

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

MARCH 2, 2023

MAYOR’S STATEMENT: Mayor Ronald Jubin called the meeting to order at 7:31 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. No public comment shall be allowed to be made virtually or accepted in writing and read into the record. All writings received shall be acknowledged and accepted by the Council as regular correspondence. The Borough may broadcast its meetings virtually for public viewing as a courtesy.”*

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

ROLL CALL

Ead [P] Hayeck [P] Dahl [Absent] Fischer [P] Marano [P] Abi- Habib [P]

PROCLAMATION

Mayor Jubin read the following proclamation onto the record.

❖ National Nutrition Month

RESOLUTIONS

R1: Authorizing the Appointment of Christine Kozak as Patrol Officer

R2: Authorizing the Appointment of Zachary Woods as Patrol Officer

Motion to Adopt above by Marano/ second by Fischer

RC Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Absent] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS OF OFFICE

Mayor Jubin administered the oaths to Christine Kozak, followed by Zachary Woods.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

1. Administration & Finance – in addition to submitted report, no further comments.
2. Police – Councilman Marano commented that the Police Department is looking to improve the kitchen in the facility.
3. Public Works / Buildings and Grounds – Council President Ead spoke on the water main break that occurred today, she noted that the water was restored today at 2pm and reminder residents to sign up for nixle alerts. She thanked DPW, Fire and Rescue for their assistance and noted that in addition to

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

MARCH 2, 2023

the report submitted, pickle ball updates will be forthcoming and thanked Ms. Goldschein for her recent submission on Camp Endeavor.

Mayor Jubin inquired on the fountains and it was noted that they should be turned on in about 3 weeks.

4. Public Affairs:

Environmental – Council Member Abi-Habib reported that the Commission met this past Monday and is excited about the Styrofoam program. Drop off dates and times will follow in coming weeks and touched upon the plantings that will soon follow and occur on Operation Pride Day.

Recreation - no update provided.

Historical – no update provided.

Board of Health – no update provided.

5. Fire – Council Member Hayeck spoke on the shared services resolution listed on today's agenda and noted no further comments to submitted report.
6. Laws/Ordinances – no updated was provide, Mayor Jubin asked the Committee to revisit the outdoor dining ordinance. He advised that the Planning Board is awaiting direction from Council.

REPORTS OF BOROUGH OFFICERS

7. Engineer – Borough Engineer Jason Cline advised the water level in Watchung Lake has returned to normal , the local recreation improvement grant is still listed as in progress, 2023 DOT project is in draft and will be submitted shortly, pre-construction meeting for the various storm culvert repairs is scheduled for Monday, the Library and Phillips Field bridge proposals have been submitted to the municipality, the 2020, 2021 and 2022 DOT road jobs have been completed and the sanitary sewer inflow and infiltration work report was submitted.
8. Police Chief – Police Chief Hart advised the two new Police Department Officer hires are replacement Officers and thanked the Mayor and Council for assisting in this process. He reported 1,661 calls occurred in February requiring police response, 202 hours of in-service training occurred, 70 citations were issued for trucks and noted speed signs are currently located on Somerset Street, Valley Road and Hill Hollow.

Chief Hart advised we had one Police Officer resign last week.

9. Fire Chief – no report submitted.
10. Fire Official – Fire Official Chris Czuba reported that in February he conducted life hazard inspections on small mom and pop shops and proceeded to report the additional investigations done from the prior month. He noted that lithium battery posts for social media would be sent out as that seems to be a hot topic in fire prevention right now.

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

MARCH 2, 2023

11. Rescue Squad – Council Member Hayeck reported that the Rescue Squad conducted their training last month focused on patient consent and noted top responders.
12. Emergency Management – OEM Coordinator Carolyn Solon reported that functional exercises with the county went well, she reported on the CERT meeting which took place on February 28th and discussed a county wide call with OEM State Director. She reported that Directive #10, signed in 2022, calls for any planned event held by the Borough to follow an incident action plan; this requires written plans to be submitted and is mandatory for each event held starting in July 2023. Ms. Solon noted that the County provided templates to facilitate things for the Borough. She continued to report that a new Hazard Mitigation plan will be due in 2025, the County will hire a consultant and if Watchung wants funding for this, it will have to be written into the mitigation plan of the Borough.

She reported on the LEPC / Local Emergency Planning Council, and advised the State is working with a contractor to develop a plan to make LEPC groups regionalized thorough the County. The County will hold these Quarterly meetings and divide the municipalities up into regions. The Right to Know information will also be handled during these meetings. Ms. Solon was happy to mention the 10 years for Watchung's CERT meeting will be held in June.

13. Attorney – no report
14. Finance – CFO William Hance noted that following the budget hearings, he completed the budget documents and send them to the State. He also completed the annual financial statement, which was sent to all and posted online. Mayor Jubin inquired on when the budget would be made available online.
15. Clerk – Clerk Gil reminded all that any resident interested in a FREE radon kit just needs to come to our office with their proof of address. She also reported that this morning the County Board of Elections held a meeting. She stressed the need for poll workers and if anyone is interested, please reach out or visit the website. Also, this year the new touch-screen voting machines will be used for all elections this year. She advised that these new machines were in Watchung during the special elections last year, but for some new voters, this might be the first time they use the new machines. The county is expected to release a video to show how to cast your vote on the new machine. Once that is released the office will certainly share out. Lastly, for anyone interested in running for municipal office the deadline to submit petitions is March 27th. All relevant information can be found on the election page.
16. Administrator – Administrator Damato reported on the removing of several trees and they are looking to plant Cherry Trees.
17. Youth Services – no report
18. Planning Board – Mayor Jubin reported that the Board spoke on the outdoor dining ordinance and awaits further direction from Mayor and Council.
19. Municipal Alliance – no report

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

MARCH 2, 2023

20. Library Advisory Committee – Councilman Fischer advised that the carpet of the bicentennial room has been painted and thanked DPW for their work.
21. Traffic and Beautification – Council President Ead discussed the two new signs the Committee is working on. She mentioned the first sign will be replacing the green sign by the circle at Watchung Lake. The other sign of similar design will be placed by Best Lake parking lot, located at the top next to the sidewalk.

PUBLIC PORTION / AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

No one appearing

DISCUSSIONS

Mayor Jubin expressed his thoughts on the importance of recognizing March as National Women's Month and thanked Councilwoman Abi- Habib for bringing attention to this topic.

Councilwoman Abi-Habib suggested holding an event acknowledging contributions of women in Watchung and advised details will soon follow.

Mayor Jubin informed the public that if you know or you are a resident interested in participating in this event please reach out to Council Members or Administrative Borough staff.

Councilman Marano provided comments on the resolutions authorizing the Police Department Officer new hires and commended all who assisted in this process.

NEW BUSINESS

REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE:

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:

Fire Prevention Bureau Monthly Report	February 2023
Mayor and Council Meeting Minutes	February 16, 2023 February 25, 2023
Plainfield Area Regional Sewerage Authority Minutes	February 2, 2023
Planning Board Meeting Minutes	January 17, 2023

#2: Environmental Commission Proposal for New Styrofoam Recycling Program, recv'd 2/17/23,
cc: M&C, JD

Motion to Adopt above by Ead/ second by Fischer

RC Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Absent] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

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

MARCH 2, 2023

CONSENT RESOLUTIONS

- R3: Authorizing Appointment of Michael De Parto to Historical Committee
- R4: Requesting Authorization from NJ Division of Local Government Services to Establish Dedication by Rider for Expenditure of Fees For Animal Control Fund
- R5: Requesting Authorization from NJ Division of Local Government Services to Establish Dedication by Rider for Expenditure of Fees for Outside Employment of Off-Duty Municipal Officers
- R6: Requesting Authorization from NJ Division of Local Government Services to Establish Dedication by Rider for Expenditure from Storm Recovery Trust Fund
- R7: Requesting Authorization from NJ Division of Local Government Services to Establish Dedication by Rider for Expenditure of Fees from Uniform Fire Safety Act Penalties Fund
- R8: Requesting Authorization from NJ Division of Local Government Services to Establish Dedication by Rider for Expenditure of Fees from Unemployment Trust Fund

Motion to Adopt above by Ead/ second by Marano

RC Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Absent] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

NON-CONSENT RESOLUTIONS

- R9: Establishing a Permanent Styrofoam Recycling Program

Motion to Adopt above by Abi-Habib/ second by Ead

RC Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Absent] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

- R10: Authorizing Shared Services Agreement with the Borough of North Plainfield for the Joint Purchase and Use of a Fire Service Ladder Truck

Council Member Hayeck commented the agreement is not binding and further negotiations still need to occur. He advised this agreement allows our Borough to work with the Borough of North Plainfield to access State funds and offset costs.

Council President Ead thanked all who assisted in facilitating this process. She explained that shared service agreements are critical and important for municipalities to help bring down costs for residents.

Motion to Adopt above by Hayeck/ second by Ead

RC Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Absent] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

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

MARCH 2, 2023

PUBLIC PORTION - GENERAL DISCUSSION

No one appearing

ADJOURNMENT

Upon there being no further business, the meeting ended to the Call of the Chair at 8:41 P.M. The next meeting of the Mayor and Council will be Thursday, March 16, 2023 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Regina Angelo
Deputy Borough Clerk
Approved: March 16, 2023