

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

**NOVEMBER 3, 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]

**OATH OF ALLEGIANCE AND OFFICE**

Mayor Balla administered the Oath of Office to the newly appointed Captain of the Police Department, Scott Anderle.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

R1: Honoring and Designating Elizabeth Titus as Historical Committee Member Emeritus

Mayor and Council Members expressed their thanks for all of Mrs. Titus’ dedicated years of service to Watchung.

Motion to Adopt Above by Ead / Second by Hayeck

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

Council Member Hayeck made a motion to change the order of business and bring forward the Discussion item / Second by Jubin

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

**DISCUSSION**

- ❖ NJ Motion Picture & Television Commission Code of Professional Responsibility

Mayor Balla provided an overview of discussions held at the September 23<sup>rd</sup> film ready workshop such as the growth of the New Jersey film industry, tax credits and other topics.

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

**NOVEMBER 3, 2022**

Angela Miele, speaking on behalf of the Motion Picture Association of America, provided comments on the New Jersey tax incentives and film production process that would be in place in participating municipalities.

Council Members provided comments on the film production process in the Borough.

Clerk Edith Gil also provided comments regarding her attendance at the Film Ready Workshop. She discussed the possible benefits to Borough businesses and residents. Council Member Robinson made inquiries on the Code of Conduct section in the sample ordinance provided.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:**

1. Administration & Finance: Council President Jubin provided detailed updates on various matters. Among them were updates to the uniform construction code fees, open permit process, best practices inventory, installation of the new phone system as well as revising the mission and vision statement that might be discussed at the next Council meeting.

Council Member Martino inquired if the Building and Fire Prevention departments were running in a deficit or a surplus. He also asked for an update on FEMA reimbursements.

Administrator Damato provided a detailed overview of FEMA reimbursement funds received and stated they will all be allocated to capital projects.

2. Police: Council Member Robinson congratulated Captain Anderle on his promotion. She also provided updates relating to new police cars arriving and discussed the process of reviewing applicants entering the Police Academy pursuant to the County scholarship program.
3. Public Works / Buildings and Grounds: Council Member Ead provided comments relating to plans and quotes to go forward with the pickleball concept, passive recreation and resurfacing the basketball court in the Spring. She also commented on the continuation of the PSE&G gas line replacement on Somerset Street and the current and upcoming infrastructure changes throughout the Borough.
4. Public Affairs:  
Environmental: Council Member Robinson reported on the tree removal and replacement statistics. She also commented on the approved Levin Property/ Shoprite renovations and advised a management plan is being put into place as a result of the Environmental Commissions suggestions. The next Styrofoam collection date is tentatively scheduled for January 21<sup>st</sup> 2023. She also mentioned the Green Team is working on specs for a new electric vehicle charging station. Council Member Robinson also provided detailed comments on the decline in the Best Lake bass population.

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

**NOVEMBER 3, 2022**

Recreation: Council Member Hayek expressed his thanks to all for making the Harvest Festival event a great success. He reported the Commission met last month and discussed different projects and ideas for improvements to Mobus Field.

Historical: Council Member Ead provided detailed comments on the Journey Through the past Event. Discussions were held in regards to protecting the Texier House Museum from future storms.

Board of Health: Council President Jubin reported St. Huberts, our animal control vendor is foregoing their services and the Borough will be soliciting requests for a new vendor. He thanked all the Watchung Walkers for their participation and mentioned the event was a great success. He also mentioned there are still two vacancies on the Board of Health.

5. Fire: Council Member Dahl stated the Committee discussed preparing for the surge of electric vehicles, and mentioned there were 19 calls for service for the month of October. He also mentioned the department is looking forward to participate in the upcoming Veterans Day Ceremony.
6. Laws/ Ordinances: Council Member Martino reported on the Committees October 21<sup>st</sup> meeting in which matters relating to final Ordinance reviews and updating the residential rental property Ordinance were discussed. He also suggested going through all Borough Ordinances to ensure they follow along with the State code.

Attorney Sordillo provided a detailed summary regarding updates made to the Residential Rental Property Ordinance. He also advised the revised Ordinance has been reviewed and circulated to the Council.

Mayor Balla changed the order of Reports to allow Police Chief Hart to provide his update.

7. Police Chief: Chief Andrew Hart reported on the departments October figures. He also discussed the speed sign enforcement program and mentioned officers from the department attended the electric vehicle training session.

**REPORTS – OTHER:**

8. Engineer: Professional Engineer Jason Cline, RVE, provided comments on various matters. Among them were discussions about lowering the water level in the lake, awaiting notification from the NJDOT regarding the 2023 grant application submitted, repairs to various storm culverts, final payments made to the Morris County Co-Op, updates to the flashing crosswalk signal on Stirling Road, updates on the soil sampling at Ness Farm and other projects were discussed.

Discussions occurred between Council Member Martino and Engineer Jason Cline regarding the drainage and paving of Meadowlark Road. Council Member Robinson requested further clarification on the design of the Michael Stein Memorial table.

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

**NOVEMBER 3, 2022**

9. Rescue Squad: Council Member Robinson reported on the drills for the month of October. She also discussed the upcoming Tree of Lights Ceremony.
10. Emergency Management: OEM Coordinator, Carolyn Solon, provided detailed comments on a new directive released on October 12<sup>th</sup> which mandates the use of the incident command system for all incidents and planned events.
11. Attorney: Attorney Sordillo had no report.
12. Finance: CFO Hance had no report.
13. Clerk: Clerk Edith Gil provided comments on various matters. Among them were reminding voters the hours and locations of early voting, discussions to waive application fees for an upcoming raffle and bingo event sponsored by the Watchung PTO, and the Boroughs next edition of the newsletter expected to be released around November 15<sup>th</sup>.
14. Administrator: Administrator Damato provided a detailed update on the PSE&G direct install program.
15. Youth Services: Council Member Dahl had no report.
16. Planning Board: Council Member Martino reported on the last meeting in which matters relating to the review and finalization of the Blue Star Mall Shoprite was discussed.
17. Municipal Alliance: Council Member Hayeck reported on the Committees last meeting in which matters relating to upcoming events were discussed.
18. Library Advisory Board: Council Member Robinson provided detailed comments on the October 24<sup>th</sup> Friends of the Library sponsored event. She also encouraged residents to please complete the Boroughs online survey regarding the library and expressed her thanks for the new Library sign.
19. Traffic and Beautification: Council Member Ead reported on the Committees September 19<sup>th</sup> meeting in which matters relating to beautifying the town, the success of the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Scarecrow Stroll and Contest, and possibly a new sign for Watchung and Best Lake were discussed. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on November 7<sup>th</sup>.

**PUBLIC PORTION / AGENDA ITEMS ONLY**

No one appearing to speak.

**DISCUSSION**

None held

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

**NOVEMBER 3, 2022**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE:**

CERT Meeting Minutes	October 25, 2022
Engineer’s Status Report	October 2022
Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes	September 19, 2022
Green Team Meeting Minutes	August 15, 2022 September 19, 2022
Municipal Council Executive Session Minutes	October 20, 2022
Planning Board Meeting Minutes	September 20, 2022
Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes	September 7, 2022

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

- #29 Legal Zoning Board of Adjustment Notice by MAHA, LLC, recv’d 10/24/22, Notice of Public Hearing Nov 10, 2022. cc: M&C, JD
- #30 Township of Scotch Plains Notice of Proposed Ordinance, Redevelopment Plan for 347 Park Ave and 350 Forest Road, Public Hearing Dec 13, 2022. cc: M&C, JD, TS
- #31 City of Plainfield Notice of Proposed Ordinance, “Amending Code Section 17:9-24A, Cannabis-Related Businesses,” Public Hearing November 14, 2022. cc: M&C, JD, TS

Motion to Adopt above by Jubin/Second by Hayeck

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

**CONSENT RESOLUTIONS**

R2: Authorizing Purchase Orders over \$2,000 –OSI Technology (*Annual Phone Maintenance*)  
Penyak Roofing Co (*Roof at Borough Hall*)  
Glenco Supply, Inc. (*Crossing sign kit*)  
Knox Company (*FD key defender, bracket, knox connect*)  
Fun Services (*harvest festival entertainment*)  
Watchung Valley Golf Club (*Holiday party*)  
Advanced Traffic Control, LLC (*2 traffic control officers*)

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

**NOVEMBER 3, 2022**

\*R3: Authorizing Bill List

Motion to Adopt above by Jubin/Second by Hayeck

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

\*R3 Ead [Abstain]

**NON-CONSENT RESOLUTIONS**

R4: Establishing a Filmmakers Code of Professional Responsibility

Motion to Adopt Above by Jubin / Second by Hayeck

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

R5: Authorizing Field and Facility Permit Application for Watchung Republican Club for a Rally on November 5, 2022 at Best Lake Parking Lot

Council Member Martino asked for further clarification regarding the purpose of the application submitted. He referenced a section of the Code and inquired on the need for a resolution rather than past practice of a verbal approval from the Mayor.

Attorney Sordillo advised he could not speak to what was done in the past but advised he was asked to update the field and facility permit application.

Motion to Adopt Above by Hayeck/ Second by Dahl

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

**PUBLIC PORTION - GENERAL DISCUSSION**

- 1) Bill Candiloros, Nottingham Drive, discussed with Mayor Balla where the idea originated regarding the new library proposal. He also suggested an Ordinance to minimize the number of signs per property throughout the Borough.
- 2) Aiden Cooper, Tuttle Road, questioned if a study was done regarding the invasive species found in the Watchung lake caused by human activity. He also is in disagreement with restricting the number of signs per property.
- 3) Kristy Hartman, Spencer Lane, questioned if the Borough has ever considered closing Hillcrest Road off to all trucks. Ms. Hartman also questioned if the surveys, engineering reviews and appraisals relating to the library / barn property have been completed.

Mayor Balla responded that the NJ Department of Transportation along with the County Engineer provided recommendations to make it difficult for trucks to come down Hillcrest Road. Administrator Damato provided comments relating to the completed survey, authorized easements and agreements in place. He also stated the application is awaiting Board of Adjustment approval. Attorney Sordillo also provided further comments relating to the process

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

**NOVEMBER 3, 2022**

of these agreements going forward.

- 4) Joe Flagares, Ridge Road, submitted written public comments regarding Council Member Martino's open permits.

Council Member Martino provided comments relating to the speakers' comments.

- 5) Neil Shroff, Valley Road, submitted written comments regarding an incident involving Council Member Robinson.

Council Member Robinson provided comments relating to speakers' comments and also advised the incident was fully investigated and is now closed.

Council Member Hayeck encouraged all to continue to work together as a team and to focus on the Councils positive accomplishments.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

R6: Authorizing Executive Session to Discuss Contract Negotiations:  
TWA Application – Sanitary Sewer Agreements

Motion to Adopt Above by Jubin/ Second by Hayeck

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

Mayor and Council entered executive session at approximately 10:10 P.M. and returned to open session at approximately 10:40 P.M.

Motion to Return to Open Session by Jubin/ Second by Robinson

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

Upon there being no further business before Council the meeting ended at 10:41 P.M. to the Call of the Chair. The next meeting of the Mayor and Council will be held on Monday, November 21, 2022 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Regina Angelo  
Deputy Clerk  
Approved: December 22, 2022