

BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

COUNCIL MINUTES

OCTOBER 1, 2015

MAYOR'S STATEMENT: Mayor Pote called the meeting to order at 7:32 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 [P] Franklin [P] Joren [P] Gibbs [P]

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

There were 25 members of the public present.

NOMINATIONS TO FILL VACANCY – COUNCIL MEMBER

Mayor Pote acknowledged a letter sent to Borough Clerk Michelle DeRocco from Watchung Republican Chair Doyle Hunsinger, listing the names of 3 eligible candidates to fill the un-expired Council seat, vacated by Dianna Beck-Clemens. There are as follows: Tracy DiFrancesco; Richard Wellbrock and Dave Mobus. He then asked candidates who were present to come forward. The only candidate present was Mr. Mobus. Mayor Pote asked Mr. Mobus if he would like to take the position of Council Member and Mr. Mobus responded he was honored to have the opportunity and looks forward to working with the group. Mayor Pote asked if any other Council members had any questions or comments. Council President Nehls thanked Mr. Mobus for stepping up and he looks forward to working with him.

Council President Nehls moved the following resolution with a second by Councilwoman Joren and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Nehls, Black, Franklin, Joren, Gibbs, “aye”.

R1:10/01/15 Appointment of Council Member

Mayor Pote administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Mobus

Mayor Pote requested Clerk Michelle DeRocco take a second roll call

Nehls [P] Black [P] Franklin [P] Joren [P] Gibbs [P] Mobus [P]

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Watchung Public Library – Summer Reading Awards

Sharon Orlando, assisted by Library volunteers Peggy Ellis and Dianna Churchill, presented the children their awards for reading and congratulated both the children and their parents for all their hard work. Mayor Pote presented them with their medals. Ms. Orlando then presented the Mayor an award for his continued support. Mayor Pote congratulated the children and encouraged them to keep up the good work.

PROCLAMATION

Mayor Pote read the following proclamation (copy attached)

Breast Cancer Awareness Month - October

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

1. Administration & Finance – Councilman Franklin had no report. He will schedule a Committee meeting prior to the next Council meeting, and will check the schedule of Councilman Mobus.
2. Police – Council President Nehls reported the Committee met on September 28th and Chief Cina brought up the body-worn cameras. It was decided that more information is needed before

moving forward on a purchase. Council President Nehls said the Committee also discussed the vacancies for the two dispatchers who will be leaving October 15th. He said there is an option of contracting with the County but the Committee recommends the Council move forward for now and allow Chief Cina to start the process to hiring process, as a transition to the County could take a year. Council President Nehls moved the Council allow Chief Cina to start this process with a second by Councilman Black and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Nehls, Black, Franklin, Joren, Gibbs, Mobus, “aye”. Council President Nehls also reported the Committee discussed the “Active Shooter” proposal and recommend moving forward with the amended proposal.

3. Public Works / Buildings and Grounds – Council President Nehls reported Public Works has everything in place in the event Hurricane Joaquin does have an impact on the Borough. Mayor Pote also said the Exempt Hall will be available if needed by residents. Councilman Nehls also said the Notice to Bid on the Knollwood/Deer Run project will be advertised and bids will be due on October 30th. He said the leaf pickup charge has been dropped but further discussion for the next season will have to be considered. Council President Nehls then said a note received from an individual commending the Public Works Department for their speedy repairs on a potentially hazardous hole in the road on Brookdale.

4. Public Affairs:

Open Space- Mayor Pote said no report has been submitted, however, he thanked newly appointed Councilman Mobus for being willing to fill in on the Committees and Commissions left vacant for the rest of 2015.

Environmental – Councilman Gibbs reported the Committee met on September 28th and the main item discussed was an application received from a resident for a tree permit to replace the 30 trees that had been removed. The resident wanted to replace these with English Laurels which are invasive. The Committee will deny this since they do not want to give exceptions to the Ordinance regarding the types of trees to be used and they do not want any invasive plantings.

Recreation – Councilman Mobus reported the Harvest Festival will be held on October 24th from 2-5 pm. He would like to request the Public Works Department cut the grass and generally cleanup the area prior to this event. He also said the baseball fields need some improvements. Mr. Atkins said Public Works had been working on the infield.

Historical – Mayor Pote said the Historical Day event was very successful and well attended. He thanked all volunteers for their support.

Board of Health- Councilman Black congratulated Councilman Mobus and said he looks forward to working with him. He said the next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for November 18th at 7 PM. He mentioned the Board would like the Council to continue to look into an ordinance for carbon monoxide detectors in businesses. Councilman Black gave dates for upcoming flu clinics and rabies clinics.

5. Fire – Councilman Black said they will be scheduling a meeting for next week. He reported receipt of the Rodgers Group draft for Phase II; the newly established “Firetruck” (ad hoc) Committee will be compiling information to bring to the Mayor and Council for review; and that they are moving forward on refurbishing of the Fire House. Mayor Pote said the Council has not seen the Architectures plans yet. Councilman Black reported that Mr. Atkins had been asked by the Rodgers Group to review the 2nd Draft, which he has, and he has given them his input. Mr. Atkins explained that he was asked to look at this draft from only the perspective of trying to assure that all concerns and study areas requested by the Mayor and Council had been sufficiently addressed. Councilman Gibbs said this is a critical piece of review of the Fire Department’s operations and procedures.
6. Laws/Ordinances- Councilwoman Joren said there was no meeting and she will not be at the October 15th Council Meeting, however, she hopes to have a meeting to give a report at the November meeting.

REPORTS - OTHER:

7. Engineer – No report
8. Fire Department – No report
9. Rescue Squad – No report
10. Emergency Management – No report

11. Attorney – Mr. Cruz had no report but said Resolution R2 on the agenda is to authorize Jeffrey R. Surenian, Esq. to execute on behalf of the Borough with Econsult Solutions, Inc.
12. Clerk – Ms. DeRocco had no report but said that in the spring, CERT and OEM mailed to each residents a double sided magnet filled with important safety information and emergency phone numbers. She said extras are on hand if anyone wanted them. She also reported October 10-11th the Texier House will be open for the Somerset County History weekend “Journey Through the Past,” and the Historical Committee is pleased to be included in this event. Ms. DeRocco gave dates for several shred events available in October.
13. Administrator – Mr. Atkins said all the generators are in place and the Mayor and Council should be proud of all their accomplishments preparing for disasters now and in the future. He also acknowledged this entire process for preparing for disasters was initiated by former Mayor Jerry Mobus. Mr. Atkins said he met with Mayor Pote and Council President Nehls today regarding the Capital Budget and he will give the information to the Public Works Committee this evening per Mr. Nehls. He also reported that there is a time table calendar for the upcoming 2016 budget which will be strictly adhered to. CFO Bill Hance will be sending the budget request forms out to all departments next week, and the deadline will be Monday, November 2. Mayor Pote thanked both Tom Atkins and Bill Hance for their work toward this and Council President Nehls thanks them for taking steps to do this. Mr. Atkins also welcomed Councilman Mobus and assured him that the appointed staff would always be ready to assist him.

Mayor Pote asked CFO Bill Hance if he had anything to report and Mr. Hance reported the Farmers’ Market has been canceled for Sunday, October 4th due to the declared State of Emergency and possible pending storms.

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PUBLIC PORTION – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Bruce Ruck, Lakeview Avenue, thanked Councilman Black for mentioning the carbon monoxide issue and said he hopes the Council will continue to consider an ordinance for this. Councilwoman Joren said the Laws and Ordinance Committee had discussed this and decided to give Mr. Greves more time for research. Mr. Ruck also said regarding the leaf issue, the Borough needs to communicate better with the residents and he would like to know the actual cost and number of bags collected.

Doris Fine, Johnston Drive, congratulated Councilman Mobus. Regarding the leaf bag fees she said she thought the Borough presented the information very well. Ms. Fine also had an issue with the Borough filling in an area where a sewer line had been exposed, noting it was a “private road” and this should have been the responsibility of the homeowner, not the Borough using tax payer dollars. Council President Nehls said he will inform Mr. Herits of this.

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NEW BUSINESS

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

Prior to the vote Council President Nehls requested a separate vote for the approval of the September 17, 2015 Council minutes.

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:
Board of Health Minutes – June 17, 2015

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

- #27- Paulina Krawiec 9/21/15 Letter of resignation from her position as Dispatcher, effective October 15, 2015 c: M & C, TEA
- #28- Dianna Beck-Clemens 9/17/15 Letter of resignation as a member of the Council c: M & C, TEA
- #29- JCP&L 9/28/15 Notice of Filing and Public Hearings on proposed transfer of assets and lease of real property assets to Mid-Atlantic Interstate Transmission, LLC c: M & C, TEA, Post
- #30- Doyle Hunsinger, Watchung Republican Municipal Committee 9/29/15 Submission for consideration of 3 candidates to fill Council vacancy c: M & C, TEA

Council President Nehls moved to approve the Council minutes of September 17, 2015 with a second by Councilwoman Joren and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Nehls, Black, Franklin, Joren, Gibbs, “aye,” Mobus “abstain”.

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, Black, Franklin, Joren, Gibbs, Mobus, “aye.”

- R2:10/1/15 Authorizing an Amendment to the Municipal Shared Services Defense Agreement (“MSSDA”) / Retention of an Expert for the Declaratory Judgment Action
- R3: Purchases Over \$2,000. – Seashore Amusements (Rides, Vending, DJ for Harvest Fest)
- R4: Waive Chapter 6-2.11 of the Borough Code / Fireworks - Rescue Squad Tree of Lights
- R5: Authorize Halloween Curfew
- R6: Authorize Person-to-Person Transfer – Liquor License / Watchungs Lakeside Villa LLC to Tocci Restaurant Incorporated
- R7: Authorize Contract Renewal – 2015 Payroll Services / ADP (Automated Data Processing)
- R8: Authorize Tax Sale Certificate #14-01 Payment – 15 Glen Eagles Drive
- R9: Authorize Tax Sale Certificate #14-06 Payment – 49 Oakridge Lane

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.

2015 Best Practices Inventory

Councilman Franklin said he welcomed the budget process starting earlier this year which will eliminate two of the “no” responses, on the Best Practices checklist. Councilman Franklin then questioned CFO Bill Hance regarding item number 15 which discusses the audit findings for corrective actions which had to do with the analysis of the payroll account being maintained. Mr. Hance explained this was due to issues the Payroll Department had when payroll was switched to ADP, because ADP’s implementation team was not familiar with municipal government. Since then it has been resolved and the Payroll Department now has a representative at ADP who is familiar with this municipal payroll. Councilman Franklin asked what the FEMA Community rating was and Mr. Hance said he was not sure what has to be done with this but he will discuss with Gary Greves. He explained that last year Mr. Greves said the Borough does not have that rating, and there is a big process to go through to get this. Mr. Hance said if the Borough wanted to pursue this there would be time and money involved. Councilman Franklin said the Borough is entitled to 100% of State aid according to the results of this inventory.

Councilman Franklin moved the following resolution with a second by Councilman Black and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Nehls, Black, Franklin, Joren, Gibbs, Mobus, “aye.”

- R10: 10/01/15 Authorize Submission of CY 2015 Best Practices Inventory to State of New Jersey

Councilman Gibbs moved the following resolution with a second by Council President Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Nehls, Franklin, Joren, Gibbs, Mobus, “aye,” Black, “Abstain”.

- R11: Waive Chapter 2-25.10 code of the Borough/Gray’s Florist

PUBLIC PORTION – GENERAL DISCUSSION

Doris Fine, Johnston Drive, said the Somerset County Freeholders do a program called “Project Warm Heart” which entails the collection of warm, gently used coats for less fortunate children. She was approached by the County and asked if she could secure a drop-off location in the Borough. She said they would need the donations by Friday, October 30th. Ms. Fine said the coats are then distributed through the Somerset County Food Bank to children in need. Councilwoman Joren suggested the Police Department would be the most convenient location since they are open all the time. Mayor Pote said the Borough will contact Chief Cina and let her know.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 P.M. to the Call of the Chair and to the next scheduled Council meeting on Thursday, October 15, 2015 at 7:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

MaryAnn Hance
Deputy Clerk