

BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

COUNCIL MINUTES

MARCH 3, 2016 – 7:30 P.M.

MAYOR'S STATEMENT: Mayor Pote called the meeting to order at 7:31 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 [A] Black [P] Nehls [A] Gibbs [P] Mobus [A] Sopko [P]

Also present were Administrator Tom Atkins, Attorney Albert Cruz, Clerk Michelle DeRocco, and Deputy Clerk MaryAnn Hance. Although not present at roll call, Councilman Nehls arrived at 7:33 P.M.

There were 35 members of the public present

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

Council President Joren moved the following resolution with a second by Councilman Gibbs and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Black, Nehls, Gibbs, Sopko, "aye."

R1:03/03/16 Appointment of Probationary Police Officers – Andrew Chuisano, Christopher DiPalo

Council President Joren read a brief biography of each of the new officers.

Mayor Pote administered the Oath of Office to Andrew Chuisano as his father Mike held the Bible and his mother Carol stood by his side.

Mayor Pote administered the Oath of Office to Christopher DiPalo as his mother Rita held the Bible and his father Joseph, his brother Nicholas, and sister Melissa stood by his side.

Chief Cina pinned the badges on each officer's lapel and congratulated them.

Councilman Gibbs welcomed the officers aboard and Mayor Pote welcomed both the officers and their families.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. Administration & Finance – Councilman Gibbs had no report, but said there is a meeting scheduled for Monday, March 7th at 8 AM.

2. Police – No Report

3. Public Works / Buildings and Grounds – Councilman Nehls said there possibly will be a meeting scheduled for next week. He then gave a brief report on the storm of February 4th. There was approximately 3 inches of rain from this storm which caused major flooding on almost all streets. The Texier House parking lot was flooded close to the Carriage House where mowers are stored (these were moved to the firehouse). He said 98% of the catch basins have now been cleared, and a sweeper box for the BobCat was rented to clear mud and debris from streets. Councilman Nehls then reported the playground fall zone material was washed away and it will have to be replaced with an approximate cost of \$13,000. Councilman Nehls asked Mr. Atkins if the insurance company would pay for any of this and Mr. Atkins said he will check. Councilman Gibbs said the town looked like a disaster after this storm and commended the Public Works Department for doing a great job.

4. Public Affairs:

Open Space – Councilman Sopko had no report but said a meeting may be scheduled for the end of the month and the main issue for discussion would be the Ness Property remediation.

Environmental – Councilman Sopko reported there was a meeting held on February 22nd and the Commission discussed the impact letter regarding the proposed Pilgrim Pipeline. He also said there discussion on recycling bottle caps. Councilman Sopko said the Community cleanup (Operation Pride) is scheduled for April 2nd and the Green Fair on April 30th 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM at Bayberry School. Mayor Pote said he will be meeting Saturday with other Mayors to continue discussions on the Pipeline. Councilman Black questioned if there are any concerns with reverberations/shocks from Weldon when blasting is being done and Mayor Pote said this definitely is a concern.

Recreation – Mr. Atkins said Councilman Mobus sent a memo that an alternate member has been approved and there is a Resolution on the agenda tonight appointing Debbie Devine to fill the vacancy.

Historical – No Report

Board of Health – Councilman Black reported the Board of Health will be meeting on March 16, 2016.

5. Fire – Councilman Black said the Special Council meeting held last night with the Rodgers Group presentation was very productive, with positive comments from the Fire Department members. He said the Committee will be meeting next week and will further discuss priorities for moving forward. Council President Joren said the Rodgers report suggested the large percentage of false alarms were causing a morale issue but hearing from members of the Department they do not feel it is an issue, and that they look at these as “training” for them. Councilman Gibbs the Committee and the Mayor and Council should look into implementing some of the Rodgers Group recommendations and also look at the other options for trucks similar to the ones purchased in Edison. Mr. Atkins said all options and alternates should be studied. Councilman Black said there will be a Fire Department meeting next Monday and he will discuss with the membership what their priorities are. Council President Joren suggested members who receive awards at the departments’ annual dinner should be invited to a Council Meeting to be recognized and Councilman Nehls said the same should be done with Rescue Squad members. Mayor Pote asked about the Grant funding and Mr. Atkins said this will be discussed with the Administration/Finance Committee at Monday’s meeting.

6. Laws/Ordinances – Council President Joren reported a meeting is scheduled for March 9th at 5 PM.

REPORTS - OTHER:

7. Engineer – No Report

8. Police Chief – No Report

9. Fire Department - No Report

10. Rescue Squad – No Report

11. Emergency Management – Mr. Atkins said Mr. Greves submitted a preliminary report approximately five weeks ago for damage caused by Storm Jonas. To date he has not heard anything.

12. Attorney – Mr. Cruz had no report.

13. Clerk – Ms. DeRocco reminded everyone the school election is Tuesday, March 8th, 2 PM to 9 PM and everyone will be voting at the Exempt Hall. She also said notices will be going out soon to everyone regarding their financial disclosure reports.

14. Administrator – Mr. Atkins said there is an Administration/Finance meeting Monday. He also reiterated the Bond Sale for 8.1 million dollars at a rate of 2.23% was an excellent result.

Councilman Black said he attended a Library Advisory Meeting on Wednesday and there were many complaints about the cleaning company not doing a proper job. Mr. Atkins said Mr. Burns knows about this and will be speaking to them.

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PUBLIC PORTION / AGENDA ITEMS ONLY
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No one from the public wished to be heard.

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NEW BUSINESS

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

Approval of the following Council minutes:
February 18, 2016 Special Meeting - Regular and Executive Sessions
February 18, 2016

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:
Recreation Commission Minutes – January 6, 2016
Board of Adjustment Annual Report - 2015
Board of Adjustment Minutes – December 10, 2015; January 14, 2016

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

- #6 - Township of Warren 2/17/16 Notice of Adoption of Master Plan Amendment c: M & C, TEA, TH, Pl. Board
- #7 - Township of Bridgewater 2/29/16 Notice of Adoption of Redevelopment Plan c: M & C, TEA, TH, Pl. Board

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

- R2:3/03/16 Authorize Final Payment for Accumulated Benefits – Jordan Migliore
- R3: Authorize Construction Permit Refund – Defender Incorporated
- R4: Authorize Treasurer to Issue Tax Sale Redemption Certificate #15-01 /
50 Stanie Brae Drive
- R5: Authorize Treasurer to Issue Tax Sale Redemption Certificate #15-04 /
107 Johnston Drive
- R6: Purchases Over \$2,000. – Edith Petty (PD - Recovered Funds)
- R7: Appointment to Youth Services Commission – Linda Monetti
- R8: Authorize Special Regional Master – Richard Reading / \$5,000.
- R9: Appointment Recreation Commission / Alternate Member – Debbie Devine

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PUBLIC PORTION - GENERAL DISCUSSION

No one from the public wished to be heard.

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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 on March 17, 2016 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

MaryAnn Hance
Deputy Clerk