

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

DECEMBER 5, 2024

MAYOR’S STATEMENT: Mayor Jubin 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.”*

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

ROLL CALL

Ead [P] Dahl [P] Fischer [P] Marano [P] Abi- Habib [P] Gibbs [P]

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

❖ Recognizing the Green Team Advisory Committee for their Sustainable Jersey Silver Certification

Mayor Jubin commenced by speaking fondly of the importance of green initiatives, hard work and the importance of trying something, even if it does not seem achievable at first. He spoke fondly of the hard work that the Green Team Advisory Committee had done across the many years since they first started, winning them the bronze certification first and now silver.

Councilwoman Abi-Habib commented on the NJLM award event and the experience felt as she listened to the number of items that larger towns did in order to achieve this too. Council President Ead and Councilman Gibbs further added how unbelievable it was for our small borough to earn this designation and gave accolades to the members of the Green Team and in particular Borough CFO William Hance.

Mayor Jubin presented certificates to all the members of the Green Team that were present. Green Team Chair Charlie Neiss spoke about the points process and commended Bill Hance for his dedication as well.

REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Mayor Jubin moved the order of business as he wanted to allow the Rescue Squad to comment on an initiative they are working for 2025.

1. Rescue Squad – Denise Wilson was present and spoke on new CPR classes that will be offered to Watchung residents and employees that want to take advantage. The price would be \$55 to become CPR certified; the Rescue Squad will be releasing an email in January with all of the details. Council Members spoke on the importance of knowing of everyone knowing CPR.
2. Administration & Finance – Councilman Fischer advised there was no update since the last meeting.
3. Police – Councilman Marano reported that the committee is looking to invest in a drone for the Police Department. He noted that much of Watchung is wooded and having a drone would facilitate if ever there was a need to search for a child or conduct a chase. Councilman Marano spoke on the plans to implement training and the funding source this could come from. Councilman Dahl discussed how

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

DECEMBER 5, 2024

much he has learned by being in the Police Committee and the different instances where a wooded area will limit and restrict Police operations.

4. Public Works / Buildings and Grounds – A written report was filed, but Council President Ead added that work by PSE&G continues on Valley Road and other areas but is near their completion; other roads are expected to be worked on in the spring.

5. Public Affairs:

Environmental – Councilman Marano advised that the Commission met on October 28th and discussed Board of Adjustment applications. They are keeping a close eye on the Bonnie Burn project, especially for tree applications. He further elaborated on a proposal submitted to Mayor and Council for a clothing recycling bin, they would partner with Helpsy and this could be another revenue stream for the borough.

Recreation – Councilman Dahl reported that the commission is hard at work in planning the events for 2025 and for the first time will be rolling out a winter wonderland event on Saturday 21st.

Historical – Councilman Fischer reported on the Committee’s open house held on November 17th. The Committee and volunteers are hard at work scanning a lot of the history there, he encouraged other to attend.

Board of Health – Councilwoman Abi-Habib advised she missed the last meeting but noted minutes would be filed.

6. Fire – Councilman Dahl noted a written report was submitted and highlighted that Santa was coming to town on December 14th and the Fire Department could be reached via direct message with street requests.
7. Laws/Ordinances – Councilman Gibbs reported on the upcoming ordinances that were being worked to in addition to those scheduled tonight. Ranging from pool fences, public urination, public camping, fire prevention, solicitations around the neighborhood, fire prevention ordinance, etc. Mayor Jubin commended the committee for their work and noted there were more ordinances this year than in the prior 5 recent year.

REPORTS OF BOROUGH OFFICERS

8. Engineer – Engineer Jason Cline spoke about PSE&G road work, announcement from DCA for an upcoming grant opportunity, and advised they had been informed last month of a grant award from NJDOT in the amount of \$291,609.00 and noted permit applications for work on Valley Road were submitted to NJDEP. Mayor Jubin asked Mr. Cline report on the risk assessment meeting he participated in, to which he provided a brief summary.
9. Police Chief – Captain Zaiton was present and reported Chief Anderle was at the Atlantic County graduation where now Officer Calleo participated. He then proceeded to report on the departments November activity.

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

DECEMBER 5, 2024

10. Fire Official – Thomas McNulty was present before Council and reported on his November inspections. Mr. McNulty also clarified that the fireworks for this weekend’s event were approved with all agencies.
11. Attorney Sordillo had nothing additional to report.
12. Finance – CFO William Hance reported that the borough had received a grant for \$58,000 for green vehicles, he noted some of the money could be used to install a high-speed charger. Bill advised he was in discussions as to where to place the EV charger that would be for municipal vehicles only. Lastly, he reported that there were 10 properties at the last tax sale.
13. Borough Clerk Gil reported on an announcement by the NJ Division of ABC, all covid-19 expansion of premises permits issued have been extended until November 30, 2025.
14. Planning Board - Councilman Gibbs advised the next meeting was scheduled for December 17th since applicant for Raising Cane wasn’t ready last time.
15. Municipal Alliance – Councilman Marano reported on a documentary called “Upstandards” on bullying, the Alliance recommends that it be watched as a family to allow for a conversation on this matter. The information will be posted to the borough’s website for all.
16. Library Advisory Committee – Councilman Fischer invited all to the upcoming program that the library in the building of ginger bread houses.
17. Traffic and Beautification – Council President Ead thanked the Department of Public Works for assisting with all the holiday decorations and gave a shoutout to the Garden Club for decorating the temporary space at the library for the kids programs.

Councilman Dahl commented that Watchung is such a small town and we have such great residents that have gone on to be a shortstop for the Yankees, some football players and today someone who has done a lot for the Borough was placed to be on President Trumps cabinet. He wished him well and thanked him for his contributions.

PUBLIC PORTION / AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

- No one appearing

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ORDINANCES ON PUBLIC HEARING & FINAL ADOPTION

Councilman Gibbs moved to open the public hearing on this item. No one appeared wishing to be heard.

OR 24/17: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 28, LAND DEVELOPMENT, OF THE

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

DECEMBER 5, 2024

BOROUGH CODE BY ESTABLISHING REGULATIONS OF TEMPORARY ACCESSORY STRUCTURES THROUGHOUT THE BOROUGH

Motion to Adopt by Gibbs/ second by Ead

RC: Ead [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y] Gibbs [Y]

Council President Ead moved to open the public hearing on this item. There was no one appearing wishing to be heard.

OR 24/18: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A STORMWATER DRAINAGE & MAINTENANCE EASEMENT AT 55 BEECHWOOD LANE, BLOCK 25.01/ LOT 7

Motion to Adopt by Ead/ second by Abi-Habib

RC: Ead [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y] Gibbs [Y]

NEW BUSINESS

REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE:

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:

Board of Adjustment Minutes	October 10, 2024
Construction Monthly Report	November 2024
Fire Prevention Monthly Report	November 2024
Green Team Minutes	September 25, 2024
Historical Committee Minutes	September 18, 2024 October 16, 2024
Library Advisory Committee Minutes	May 15, 2024
Mayor and Council Minutes	November 7, 2024
Planning Board Minutes	October 15, 2024

#24: Planning Board Review Memo of ORD 24/17, recv'd 11/15/24, cc: M&C, JS, JD

#25: Notice of Allison Baitel's Non-Renewal of Membership from the Recreation Commission recv'd 11/5/24, cc: M&C, DG

#26: Notice from the SC Planning Board re State Development & Redevelopment Cross Acceptance Plan, recv'd 11/18/24, cc: M&C, JD, PB

Motion to Accept above by Ead/ second by Fischer

RC: Ead [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y] Gibbs [Y]

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

DECEMBER 5, 2024

CONSENT ITEMS

R1: Authorizing the Return of Escrow Monies for Engineering Review Fees

R2: Waiving Borough Fees for Watchung's Winter Wonderland event on December 21st

R3: Authorizing Purchases Over Allowed Threshold – Party Perfect Rentals, LLC

Motion to Adopt by Ead/ second by Marano

RC: Ead [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y] Gibbs [Y]

NON-CONSENT ITEMS

R4: Establishing Green Purchasing Policies for the Borough

Motion to Adopt by Abi-Habib/ second by Gibbs

RC: Ead [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y] Gibbs [Y]

R5: Authorizing a Contract with Animal Control Solutions, LLC for 2025

Motion to Adopt by Fischer/ second by Abi-Habib

RC: Ead [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y] Gibbs [Y]

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

OR 24/20: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 27, RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY REGISTRATION, OF THE BOROUGH'S CODE TO UPDATE INSPECTION REGULATIONS

Motion to Adopt by Gibbs/ second by Fischer

RC: Ead [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y] Gibbs [Y]

OR 24/21: ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 3, POLICE DEPARTMENT, OF THE BOROUGH'S CODE TO UPDATE THE ORGANIZATION OF THE WATCHUNG BOROUGH POLICE DEPARTMENT

Motion to Adopt by Gibbs/ second by Marano

RC: Ead [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y] Gibbs [Y]

OR 24/22: ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 6, POLICE REGULATIONS, OF THE BOROUGH'S CODE TO ESTABLISHING RESTRICTED AREAS AT THE WATCHUNG BOROUGH POLICE DEPARTMENT

Motion to Adopt by Gibbs/ second by Fischer

RC: Ead [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y] Gibbs [Y]

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

DECEMBER 5, 2024

PUBLIC PORTION - GENERAL DISCUSSION

- No one appearing

ADJOURNMENT

Upon there being no further business before Council, the meeting ended at 8:50 P.M. to the Call of the Chair. The next meeting of the Mayor and Council will be Thursday, December 19, 2024 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Edith G. Gil
Borough Clerk

Approved: December 19, 2024