

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

MAY 16, 2024

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.”*

SALUTE TO THE FLAG and MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN, SERVING HOME AND ABROAD and STATE TROOPER MARCELLUS BETHEA.

ROLL CALL

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

PROCLAMATION

Mayor Jubin read the following proclamations onto the record.

Mayor Jubin also acknowledged Public Works Week and mentioned the Borough has a phenomenal Public Works team.

Mayor Jubin provided comments on first meeting Mayor Ellis and described how warm and open and caring he has always been.

- ❖ Building Safety Month
- ❖ EMS Week
- ❖ Honoring Mayor Ellis

Mayor Ellis thanked everyone present and reminisced on his times as Mayor and noted what an honor it was to serve and raise his family in Watchung. He thanked the Mayor and Council for this recognition and mentioned that if anyone needs any kind of information, he is always available.

Mayor Jubin and the Council presented Mayor Ellis with a gift honoring his many years of dedicated service.

Assemblywoman Matsikoudis was present to provide Mr. Ellis with a certificate on behalf on Senator John Bramnick and Assemblywoman Nancy Munoz.

Former Mayor Steven Pote, thanked Mayor Ellis for his dedication to Watchung and everything he has done for him personally. He commented on his history of their interactions at Wilson Memorial Church and all the appreciated advice and guidance received from Mayor Ellis.

Donald Speeney, Planning Board Member, spoke on previous experiences with Mayor Ellis on the Planning Board such as the Mayors Regatta and thanked him for all his service to Watchung.

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JD Bryden, Deputy District Director, presented Mayor Ellis with a certificate of special congressional recognition for his dedication to Watchung on behalf of Congressman Kean's Office.

Executive Director Snyder from the Plainfield Area Regional Sewerage Authority thanked Mayor Ellis for all his dedicated service.

Council President Ead expressed her thanks to Mayor Ellis for his lifetime of service to community and Watchung.

Councilman Gibbs expressed his thanks to Mayor Ellis for all his dedicated service.

Councilwoman Abi-Habib expressed her thanks to Mayor Ellis for all his devotion and dedication to making Watchung a better place.

Councilman Marano thanked Mayor Ellis for his lifetime of service to Watchung.

Councilman Dahl expressed his thanks to Mayor Ellis for being devoted, humble, respectful, hard working and committed.

Mayor Jubin once again expressed his thanks to Mayor Ellis for all his service to Watchung and for being the patriarch of the community. He invited members of the public to take pictures with Mayor Ellis and to enjoy the cookies provided.

Prior to calling a 5-minute recess, Mayor Jubin extended his condolences to the family of former Councilmember Patrick Fittipaldi who passed away on May 9th.

PUBLIC PORTION / AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

No one appeared.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE:

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:

Animal Control Solutions Monthly Report	April 2024
Board of Adjustment Meeting Minutes	April 11, 2024
Construction Code Monthly Report	April 2024
Fire Prevention Report	April 2024

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Mayor and Council Regular Meeting Minutes	March 7, 2024 May 2, 2024
Mayor and Council Executive Session Minutes	May 2, 2024
Police Activity Report	April 2024

#8: Notice of Resignation from C. Zaikov to Recreation Commission, recv'd 5/1/24, cc: M&C

#9: Letter from NJDEP re: SC Septic Management Plan, recv'd 5/14/2024, cc: M&C, BOH, Zoning

Council President Ead thanked Mr. Zaikov for all his years of service to the Recreation Commission and the youth of Watchung. Councilman Dahl extended his thanks to Mr. Zaikov and wished him all the best.

Motion to Adopt the above by Ead/ Second by Marano

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

CONSENT ITEMS

R1: Authorizing Appointments of Summer Camp Staff

R2: Authorizing a Field and Facility Permit Application for Movie Night Held by the Watchung PTO

R3: Authorizing Raffle Licenses #681 & #682 to Father's Club of Mount Saint Mary Academy High School

R4: Authorizing Appointments of Volunteers to the Recreation Commission and the Green Team

R5: Supporting the Swift Passage of S-2930/A-4045 Calling for the Modernization of the Open Public Records Act

R6: Authorizing Purchases Over Allowed Threshold – Jesco, Inc. (*PW - backhoe loader*)

Motion to Adopt the above by Ead/ Second by Dahl

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

NON-CONSENT ITEMS

R7: Authorizing Appointment of Deputy Emergency Management Coordinators

Motion to Adopt the above by Dahl/ Second by Ead

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

R8: Awarding a Contract to MTM Metro Corp for the Removal and Disposal of Asbestos Containing Material

Councilman Marano questioned where the scope of work would be and Administrator Damato advised

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The asbestos removal will take place at the library.

Motion to Adopt the above by Ead/ Second by Gibbs

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

Attorney Sordillo advised that he had received word on a last-minute resolution (R10) authorizing a 50/50 raffle license to the Watchung Educational Foundation, to be conducted at Mobus Field on June 22nd with a rain date scheduled for the same time and location on June 23rd.

He also mentioned this Resolution is subject to final State approval for any other permits or requirements from the State to operate as well as any other functions they will conduct at the property.

Council President Ead expressed her thanks to the Watchung Educational Foundation for coming together with this initiative.

Upon this guidance, Councilman Gibbs called to move this oral resolution authorizing a 50/50 raffle license to the Watchung Educational Foundation for June 22, 2024.

Motion to Adopt the above by Gibbs/ Second by Ead

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

PUBLIC PORTION - GENERAL DISCUSSION

Dmitry Gukhman, Resident, expressed his thanks and appreciation for Administrator Damato's involvement in resolving the water leak situation at his home.

Councilman Gibbs spoke on the rules and different channels that officials have to go through to be able to get the best results for residents.

Mayor Jubin thanked Sherif Zaiton, Police Captain, Charles Pivnichny, and Brennen Gaiser, Police Dispatcher, our 1st, 2nd and 3rd Deputy OEM Coordinators for their volunteerism.

Council President Ead provided comments on the successful Mayor and Council Senior Luncheon and expressed her thanks to everyone who helped organize the event.

Mayor Jubin provided comments on what an honor it is to have such strong women leadership by his side in Watchung. He also spoke on the successful Women of Watchung event and reminded everyone about the upcoming Community picnic.

Michael Schachter, Resident, expressed his concerns about the builder who was building houses on Upper Drive and is now building on the Extension. He stated the builder refused to put in a cul-de-sac which was approved by the Planning Board twenty-two years ago and provided detailed examples of why its needed. He also mentioned when the ground was moved around, they created water problems coming down the hill. He requested assistance from the Mayor and Council to help him resolve these issues.

Administrator Damato commented on information provided to him by Engineer Jason Cline.

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Mayor Jubin advised they would look into Mr. Schachter's concerns and get back to him.

Councilman Gibbs mentioned the Mayor's Wellness Walk scheduled for Monday night will be associated with a Holocaust Remembrance event.

Councilmember Abi-Habib stated in regards to the Mayors Wellness Campaign, at the Community Picnic there will be blood pressure screenings, CPR and first aide demonstrations, free movement screenings, and a group fitness activity for everyone.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

R9: Authorizing an Executive Session for Contract Negotiation and Attorney-Client Privilege Matters

Motion to Adopt the above by Ead/ Second by Gibbs

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

Mayor and Council entered into executive session at approximately 8:46 P.M. – 9:54 P.M.

Motion to return to open session by Gibbs/ second by Ead

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

ADJOURNMENT

Upon there being no further business, the meeting ended at 9:55 P.M. to the call of the Chair. The next meeting of the Mayor and Council will be Thursday, June 6, 2024 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Regina DeLeonibus
Deputy Borough Clerk

Approved: July 18, 2024