

BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

COUNCIL MINUTES

MAY 7, 2015

MAYOR'S STATEMENT: Mayor Pote called the meeting to order 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

Nehls [P] Black [A] Franklin [P] Joren [P] Gibbs [P] Beck-Clemens [P]

Also present were Administrator Tom Atkins, Attorney Albert Cruz, Clerk Michelle DeRocco, and Deputy Clerk Mary Ann Hance.

There were 5 members of the public present.

PROCLAMATION:

Councilman Franklin read the following Proclamation (copy attached):

EMT Week / May 17th through May 23, 2015

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

1. Administration & Finance – Councilman Franklin reported the Committee met this morning and discussed budget items which were questioned by Council President Nehls. He said there will be another meeting next week. Councilwoman Beck-Clemens said the Committee also discussed the possibility of having credit cards accepted by the Tax Office, authorized RFP's for companies who could provide Grant Application services. Councilwoman Beck-Clemens added that in addition to on-going budget discussions, the amendment to the Personnel Manual regarding unused sick days, is on tonight's agenda, and also discussed were future banking practices and options to eliminate unnecessary fees, and the Transparent Tax Act. .
2. Police - Council President Nehls had no report.
3. Public Works / Buildings and Grounds – Council President Nehls reported he had spoken with Tom Herits and Bob Burns today and they will try to set up a meeting with the architect for the Fire Department renovations. He also said there have been many complaints from Ridge Road residents regarding the conditions of the road. He said Tom Herits has estimated the cost for Parlin to Joan Drive would be \$87,000 and from Parlin to High Tor would be \$129,000. Council President Nehls said he would like to meet with the Public Works Committee on Friday, May 15th at 8 AM. He also reported Tom Herits is obtaining quotes for drainage improvements at Mobus Field. He said the estimated cost is around \$18,000. Public Works has continued filling pot holes and working on Mobus Field. Council President Nehls said Bob Burns reported residents are still putting leaf bags out and he would like to know how to proceed since April 30th was the last scheduled day for pickup. After discussion, it was determined the leaf pickup should be extended to May 15th and Clerk Michelle DeRocco will contact Chief Cina to have the message sent through Nixel. Councilwoman Joren felt a “reverse 911” would reach more people. Council President Nehls then read a report on the Library progress. He said the Committee has met twice with Mr. Iovino, the architect that the Borough had hired, who has provided several ideas for improvements and upgrades to the current building, that could provide up to 10,000 square feet of usable space and bring the building into compliance. Councilman Nehls said the Council had previously approved spending of \$1.5 million dollars for this renovation, with an additional \$500,000. to be raised by donations. He explained this and some money that had been put aside in 2001 for a Library elevator would be used. He said Mr. Iovino will be putting together his designs and the Mayor and Council are looking forward to his recommendations.
4. Public Affairs:

Open Space- Councilwoman Beck-Clemens had no report but said they are waiting for the remediation of the Ness property.

Environmental – Councilman Gibbs had no report.

Recreation –Councilwoman Beck-Clemens reported the annual picnic is scheduled for May 16th, and all is set for Movie Night on June 12th Movie Night as Mobus Field, where “Despicable Me 2” will be shown.. She explained \$1.00 tickets will be sold that evening and this \$1.00 will cover the cost for all refreshments. She also said the tennis courts are now open and lessons are being given. The Mobus Pavilion roof has been done, and thanked Penyak Roofing who also did the shed roof at no additional cost. Councilwoman Beck-Clemens read a comprehensive list of upcoming programs and said all can be found on the Borough’s website.

Historical – Councilwoman Beck-Clemens reported there was a special meeting on April 27th to discuss the Veterans Memorial. The Committee is seeking addition names for the Memorial of Watchung residents, and said they are seeking people who may have participated in the wars after September 11, 2011. After discussion and research, the Historical Committee will call the new memorial “Post 9-11.” Councilwoman Beck-Clemens also reported on the Youth Service Commission, and announced they are possibly implementing a lunch time soccer program in the Spring of 2016 at Bayberry School, to be run by U.S. Sports.

Councilman Gibbs mentioned the 9-11 Committee will need to replace the Chair so this Committee can start moving forward.

Board of Health- No report was submitted.

5. Fire – No report was submitted.
6. Laws/Ordinances- Councilwoman Joren had no report but they will be scheduling a meeting for the end of the month. Council President Nehls reported Bob Burns said there have been issues with the pump station. He said it has to be cleaned out regularly and Councilman Gibbs asked if it was possible to charge a fee for those properties who pump to this station. Mr. Cruz said the Laws and Ordinance Committee could discuss this and with the Council’s permission he will contact John Black to see how to do this, possibly through an additional service charge.

REPORTS - OTHER:

7. Engineer – No report was submitted.
8. Police Chief – No report was submitted. Mr. Atkins said both Chief Cina and Gary Greves were at a meeting this evening with the Board of Education.
9. Fire Department – Chief Erber reported the statistics for the month of April. He also wished to commend the men for the great job they did at a garbage truck fire at Brandywine. He also reported on drills that have been held and those that will be held in May and June. Chief Erber said the Department will have their Memorial Service early on Monday, May 25th, and then go to Warren to participate in the parade. Councilwoman Beck-Clemens said she would like copies of the reports from the Fire Department and Rescue Squad.
10. Rescue Squad – No report was submitted.
11. Emergency Management – No report was submitted
12. Attorney – Mr. Cruz had no report.
13. Clerk – Ms. DeRocco reminded everyone the Watchung Shred event will be held on June 13th from 9 AM to 1 PM. She also reported the Warren/Watchung Green event held in Warren was well attended. She said our Green Team members Shelini Parikh and Bill Hance were there handing out seedlings and assisting in other areas. Mayor Pote said both he and Councilwoman Beck-Clemens attended and he thanked Bill and Shelini.

14. Administrator – Mr. Atkins mentioned the Transparency Tax Act which he said was well intended but explained it would present unintended consequences such as compelling other levels of Government to possibly establish reserves for uncollected taxes in addition to potentially establishing other Governmental levels of revues on tax appeals.

PUBLIC PORTION – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Doris Fine, Johnston Drive, questioned the correspondence regarding the rezoning in Scotch Plains. Councilman Gibbs said this refers to an application by the Middle School and Mr. Atkins explained it is to put in an additional parking lot. Ms. Fine also suggested in regard to the leaf pickup, to ask the schools put the dates on the school calendar.

Lynda Goldschein, Sherwood Drive said the original intent for leaf pickup was for the smaller properties. Council President Nehls said he can speak with the Public Works Committee regarding this. Ms. Goldschein then asked how to stop companies from using permanent paint for their markouts and Councilman Gibbs said she could contact the company and if that did not help, she could contact the Board of Public Utilities.

Denise Wilson, Mountain Boulevard, wished to commend Fire Chief John Erber and his crew for the excellent job they did putting the garbage truck fire out.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

CONSENT AGENDA: The Consent Agenda Items listed below were unanimously adopted following a motion by Council President Nehls and a second by Councilwoman Joren and upon roll the vote was as follows: Nehls, Franklin, Joren, Gibbs, Beck-Clemens, “aye.”

Approval of the following Council minutes:
April 16, 2015

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:
Board of Health Minutes – February 18, 2015
Youth Service Commission Minutes – March 31, 2015
Tax Collector’s Report – March 31, 2015
Planning Board Minutes – March 17, 2015
Building Department Report – April, 2015

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

- #13 - Borough of Bernardsville 4/15/15 Resolution supporting the Transparent Tax Act of 2015 c: M & C, TEA
- #14 - Township of Scotch Plains 4/27/15 Notice of Public Hearing on proposed Ordinance #2015-7 to amend Zoning Ordinance for the re-zoning of certain premises c: M & C, TEA, Pl. Board

CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS: The Consent Agenda Resolutions listed below were unanimously adopted following a motion by Council President Nehls and a second by Councilwoman Joren and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Nehls, Franklin, Joren, Gibbs, Beck-Clemens, “aye.”

- R1:05/07/15 Urging the Legislators to Enact Legislation that Promotes a Rational Affordable Housing Policy and Protects the Interests of the Tax Payers
- R2: Authorize Tax Sale Certificate Redemption #14-04 / 659 Mountain Boulevard
- R3: Authorize Personnel Manual Revision – Unused Sick Time
- R4: Authorize Return of Tax Overpayment – 70 Tuttle Road
- R5: Authorize Return of Tax Overpayment – 25 Gildersleeve Place

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NON-CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS: 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.

Prior to any discussion and voting Councilman Gibbs recused himself and stepped down from the dais. Councilwoman Joren said she is pleased to be introducing this Ordinance tonight and thanked Mr. Cruz for bringing it to the Laws and Ordinance Committee.

Proposed Ordinance OR:15/06: "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER XXVIII, ARTICLE 28-100, TITLED "TITLE AND PURPOSE", SECTION 28-106, TITLED "PROHIBITED USES", OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG TO ADD A NEW SUBSECTION F PROHIBITING UNREGULATED PIPELINES IN ANY ZONE." Councilwoman Joren moved the ordinance be adopted on first reading and directed the Clerk to publish the ordinance and notice of Public Hearing.

Councilwoman Joren moved the following resolution with a second by Council President Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Nehls, Franklin, Joren, Beck-Clemens "aye." Public Hearing to be held on May 21, 2015.

R6:05/07/15 Introduction of Ordinance OR:15/06 – Amend Code / Prohibiting Unregulated Pipelines

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PUBLIC PORTION – GENERAL DISCUSSION

No one from the public wished to speak.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 P.M. to the call of the Chair and to the next scheduled Council meeting on Thursday, May 21, 2015 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

MaryAnn Hance
Deputy Clerk