cut up and left at the curb. Mayor Mobus commented on how diligently the Public Works Department is working to complete this massive cleanup and Councilman Nehls stated the crews are also working on weekends. Councilman Nehls said there will be a meeting next Thursday to discuss the Public Works Department budget for 2013.

#### 4. Public Affairs:

Recreation - Council President Pote reported that the Recreation Commission meeting has been rescheduled for next Thursday.

Historical - Council President Pote reported the Historical Committee met Wednesday evening and everything is moving along nicely. Two new members have been appointed to the Committee. There is much work to be done categorizing the materials that they have and there are some short term goals including a "pilot" wall and an Eagle Scout Project which has not been approved. Councilman Pote's challenge to the committee is to open the Texier House to the public by the end of this year. Mayor Mobus asked if one of the new members is the Curator and Councilman Pote responded Mr. and Mrs. Stomber have the expertise the committee was looking for to insure that the Committee is doing everything correctly the first time to preserve the information for future generations. There is a tremendous amount of material to be classified.

Open Space - Councilwoman Cassidy reported there has been no meeting but they are hoping to have one next week.

Environmental - Councilwoman Cassidy reported a meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 22nd.

Board of Health - Councilman Black had no report, but announced the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 16th. He also said there are two new members on the Board.

- 5. Fire - Councilman Black had nothing to report.
- 6. Laws/Ordinances - Councilwoman Joren had nothing to report.

**REPORTS - OTHER:**

- 7. Engineer - No report was presented.
- 8. Police Chief - No report was presented.
- 9. Fire Department - No report was presented.

10. Rescue Squad - Denise Wilson, Rescue Squad Vice President reported the squad organized a First Aid night for the 12 year old Girl Scout Troop, there were various stations set up to teach basic first aid skills and they are looking forward to returning during the year for additional training skills. The lights on the circle have been turned off and will be removed within the next week. Eddie Chang and Emily Wexler both took the new comprehensive EMT test and passed and are now officially New Jersey State Certified. The Annual Installation Dinner Dance details have not been completed yet. There were two CPR calls in December with one starting with chest pain and escalating to CPR. While enroute to the hospital the person regained a pulse and hours later walked out of the hospital. There were a total of 35 calls in December and top responders were Adam Wexler, Liana Sa, Gemmy Siegel and Roberto Mertinex. 2012 Statistics included 434 calls and the top responders were Adam Wexler, Logan Taylor and Charles Pivnichny.

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

12. Clerk - Mrs. DeRocco announced that a pre-construction meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup> at 2:00 PM at the request of NJ American Water Co. to discuss Phase II of the Mountain Boulevard water main replacement. She reminded all that the County's "BOBO" program is on-going and drop-off bins are available at Borough hall. She said people are homeless all year round, and not just the holiday time. She reminded all Council people who have not yet returned their budget books to please do so.

13. Administrator - Mr. Atkins reported he attended the reorganization meeting for the Joint Insurance Fund. The main issue discussed was the need to take action on property damage claims from the storm. He also noted that Christmas tree pick up will be done during the month of January.

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

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**NEW BUSINESS**

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

Approval of the following Council minutes:  
December 13, 2012  
December 27, 2012

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:  
Tax Collector's Report - November, 2012  
Building Department Report - December, 2012

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

- #1 - Borough of North Plainfield 12/13/12 Notice of Public Hearing on proposed Sustainability Element of Master Plan on January 9, 2013, and continued discussion of goals and objectives on January 23, 2013 c: M & C, TEA, DS, TH
- #2 - Township of Warren 12/20/12 Notice of Adoption of Ordinance No. 12-22, amending Zoning Code by adding a new section entitled "Keeping of Fowl" c: M & C, TEA, TH, DS

**CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS:** The Consent Agenda resolutions listed below, with the exception of R4, were unanimously adopted following a motion by Councilman Pote, and a second by Council Black. Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Pote, Black, Joren, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye."

R1:01/10/13 Purchases Over \$2,000. - Continental Fire & Safety, Inc.

R2: Authorized Execution of Contract for Board of Health Services - MiddleBrook

R3: Authorize Professional Service Contracts - Borough Engineer, Planning Bd. Engineer, Auditor, Labor Attorney, Bond Counsel, Bd. Of Adjustment Engineer/Professional Planner

R4: Authorize Professional Service Contracts - Borough Attorney, Municipal Prosecutor

R5: Authorize Tax Sale Redemption - Certificate #12-010

R6: Authorize Tax Sale Redemption - Certificate #12-004

Councilman Pote asked if anyone wished to discuss R4. There being no discussion, Councilman Pote then moved the resolution R4, with a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call as follows: Pote, Franklin, Nehls, Cassidy "aye". Joren "abstain".

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**NON-CONSENT AGENDA:** 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.

None

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**NON-CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS**

None

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**PUBLIC PORTION**

Pete Martino- Sunbright Drive questioned how the Borough decided which contractors to hire to assist in the cleanup effort and if the bid process was followed. Administrator Tom Atkins explained this was an emergency situation, these contractors submitted proposals which were analyzed and will be paid on an hourly or per diem basis. One of the contractors, Predator, is in the County Co-Op and is being paid per diem. The contractors are hired are this storm clean up only. Mr. Martino then questioned why the Borough allowed until December 10<sup>th</sup> to get all debris out to the curb, and he felt by doing this it allowed residents to take advantage of the tree permit waiver and put out more than storm debris. Councilman Black mentioned that residents have told him their entire property frontage was "maxed" out and once this was removed they had additional debris from the storm to still be removed. Administrator Tom Atkins mentioned he has heard from residents and almost all comments in regard to the clean up effort have been positive.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 P.M. to the Call of the Chair, and to the next scheduled Council meeting to be held January 24, 2013 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

*MaryAnn Hance*  
Deputy Clerk