

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
MINUTES
OCTOBER 3, 2019- 7:30 P.M.**

MAYOR'S STATEMENT: Mayor Keith S. Balla 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 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.

GUEST: ASHA RICCI / SIGNING the PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

Gibbs [P] Black [P] Nehls [P] Sopko [P] Goodloe [P] Eisenberg Knegten [P]

Also present were Administrator James Damato; Attorney Albert Cruz; Clerk Michelle DeRocco, and Administrative Assistant Regina Angelo.

There were 45 members of the public present.

PROCLAMATION:

Deaf Awareness Week – September 29th through October 5 (copy attached)

Councilwoman Eisenberg Knegten read a Proclamation honoring Deaf Awareness Week.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

R1: 10/03/19 Honoring Andrea Meyer / 31 Years of Service

Council President Gibbs moved Resolution R1 with a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Sopko, Goodloe, Eisenberg Knegten, “aye.”

Council President Gibbs presented the Resolution to Ms. Meyer and she thanked all and said it has been a privilege to work here.

R2: 10/03/19 Appointment of Probationary Police Officer – Benjamin Nir

Council President Gibbs read a brief biography on Probationary Police Officer Benjamin Nir.

Council President Gibbs moved Resolution R2 with a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Sopko, Goodloe, Eisenberg Knegten, “aye.”

Mayor Balla administered the Oath of Office to Probationary Officer Benjamin Nir as his mother Esther held the Bible.

Noting Resolution R3 on this evening’s Agenda, Mayor Balla called forward Dr. Bruce Ruck, resident and President of the Watchung Board of Health, to provide commentary for the residents regarding mosquito control.

Dr. Ruck, said right now there is an outbreak of mosquitos carrying the EEE (Eastern Equine Encephalitis) Virus. He said the outbreak is getting serious because they have found these mosquitos in Union County bordering Watchung. He said there were already two deaths this past weekend. He said the County is spraying and doing a lot of surveillance. He is asking the residents to remove any pools of water around their home. He suggested residents go on the CDC (Center for Disease Control) website and learn of the mosquito repellants recommended by the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency)..

Councilman Nehls said stagnant water pools accumulated in vacant properties should be looked into as well. Mr. Ruck said when he spoke to Brook Hill (swim club) they suggested to throw chlorine in those pools of water so the areas were vectored. He said the County is looking around but they will not inspect abandoned properties. Councilman Nehls suggested we have one of our inspectors go out and inspect the abandoned properties.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. Administration & Finance – Councilman Sopko said the Committee will be meeting in another week and will be working on preparing a resolution of intent regarding funding for the library.
2. Police– Council President Gibbs had no report but mentioned an incident that occurred the previous evening on Hillcrest Road. He said because the state police are leading this investigation, he doesn't have any other information other than what has been released.
3. Public Works / Buildings and Grounds– Councilman Nehls said the Public Works Committee held a meeting on the 27th and the discussed the “Welcome to Watchung” signs. He said the Committee has reviewed the sign proposal and is recommending moving forward with the new signs, and that we are waiting for an updated cost proposal. He mentioned the proposed plantings on Somerset Street be put off until next spring. He said Mr. Burns has already received cost proposals for clean-up of Camp Endeavor, and they are also looking to get trees taken down from that area. He requested the Mayor direct the Committees to come up with some plans for the park so the process can start moving forward for next year. He said Mr. Burns has been directed to move forward with the painting of the Library. He brought up the sidewalk situation in town and deferred to Councilwoman Eisenberg Knegten to speak on the topic.

Councilwoman Eisenberg Knegten said a resident came up a few meetings ago and asked for clarification on who is responsible for the upkeep of the sidewalks. Councilwoman Eisenberg Knegten said our current ordinance says the resident is responsible to maintain, repair and plow the sidewalks in front of their house. She said this ordinance is enforced in some areas more than others. She would like to see usable sidewalks from Bonnie Burn to the circle, from the circle to Warren on Mountain Boulevard, around our lake and Valley View School and out to Bayberry. She said she would like to see for the time being the Borough take back that responsibility to maintain, repair, and plow our sidewalks in town. She said most of the sidewalks are so far gone that the repair of them would be a large cost to fix for our residents. She said from there we can talk about where the responsibility goes after they are useable. She feels like there is money available to Watchung such as grants on the federal level to help with this project. She said there is a big push to connect our County from one end to another which could provide funding for sidewalks in Watchung. She feels like this initiative is important for our town. Councilman Nehls said the funding is a big component of this. The County previously said they would not fund the cost of the putting sidewalks in, when they did the Mountain Boulevard improvement project. Councilman Nehls said this will be a very expensive process. He said in the past an option they have done in other instances is put money aside yearly for large purchases. He said this could be done for sidewalks and let it build up for years. He also suggested doing portions of the sidewalks instead of doing it all at once. He believes if we have an ordinance we don't enforce we need to get rid of it. He feels the residents need to be a part of this and it needs to be talked about openly. Councilman Black agrees that we need to move ahead and start dialogue with this and keep up a consistent pace. He also said he would like to see the Old Somerset Road trail revisited. Councilman Sopko said the State has a program called “Complete Streets” and Somerset County has a walk bike and hike program which are two programs we can utilize for possible funding.

4. Public Affairs:

Environmental- Councilwoman Goodloe said the Environmental Commission has not met since the last meeting but their next meeting is scheduled for October 28th. She also said there is still a vacancy on the board and encouraged residents to submit applications. She also spoke about the Trex Recycling Program and encouraged residents to get recycling.

Recreation– Councilman Black said the Harvest Festival is approaching on October 19th from 1:00 to 4:00 P.M. at Mobus Field. Mayor Balla commended the Recreation Department for the Fishing Derby event that occurred this past weekend. Council President Gibbs asked if the Recreation sports programs could be advertised in more areas.

Historical – Councilman Black had no report.

Board of Health– Councilman Sopko said on October 16th there will be an expedited Board of Health meeting to discuss updates to the mosquito situation. Mr. Ruck (from the audience) added that the other big issue they are discussing is the vaping issue and that is also being looked into. Council President Gibbs questioned how he felt about banning vaping in Watchung. Dr. Ruck recommended taking a look at the Governor's recommendations which just came out, before the local Board makes any decisions. Council President Gibbs recommended that Laws and Ordinances Committee takes this topic into consideration going forward once the Governors recommendations are looked at.

5. Fire– Councilwoman Eisenberg Knegten deferred to the Fire Chief's report later on in the evening.
6. Laws/Ordinances– Councilman Black had no report.

REPORTS - OTHER:

- 7. Engineer – No report.
- 8. Police Chief – No Report
- 9. Fire Department - Chief Pivnichny said there were 29 calls for service responded to last month. He said there were six mulch fires, one building fire and 5 malfunctioning alarm systems. He said there were 214 man-hours of service for the volunteers this month. He reminded everyone that Fire Prevention Open House will be October 13th from 12 to 2 P.M. and they will also be visiting the schools next week.
- 10. Rescue Squad – No report.
- 11. Emergency Management – No report.
- 12. Attorney – Mr. Cruz had no report but said there is one item on for executive session this evening.
- 13. Clerk – Ms. DeRocco mentioned our High School intern Christina Tillinghast was named as a National Merit Commended Scholar. She also reminded everyone October 15th is the last day to register to vote.
- 14. Administrator – Mr. Damato said they are gathering information to gauge the interest in creating a Chamber of Commerce in Watchung. He said there has been some talk about getting recycling and shredding events back in Watchung and he is working on that. He also reached out to Brook Hill and PSE&G regarding some questions brought up at the last meeting. He said there was samples of water taken from the pools and there was no mosquito larvae found. He said everything was treated on the property. He said with regard to PSE&G the area off of Valley Road was in question and that portion was found to have no standing water pools in that area. He apologized for the phones in Borough Hall not working this week and said the phone system is being worked on.

Wildlife Management Advisory Committee – Council President Gibbs had no report but mentioned R13 on the Agenda for discussion.

Youth Services – Councilwoman Eisenberg Knegten had no report.

Planning Board – Councilman Sopko had no report but said the Planning Board will meet next on October 15th.

Board of Education – Board of Education Liaison was present and Mr. Barbella provided an update from the last Board meeting of September 25th. He said on that date three new board members were appointed which complete the vacancies. He mentioned the elections coming up in November and encouraged everyone to get out and vote. He said the school districts test results should be received shortly and will be reviewed. He brought up the vaping topic and said it will be discussed at the next school board meeting. Council President Gibbs asked if the tests are results of the individual scores from the students. Mr. Barbella replied they are but explained there are other components that need to be reviewed.

Municipal Alliance – Councilwoman Goodloe encouraged everyone to sign up for the Great Pumpkin 5k to be held on the morning of the Harvest Festival Saturday, October 19th. She said the next meeting for the Municipal Alliance is scheduled for November 13th.

Library – Councilwoman Eisenberg Knegten said the Library Ad-hoc Committee met last Thursday, September 26th. She said the Committee is continuing discussions regarding possible locations and still discussing the design of the building being one or two stories. She also said this Saturday is the Community Yard Sale sponsored by the Friends of the Library as a fundraiser for the library and is taking place in the Best Lake parking lot.

Mayor Balla reported that on September 20th members and residents participated in the Shop Rite “Bagging for Hunger” event to help local food banks stock their shelves by bagging groceries and thanked everyone for participating. He said he attended a meeting with the school district president discussing further ways the Borough and School Board can collaborate to raise education for our children. He also said recently he attended the Library Ad-hoc Committee meeting and the Gerald Mobus Fishing Derby.

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PUBLIC PORTION / AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Bruce Ruck, Lakeview Avenue, said he would like to see a reversal with the sidewalk conversation. He feels it is important to discuss who is responsible to ultimately take care of the sidewalks and then the Council can decide if they want to do it or not. He feels like this decision is a large impact on the home owner and the town and needs to be thought out carefully.

Catherine Leigh, Guinard Drive, mentioned Hillcrest Road in said it is in desperate need of sidewalks. Councilman Nehls said that Hillcrest Road can also be considered. Ms. Leigh feels drivers do not want to stop for pedestrians and we are in need of usable sidewalks.

Margaret Ellis, Valley Road, said she is horrified to hear potential toxins are going to be sprayed in the air over our homes. She asked how much notice the residents will have so they can be absent when this occurs and Councilwoman Goodloe said the County is doing the spraying and they are the ones who need to provide the notice. Council President Gibbs said according to the Resolution it is the responsibility of the County to provide notice to the residents. Administrator Damato said he spoke with people at the County and asked them to provide dates in advance in order for the Borough to get notices out to the public.

Tom Franklin, Wildwood Terrace, said the Council will be acting on a resolution regarding deer management tonight. He said there are limited alternatives to this problem and feels it is very important to continue the cull. He said there is not an available contraceptive vaccine for free range deer out there. Mr. Franklin also said as far as sterilization for deer goes someone speaking about this topic has to get into all the logistics so the public is aware. He also mentioned this alternative is a difficult and costly alternative. He said now the alternatives are cull or do nothing and if nothing is done the Council will be responsibility for making a bad situation worse.

Catherine Leigh came forward and read a letter from resident Karen Graboyes. The letter focused on the need for a deer cull in Watchung. The letter also cited some of the data found as a result of the deer surveys conducted, how the deer destroying the understory in Watchung. In the letter, Mrs. Graboyes asked the Council to please recognize the facts and data and to start addressing the deer problem.

Ralph, a member of the Warren Blue Ridge Sports Club, provided the Council with background information on the Club. He said the Club adheres to the NJ Division of Wildlife regulations and town ordinances. He said deer hunting is done from elevated tree stands and always in a safe direction down towards the ground. He said the hunters have to qualify every year. He recommended Watchung consider the use of cross bows. He said the crossbow is much quieter, safer and opens up more sites for hunting. He asked the Council to consider the facts presented tonight and offered anyone who wants a crossbow demonstration to come up to their range in Warren Township and they would provide a demonstration. Councilwoman Goodloe asked what percentage of the deer hunted is donated to soup kitchens. Ralph responded that it is a very high volume but he does not know the exact numbers. He said they have donated much of the meat to many charities. Councilwoman Goodloe asked if they are permitted to sell the meat, and he responded no. He said they either consume the meat or they donate it.

Ashley Cohen, Hill Hollow Road, said through an OPRA request last year she found out the amount of deer meat donated in Watchung was only 27 percent. She also questioned enforcing ordinances such as the one we have that allows people who live in town to speak before people who do not.

Rachael Funcheon, Cedar Road, said if we had 120 deer per square mile the deer would be running all over the town. She said if there are going to be changes made to the Resolution tonight she asked it be pulled and to allow the public to have a moment to digest it. She said it's only fair and transparent if a new Resolution is being proposed the public and the Council can take time to read and understand it.

Catherine Leigh, Guinard Drive, said both deer studies done came back showing Watchung has a deer problem. She does not understand why the Council feels we should not have a cull. She said the Council was not elected to make decisions based on their opinions but elected to represent and keep Watchung safe. She said these studies were based on facts only.

Hans Juette, Elsinore Drive, said this issue started 20 years ago when the people of Watchung came to the Council to seek solutions on the deer issue. He said the Council passed an Ordinance which states if it's shown that a species is causing damage then they need to come up with a recommendation to manage that species. He said the culling results show that there are two to three fetuses for every doe. He mentioned the Council is supposed to work to protect residents' properties and we need to make this decision based on the facts.

Rachael Funcheon, Cedar Road, said the deer herd population has been going down. She mentioned the deer count numbers first done in 2002 are far greater than the numbers counted now.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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NEW BUSINESS

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The Consent Agenda items, were unanimously adopted following a motion by Council President Gibbs and a second by Councilman Nehls, and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Sopko, Goodloe, Eisenberg Knegten "aye."

Approval of the following Council minutes:

September 19, 2019 – Regular and Executive Session

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:

Library Advisory Committee Minutes–July 10, 2019
Board of Health Minutes – June 12, 2019
Recreation Commission– June 5, 2019
Historical Minutes – June 19, 2019
Building Department Report – September, 2019

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

- #33 Carolyn Taylor, Letter of Resignation as a Member of the Recreation Commission, Effective September 23, 2019 c: M & C, JD, LM
- #34 Borough of Tinton Falls, 9/3/19, Resolution in Support of Referendum Question on the 2019 General Election Ballot/Veterans who Reside in Continuing Care Retirement Communities will be Eligible for Property Tax Deduction C: M & C, JD
- #35 Township of Scotch Plains 9/30/19 Notice of Introduction of Ordinance; #2019-23
Re: Adopting Redevelopment Plan for “Area in Need of Redevelopment” known as “Snuffy Pantagis Redevelopment Area” Amending “Zoning” and Addition of New Sub Section.
Public Hearing to be held on October 15, 2019 C: M & C, JD, Pl. Board

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The Consent Agenda Resolutions as amended, were unanimously adopted with the exception of R11 by Council President Gibbs and a second by Councilman Nehls, and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Sopko, Goodloe, Eisenberg Knegten “aye.”

- R3:10/03/19 Authorize Agreement with Somerset County to allow the Application of Aerial Mosquito Control
- R4: Purchases Over \$2,000 – Claris– (PD – Filemaker Software Renewal)
Finne Building & Investment (B&G – Washington Drive Culvert Repairs)
Grove Lock & Safe Co. (PD- Electronic Lock System)
Cherry Valley Tractor Sales (B&G –Tractor Repairs)
Witmer Public Safety Group (FD-Hoses, Nozzles, Etc.)
NJ Fire Equipment Co (FD – Breathing Apparatus)
First Battalion Firefighting (FD- Hoses, Nozzles, Etc.)
Mid Atlantic Rescue Systems (FD- Hi –Vis Gear)
Tilcon New York, Inc. (2019 Road Improvement Program)
- R5: Waive Chapter 2-25.10 of the Code – Sparta Discount Tire
- R6: Authorize Professional Service Contract– Borough Engineer /Maser Consulting
- R7: Authorize Implementation of Halloween Curfew – October 31, 2019
- R8: Ratify Motion / Volunteer Fire Department Pig Roast/ Bon
- R9: Authorize Clerk to Advertise for Bids/ 2019 NJDOT Grant-Road & Drainage Improvements / Glen Eagles Drive, Wildwood Terrace, Carrar Drive (North Portion Only)
- R10: Authorize Placement of Charitable Bin – Texima LLC

Councilman Nehls said he had a discussion earlier with Mr. Cruz and has some issues with the content of the R11. He said all these stipulations that were agreed upon at the last Council meeting aren’t required of other groups and doesn’t feel it’s fair to ask the MOMS Club to run under other conditions. Mr. Cruz suggested to remove the conditions from the Resolution if they wanted to move the resolution forward.

Councilwoman Eisenberg Knegten asked to clarify what was being removed from the Resolution or if it was just point three regarding the insurance for the box. Councilman Nehls said all the conditions are to be removed as they were never requested from the Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts. He feels if we set rules for one group we should do it for all. Councilwoman Goodloe said the MOMS Club offered to maintain the box which is why the condition is listed in the Resolution. Mayor Balla said this was proposed and agreed to at our last meeting. He feels like we should ask the MOMS Club to come and be able to speak on the changes. Councilwoman Goodloe said the club offered to maintain it and seems unnecessary to remove it.

Council President Gibbs made a revised motion to move the following Resolution without the conditions in the fourth WHEREAS paragraph. Councilwoman Eisenberg Knegten suggested to keep conditions one and two and strike three, four and five in the fourth WHEREAS paragraph. Council President Gibbs then made a motion to move as revised. Councilman Nehls seconded the motion and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Sopko, Goodloe, Eisenberg Knegten “aye.”

R11: Ratify Motion / Approval for Little Free Library at Mobus Field / MOMS Club

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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.

Council President Gibbs removed himself from the dais.

Councilman Nehls moved the following correspondence with a second by Councilman Sopko and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Black, Nehls, Sopko, Goodloe, Eisenberg Knegten “aye.”

#36 PSE&G 9/20/19 Notice of Public Hearings re: (1) Petition for Approval of Changes in the Electric and Gas Societal Benefits Charge (2) Petition for Approval of the Next Phase of the Gas System Modernization Program and Cost Recovery Mechanism 10/02/19 C: M & C, JD

Council President Gibbs returned to the dais.

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

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

Council President Gibbs said the next topic is a passionate topic for all. He said the Council has been looking at the numbers of the deer population for a few years now and whether everyone agrees with the surveys done or not we are above the deer per square mile for forest regeneration. He said he does not feel the deer are the only problem but feel they pose and issue for our ability to regenerate our understory.

Council President Gibbs offered a motion to revise R13 and asked Mr. Cruz to revise the resolution in order to reflect these changes:

1. The program will not permit residential property hunting.
2. An expert will be hired to review the deer management program and make recommendations on any changes that may be prudent or warranted.
3. Additional information will be sent out to our residents. Signage will be placed at all boundaries during the cull activities indicating the length of time and weeks.
4. General public notice to be disseminated on the Borough website and via social media to residents indicating dates and locations of the program.
5. The program will be extended from 8 weeks to 12 weeks.

Council President Gibbs is offering those revisions to the resolution and asked Mr. Cruz to ratify this resolution at the next meeting.

Councilwoman Goodloe asked if she can propose her additional amendments now or wait until after the first set of amendments are voted on and discussed.

Attorney Cruz does not feel this resolution should be tabled. He suggested the Council debate on the motion and second and then if there are further amendments, that they be voted on separately.

Councilman Sopko seconded the amended motion by Council President Gibbs for public safety reasons.

Councilwoman Goodloe said she listened carefully to both presentations and found them to be very persuasive. She said both studies were hand-counted and the deer were identified by hand. She does not feel like we should have guns in residential areas and is pleased the Council came together to amend that condition in the Resolution.

Councilman Black said he is grateful to see these amendments. He is happy we are only using public property going forward.

Councilwoman Eisenberg Knegten agrees with the prior statements and was happy a compromise was made on this issue. She feels in the future this is something we need to work on and continue this more thoughtful approach moving forward regarding the long-term plan. She also agrees regional coordination with the surrounding towns is very important.

Council President Gibbs agrees with her statements and said that is why he feels an expert should be consulted to review our deer management program.

Attorney Cruz said the Council is voting on this tonight as amended and in two weeks they will be voting on the ratified Resolution confirming that the Resolution accurately reflects the vote tonight and the amendment process.

Council President Gibbs moved the following Resolution as amended with a second by Councilman Sopko and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Sopko, Goodloe, Eisenberg Knegten “aye.” Nehls, “nay.”

R13: Authorize 2019/2020 Deer Management Program / Warren Blue Ridge Sportsmen

Councilwoman Goodloe proposed further amendments to R13. She asked the resolution include a written notice via regular mail to all commercial property owners who abut or are within a half a mile from the site. She would also like to amend the setback from 450 feet to 550 feet, meaning you cannot hunt within 550 feet from any occupied or potentially occupied structure.

Council President Gibbs feels the half a mile notice is a little extreme. He feels like we can get the information out to the residents in other ways without doing a mailing of a half a mile. He proposed a quarter mile notice. Councilwoman Goodloe agreed to the quarter mile amendment. Councilman Sopko went through all proposed amendments and feels they are redundant but he said he would be accepting to those amendments as once the lists are created we will have them for the future.

Council President Gibbs moved the resolution on the direct mailing amendment of a quarter mile to all residents. Councilman Sopko seconded the motion and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Sopko, Goodloe, Eisenberg Knegten “aye.” Nehls, “nay.”

Attorney Cruz said the motion on the regular mailing to residents of a quarter mile from the culling site has been accepted and seconded and suggested discussion on the second amendment which was the setback to 550’ feet.

Council President Gibbs feels the state requirements of 450’ feet is adequate given the size of these sites.

Councilman Sopko said he additional 100 feet doesn’t make a difference and he does not support that amendment.

Councilman Black advised supports the 550 feet amendment.

Councilwoman Eisenberg Knegten feels from a public safety stand point she is in favor of increasing the 450 feet to 550 feet.

Roll call on the amendment proposed to change the requirement from 450’ feet to 550’ feet.
Gibbs, Sopko, Nehls “nay” Black, Goodloe, Eisenberg Knegten “aye.”

Attorney Cruz sad in the Borough form of government the Mayor breaks a tie.

Mayor Balla said for public safety reasons he supports the amendment being changed to 550 feet and voted “aye.”

The motion increasing the requirement to 550’ feet has passed.

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PUBLIC PORTION - GENERAL DISCUSSION

Catherine Leigh, Guinard Drive, commended the Council for coming together to reach a solution on the deer issue.

Wendy Robinson, Hill Hollow Road, asked when the discussion begins regarding paving the sidewalks to please include the repaving of Hill Hollow Road in that process. She said when it snows the plows come through and destroy the sidewalks and she doesn’t feel it should be the home owner’s responsibility to repair them after that. She commented on what Mr. Damato said earlier regarding the phones and internet being down at Borough Hall and asked him to make sure the Borough is protected against and aware of the cyber hacking issue.

Hans Juetten, Elsinore Drive, reminded everyone that the hunters do not need to use guns to cull the deer but can use the crossbow as a safer method. He asked why the rights were taken away from the residents in Watchung that everyone else in the State of New Jersey enjoys. He asked what makes Watchung so unique that the use of the crossbows are banned here. He told Council President Gibbs that he has been working with experts in the field regarding the deer issue, and said the Council chose not to bring in the Department of Environmental Protection, who are the real experts. He said Council President Gibbs has had a letter for months saying the DEP would like to come in and provide their opinion to the Council on what is necessary for a deer management program. Council President Gibbs said the Council cannot have a DEP only meeting. Attorney Cruz agrees that the DEP cannot come in and hold a meeting in executive session as it is not an exception under the Open Public Meetings Act. Mr. Juetten replied any textbook or University will tell you we need to get down to 10 deer per square mile in order to have regeneration.

Ray Barratt, Valley Road, thanked the Council for the start of a long overdue conversation. He said he looks forward to a more open discussion on the deer management topic. He also brought up the candidate debate held the night before and commended all the candidates on doing a great job and was pleased with the outcome.

Marilyn Goldstein, Hill Hollow Road, questioned why there is not a single “deer crossing” sign in town that tells drivers to proceed carefully. She feels there should be signs at the entrances in town to make people aware of the deer population. She also said she does see deer at night but she drives carefully to avoid them.

Tom Franklin, Wildwood Terrace, said by stretching the operating distances and restricting the number of possible culling sites that enough deer will not be harvested and the cull will become ineffective. He asked if crossbows could be authorized only on residential sites instead of the use of guns, as he feels the crossbows are quieter than and just as accurate as a gun. He also asked the Council to look into the extra 100’ feet amendment and make sure it wouldn’t render certain culling sites useless and if so asked the Council not to consider the extra 100 feet.

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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, Goodloe, Eisenberg Knegten, “aye.”

R14:10/03/19 Executive Session: Property Acquisition

The Borough Council may take official action on those items discussed in executive session upon completion of the executive session.

Upon return to regular session at 10:39 P.M. all Councilmembers previously present were still in attendance.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 P.M. to the Call of the Chair. The next scheduled meeting of the Mayor and Council to be held Thursday, October 17, 2019 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Regina Angelo, RMC
Administrative Assistant