

BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

MINUTES

WORKSHOP MEETING OF JANUARY 22, 2004

MAYOR'S STATEMENT: Mayor Ellis called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and made the following statement: 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 annual notice to the Courier News, Echoes Sentinel, The Messenger-Gazette and Star Ledger, and posted at Borough Hall

SALUTE TO THE FLAG, SILENT PRAYER, and ROLL CALL

Black [P] Franklin [P] Otto [P] Mobus [P] Joren [P] Harding [P]

Also present were Borough Attorney Albert Cruz, Acting Borough Administrator/Clerk Laureen Fellin, and Deputy Borough Clerk Michelle DeRocco

PRESENTATION – Insurance Awareness Workshop presented by the James F. Hurley Insurance Co.

Mayor Ellis introduced Jim Hurley and Candyce Forster with whom he said he has been working with since the beginning of time. He also announced that Laureen Fellin is now our representative for JIF

Mr. Hurley gave a brief overview of the JIF program and said that the Employment Practices Liability (EPL) has escalated. He explained that there is a formal process for employee's complaints and a need for mandatory personnel policies. He said all employees and the Governing Body need to be trained on a number of different policies which include violence in the work place, drug and alcohol abuse, and sexual harassment, as the Borough's deductible is now \$10,000. with an additional 20% of any claim balance the Borough would be liable for JIF has provided a model Personnel Practices Program program on a CD to the Borough which should be reviewed. Councilman Otto asked Mr. Hurley if JIF did a review last year and if so, how our professionals are doing. Mr. Hurley replied that they review liability but not personnel and Watchung's program has been approved. Borough Attorney Albert Cruz stated that the Borough needs to certify to JIF that they are in compliance. Mr. Hurley stated that credit is given on certification. Mr. Cruz asked Mr. Hurley why the Governing Body has a liability and he explained that in a lawsuit against the Borough, everyone would be named. Councilman Black asked if punitive damages were to exceed \$10 million dollars if they then go after personal assets. Mr. Cruz said there are many resolutions from other towns asking for a limit on punitive damages and said the bottom line is, follow the guidelines and don't do anything wrong. Ms. Forster added that in New Jersey, punitive damages are not insured. Mayor Ellis said the Borough has created a new personnel policy for supervisors and employees and all have either been trained or will be trained. Councilman Mobus asked if this included volunteers such as the Fire Chief and Mr. Hurley explained that yes, volunteers including the firemen and rescue squad members need to be trained also. Mayor Ellis said he has no problem mandating this.

Mayor Ellis thanked Mr Hurley and Ms. Forster for coming this evening and bringing awareness to the severity of the situation.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 P.M to the call of the chair and to the next regularly scheduled meeting will follow at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle DeRocco