

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

SEPTEMBER 15, 2022

[THIS MEETING WAS HELD IN-PERSON AND BROADCASTED VIA ZOOM]

MAYOR’S STATEMENT: Mayor Balla called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. and stated the following *“This meeting is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. 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 the Annual Meeting Notice to the Courier News, Echoes Sentinel, the Star Ledger, posted at Borough Hall and on the Borough’s website. Public Comments will be accepted in-person, through zoom or by email to the Borough Clerk. For those joining through Zoom, please note that upon arrival you are automatically muted.”*

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

ROLL CALL

Jubin [P] Robinson [P] Martino [P] Hayeck [P] Dahl [P] Ead [P]

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

❖ Watchung Hills Regional High School Referendum

Presentation by Elizabeth C. Jewett, Ph.D. Superintendent, Timothy M. Stys, Business Administrator, Michael Birnberg, Board Member, and Robert Morrison, Board President.

Dr. Jewett detailed the referendum process and discussed anticipated projects to be funded. Mr. Stys stated the goal is to utilize capital monies and have the ability to get debt service aide. He also discussed upgrades to the building and noted security equipment for the school is funded through the school budget and other grants.

Mayor Balla inquired with Mr. Stys on the amount of money annually set aside for the school’s capital reserve. Council Members took turns asking their questions on any anticipated cost increases and inquired on the statutory process of scheduling the date for the referendum.

PROCLAMATION

Mayor Balla read the following proclamation onto the record:

❖ Hispanic Heritage Month

PUBLIC PORTION / AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

No one appearing to speak.

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DISCUSSION

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE:

Board of Adjustment Meeting Minutes	August 11, 2022
Building Department Monthly Report	August 2022
Police Department Activity Report	August 2022
Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes	March 3, 2021 September 1, 2021 May 4, 2022

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

- #23 – Township of Berkeley Heights Planning Board, Notice of Public Hearing on 9/21/22 for construction of mixed-used property within area commonly known as Connell Corporate Park, rec’vd 9/12/22, cc: JD, M&C, TS
- #24 – Township of Scotch Plains, Notice of Public Hearing/ Final Adoption on 10/18/22 re Ordinance Amending Ch 23, Zoning, which amends current cannabis zoning in Scotch Plains to include Microbusiness in the permissible zoned area. Recv’d 9/12/22, cc: JD, M&C, TS
- #25 – Legal Notice from Levin Properties, LP, Application to the Planning Board, Public Hearing on 9/20/22. Recv’d 9/12/22, cc: JD, M&C

Council Member Ead questioned if the Planning Board could consider the idea of eventually adding a sidewalk option to connect the Bonnie Burn Development to Levin properties.

Attorney Sordillo made a few suggestions on how to go about this, one of which being an authorized representative of the Borough could appear before the Planning Board hearing and suggest this during their public comment section .

Motion to Adopt above by Jubin/Second by Hayeck

RC: Jubin [Y] Robinson [Y] Martino [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Ead [Y]

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CONSENT RESOLUTIONS

R1: Authorizing Purchase Orders over \$2,000 – Communications Specialists (*PD-yearly radio maint.*)

R2: Authorizing Refund to Jshotdogs for Mobile Food Establishment License

•R3: Authorizing Bill List

Motion to Adopt above by Jubin/Second by Dahl

RC: Jubin [Y] Robinson [Y] Martino [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Ead [Y]

•Martino [Abstain]

NON-CONSENT RESOLUTIONS

“AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, CH. 5-12.76 ET SEQ. THEREOF, AND TO, FIX AND DETERMINE MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM SALARIES AND COMPENSATION TO BE PAID TO CERTAIN EMPLOYEES AND FURTHER AMENDING TO INCLUDE THE TITLE OF POLICE CAPTAIN”

R4: Introducing OR 22/07 Amending the 2022 Min/Max Salary Ordinance

Motion to Adopt Above by Jubin / Second by Hayeck

RC: Jubin [Y] Robinson [Y] Martino [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Ead [Y]

“AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, CHAPTER 3, POLICE DEPARTMENT, TO AMEND THE ORGANIZATION OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT TO CREATE THE POSITION OF POLICE CAPTAIN”

R5: Introducing OR 22/08 Amending Chapter 3 to Establish the Title of Police Captain in the Department of Police

Council Member Martino asked Chief Hart for clarification on a few items regarding the above Ordinance. He suggested adding a buffer to the Ordinance to prevent the Council from having to make changes to it down the line. He also asked Attorney Sordillo for clarification on line 3-1.9 (line 9) of the above Ordinance in regards to the recommendation process by the Police Committee.

Council Member Hayeck provided input on the language of the ordinance and noted the main priority was to meet the structural needs requested by the Police Department. He noted he did not feel the language to add a buffer was necessary at the time.

Council President Jubin also agrees there is no need for additional buffer language to be placed in the ordinance. He also commended the Police Department for all they do for the community.

Council Member Robinson spoke on the process in regards to an up to amount and feels it would have been fiscally responsible to adopt the Ordinance with an up to 21 or 22 officers to cover future bases.

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Council Member Ead feels the need for more consistent police committee meetings are necessary.

Chief Hart stated his position is to tell the Governing Body what his department needs. He also mentioned if in the future more officers are needed, he will ask for more.

Motion to Adopt Above by Robinson / Second by Ead

RC: Jubin [Y] Robinson [Y] Martino [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Ead [Y]

R6: Authorizing Incidental Modification to Project Scope of MA-2022 Improvements to Johnston Drive and Scott Drive

Motion to Adopt Above by Ead/ Second by Hayeck

RC: Jubin [Y] Robinson [Y] Martino [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Ead [Y]

PUBLIC PORTION - GENERAL DISCUSSION

Charlie Gunther, Watchung Avenue, read a statement he prepared in regards to the censure of Council Member Martino.

Lynda Goldschein, submitted written public comment expressing her concern regarding censuring Council Member Christine Ead for asking for bids to do the Paving project at the Texier House

ADJOURNMENT

Upon there being no further business before Council the meeting ended at 8:48 P.M. to the Call of the Chair. The next meeting of the Mayor and Council will be held on Thursday, October 6, 2022 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Regina Angelo
Deputy Clerk
Approved: October 20, 2022