

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
JUNE 21, 2018 - 7:30 P.M.**

OPENING STATEMENT: Mayor Stephen K. Pote called the meeting to order at 7:33 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 and Special Meeting Notice to the Courier News, Echoes Sentinel, and Star Ledger, and posted at Borough Hall.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG and MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN, SERVING HOME AND ABROAD.

ROLL CALL

Gibbs [P] Black [P] Nehls [P] Mobus [P] Sopko [P] Alberto [A]

Also present were Attorney Albert Cruz, Engineer Tom Herits, Clerk Michelle DeRocco, and Deputy Clerk MaryAnn Hance.

There were 15 members of the public present.

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REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. Administration & Finance – Councilman Mobus reported the Committee met on June 11th. He said as of tonight Council meetings will be recorded and should be available online within 24 hours. He also reported the Committee discussed the estimated legal cost for the Library lawsuit which would be approximately \$50,000 to \$100,000. Councilman Mobus said the Committee has entered into discussions with some of the Exempt Firemens member about the Exempt Hall being shared with the Borough for the purpose of establishing a Community Center however, it is too early to discuss any of the details. He said at present the Borough owns the property and the Exempts' own the building. The Committee also discussed the need to obtain a Labor Consultant for a personnel issue – Resolution R4 on the agenda is the recommendation from the Borough Labor Attorney and the Administrator for approval for Denis Connell at a rate of \$200 per hour not to exceed \$4,000. Councilman Mobus also said Resolution R5 is the Committees' recommendation for the adoption of a Cash Management Policy. He explained this, along with the previously approve Surplus Policy, will put the Borough in a better position to achieve a triple A bond rating. Councilman Mobus also said at the recommendation of the Department of Public Works Manager and the Public Works Committee, the Administrative/Finance Committee is recommending the creation of a new part-time position of a building maintenance employee. He said this position will require knowledge of plumbing, electrical, and other trade experience. Councilman Mobus said the purpose of this position is to reduce the need for hiring outside contractors.
2. Police – Council President Gibbs had no report but noted with the two new officers sworn in at the last meeting the Department is now fully staffed.
3. Public Works / Buildings and Grounds – Councilman Nehls reported Mr. Atkins sent the Mayor and Council a report on all roadways which will possibly be scheduled for work this summer. The estimated cost is \$843,000 with an additional \$107,000 for drainage on some of these roads. He said these projects will use most of the bond money. Councilman Nehls said High Tor Drive will be completed utilizing the \$493,000 Department of Transportation grant received which covers all except some minor costs. Councilman Nehls made a motion to accept the Engineers recommendations in order to begin the work and Council President Gibbs seconded the motion and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Mobus, Sopko, "aye."

Councilman Sopko commented that this a large undertaking, but it is a good thing, and Council President Gibbs said this list includes 18 streets. Mayor Pote asked if the list will be prioritized. Councilman Nehls said Mr. Herits and Mr. Burns will double check the roads and do the most important ones first. Councilman Nehls reported that Mr. Burns is working on getting the island plantings done on Somerset Street. He then had a question regarding who is responsible for repairs of railroad tie walls on Washington Rock Road, which may be in need of repair and requested Mr. Cruz to do the research. Council President Gibbs questioned if the Borough had installed the wall and Councilman Nehls said they had not. Councilman Nehls then reported the Public Works Committee will be starting discussions on the dredging of Watchung Lake, and requested Maser to submit a proposal for to start the process. The approximate cost will be \$100,000. Council President Gibbs said the Borough needs to think about the end result, including plantings and include Environmental and Traffic and Beautification in this process. Councilman Nehls asked Mr. Herits

to look at how to stabilize the embankments, possibly pumping the silt to the banks. Councilman Mobus said Best Lake appears to be ok and Councilman Nehls responded as of now it is. Councilman Black asked when the Lake was last dredged and suggested looking at the costs at that time. Mr. Herits said it was approximately 12-13 years ago. Councilman Nehls said regulations have changed and if there is any contaminated soil, the cost for disposal has escalated since the last time. Councilman Mobus asked if there is a potential for grant money and Mr. Herits said he will have Kelsey look into this.

4. Public Affairs:

Environmental – No report was submitted.

Recreation – Councilman Mobus reported the Summer Camp program will be “kicking” off with an open house on Friday, June 29th and Camp starting July 2nd and continue for seven weeks. He said registration has been steady and some of the weeks are now full. Councilman Mobus said the Commission is planning a trip to the Yankee/Rangers game on August 12th. The cost will be \$75.00 per person which includes transportation to and from and the entrance ticket. The bus will leave the Police Department parking lot at 10:30 AM.

Historical – Councilman Mobus reported Diddy Addario advised him there are several copies of the video prepared by Chris Vander Fliet and they will set a date to view this. He also said Diddy finalized the report to get the \$4,000 grant money for the mural, but more fund raising will still be needed. The Committee is all set for the ‘Weekend Journey Thru the Past’ in September and they are also working on a design for outdoor display of the church bell, previously held at Borough Hall for several years, and now held at the Texier House. The Committee is also working and looking at ways to preserve the Civil War Diaries.

Board of Health – No report – Councilman Black announced the next meeting is scheduled for September 19th at 7 PM.

5. Fire – Councilman Black reported he still does not have the specs for the Fire Engine. He asked Mr. Herits for a status update on the Firehouse renovations. Mr. Herits responded they are only waiting for the hood to be delivered and installed. Council President Gibbs said after receiving the report from the Rodgers Group a few years ago and their recommendations, the Committee should push the department to move forward.

6. Laws/Ordinances – No report except Councilman Black said a meeting will be scheduled.

REPORTS – OTHER:

7. Engineer- Tom Herits said he will contact Tilcon tomorrow to set up a meeting to get the road projects started. He said he is working on the plans and specs for the High Tor Drive project which must go to the Department of Transportation for their approval. He said these plans will include some miscellaneous drainage projects which need to be done. Mr. Herits said the Public Works Committee has requested he have the Ross Pond project completed by next summer. He also reported the generators should be completed by next month and Public Works is working on setting up the tent for the summer camp. Mayor Pote said he would like a meeting set up with Mr. Herits, the 9-11 committee, and himself to discuss the next steps for the brick placement and would like this completed before September 11th.

Councilman Nehls said there are additional issues for the Ross Pond project that Mr. Cruz must work on but said Mr. Herits can start the permitting process.

Councilman Black asked how the stones that are stored at the upper parking lot area could be better protected. Councilman Nehls said it was requested that Public Works move these to another location but they have many other work orders to do. Councilman Black asked that Mr. Atkins and Public Works discuss something more substantial to secure these.

8. Police Chief – No report was submitted.

9. Fire Department – No report was submitted.

10. Rescue Squad – Diddy Addario reported the Squad participated in two community events, the Borough picnic with approximately half dozen members assisting and also the 15th annual Bob Beckert 5k in Warren. She also reported members will be attending the Watchung Hills Regional High School graduation in recognition of graduating cadet members and to supplement Warren Rescue Squad’s EMS coverage. There are several members moving toward taking the test for full membership and the Squad read one new probationary driver and one Cadet in May; and this month have added another probationary driver.

11. Emergency Management – No report was submitted.

12. Attorney – Mr. Cruz said regarding the settlement agreement with the Fair Share Housing Center, Judge Miller has scheduled a fairness hearing on August 9th at 9:00 A.M. at the Somerset County Court House in Somerville. This is a public hearing. He also reported on Tuesday, June 19th the Planning Board started consideration of the preliminary investigation to determine whether or not the Bonnie Burn Road property is an area in need of redevelopment and has set forth the schedule to move forward and it is anticipated the preliminary study would be presented on July 17th as a preliminary matter not for a Public Hearing and then the actual Public Hearing on August 21st. At the July 17th meeting Planning Board Members could comment on the draft of the preliminary study.

13. Clerk – Ms. DeRocco had no report.

14. Administrator – No report was submitted.

PUBLIC PORTION / AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Diddy Addario, Rock Avenue, commented on the \$100,000 for the Watchung Lake. She said she owns 25 feet of Bay front property and it has taken three years and \$10,000 to get the permits and the 25 foot bulkhead to meet the new requirements will cost between \$50,000 and \$60,000.

Tom Sicola, Stirling Road, suggested the Borough send the school Business Administrator the list of roads that will be worked on in case there has to be a contingency plan if these projects are not completed prior to the next school year.

Tom Franklin, Wildwood Terrace, had questions on Councilman Mobus' report about utilizing the 2nd floor of the Exempt Hall as a Community Center and asked if this would be open every day, manned by a Borough employee, will it be available to community groups and will they have to get a key, and will there be fees. Councilman Mobus responded that nothing has been set up but this would be a fully functioning Community Center and will be accessible to all residents at no cost. Someone at Borough Hall would control the scheduling.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

CONSENT AGENDA: The Consent Agenda Items listed below were unanimously accepted, following a motion by Council President Gibbs and a second by Councilman Nehls.

Prior to the vote Clerk Michelle DeRocco requested the June 7, 2018 Regular/Special Council minutes be pulled until the July meeting. Ms. DeRocco also explained the May 3rd minutes were revised to reflect a minor change in wording.

Council President Gibbs made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items as revised with a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Mobus, Sopko, "aye".

Approval of the following Council minutes:

~~June 7, 2018 – Regular / Special Meeting~~ – PULLED
May 3, 2018 – Revised Minutes

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:

Recreation Commission Minutes – May 2, 2018
Traffic and Beautification Minutes – May 29, 2018
Bd. of Adjustment Minutes – May 10, 2018
Police Activity – May, 2018

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

#16 - Township of Bridgewater 6/12/18 Notice of Public Hearing on July 2, 2018 on Proposed Zoning Ordinance #18-12 – "Cluster Developments" c: M & C, TEA, TH, Pl. Bd.

#17 - Township of Warren 6/14/18 Notice of Public Hearing on July 12, 2018 on 2 Proposed Zoning Ordinances #18-15 – Affordable Housing Development Fees; and #18-17 – "Requirements for Sale Units, Affordability, Income Limits" c M & C, TEA, TH,

Pl. Board

- #18 - Township of Green Brook 7/15/18 Notice of Public Hearing on June 25, 2018 on Proposed Amendment to Master Plan: Housing Element and Fair Share Plan c: M & C, TEA, TH, Pl. Bd.
- #19 - Township of Green Brook 7/15/18 Notice of Public Hearing on July 10, 2018 on 5 Proposed Zoning Ordinances #2018-846: Conditional Uses, Hotels & Motels; #2018-847: Land Development Ordinance Guarantees and Inspections; 2018-848: Building and Housing and Affordable Housing Agency; #2018-849: Collection of Development Fees in Support of Affordable Housing; #2018-850: Set Aside Requirements c: M & C, TEA, TH, Pl. Board

CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS

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

- R1:06/21/18 Purchases over \$2,000 – Dell, Inc. (PD- Computer)
El Coronado (FD – Conference)
Fred Dealaman Bus Service (Rec. – Camp Trips)
- R2: Confirm and Ratify 2018 Council Annual Calendar of Meeting Dates
- R3: Appoint Alternate Plumbing Subcode Official – Daniel Niro
- R4: Authorize Appointment of Professional Consultant – Denis Connell
- R5: Adoption of Cash Management Plan
- R6: Appointment to Traffic and Beautification Commission – Linda Lauerman
- R7: Authorize Renewal of Liquor Licenses 2018/2019
- R8: Authorize Expansion of Contract – Maser Consulting / GIS/Census Update
- R9: Approval of Job Description / Building Maintenance Worker / Part Time

NON- CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

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.

Proposed Ordinance OR:18/13 – **“AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG CH. 5-12-12.76 ET. SEQ., THEREOF AND TO FIX AND DETERMINE MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM SALARIES AND COMPENSATION TO BE PAID TO CERTAIN EMPLOYEES.”** was introduced.

Councilman Black moved Ordinance OR:18/13 be given its first reading. So ordered. Councilman Black moved the Ordinance be adopted on first reading and the Clerk be directed to publish the ordinance and notice of public hearing. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Mobus, Sopko, “aye.”

Councilman Black moved the following resolution with a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Mobus, Sopko, “aye,” Public Hearing to be held July 19, 2018.

R10:06/21/18 Introduction of OR:18/13 – Salary Min-Max / 2018

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

R11: Authorize Appointment of Summer Camp Counselors

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

R12: Waive Chapter 2-25.10 of the Code – Gray’s Florist and Greenhouses

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

R13: Payment of Bills

Council President Gibbs reminded residents to look at their tax bills to see how this money is distributed.

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PUBLIC PORTION-GENERAL DISCUSSION

Virginia Hartman, Ellisen Road, compared statistics of the population of New Jersey vs the population of Watchung. She said over 600 Watchung residents have signed a petition to save the Watchung Library and if this were a statewide petition it would be the equivalent of over 900,000 signatures. She also stated over 140 people demonstrated on the Village Green to save the Watchung Library. She said the Council has refused to hear the voices of over 600 resident who signed the petition and over 140 residents who left their homes on a Saturday to participate. She said Policemen stopped traffic for seniors and young parents with children but not one Councilmember showed up to hear our voices.

Sophia Lee, Spencer Lane, presented the Mayor and Council with copies of a Public Question, including an Interpretive Statement for the same, that she and other residents who want to save the library, would like to have placed on the November Ballot for vote.

Tom Franklin, Wildwood Terrace, said there has been a lot of information on social media about the question of affordability for a library. He said the present Borough debt is a little less than \$21 million. He then gave statistics of the cost of a \$2.5 million bond which would only increase the debt to \$23.5 million. He the cost per household would be \$72.00 per year.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 P.M. to the Call of the Chair and to the next scheduled Council meeting to be held on Thursday, July 19, 2018 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

MaryAnn Hance
Deputy Clerk