

BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

MINUTES

DECEMBER 29, 2008 - 7:30 P.M.

MAYOR'S STATEMENT: Mayor Ellis called the meeting to order at 7:35 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, Messenger-Gazette and Star Ledger, and posted at Borough Hall.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG and SILENT PRAYER

ROLL CALL

Franklin [P] Black [A] Mobus [P] Joren [A] Pote [P] Nehls [P]

Also present were Administrator/Clerk Lauren Fellin, Borough Attorney Albert Cruz, Police Chief Sean Whelan, Borough Engineer Tom Herits and Deputy Clerk Michelle DeRocco. There were 37 members of the public present, with 16 remaining after the Police appointments,.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE AND OFFICE

The meeting began with Council President and Police Commissioner Thomas Franklin administering the Oath of Office to two new probationary Police Officers, Sherif Zaiton and Kyle Poulsen, who will begin their employment with the Borough on January 1, 2009.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. Administration & Finance - Councilman Nehls reported the Administrative and Finance Committee met this morning to review the RFP's for the positions of Attorney and Prosecutor, and will meet again soon to review the other proposals received.

2. Police - Councilman Franklin said the end of the year police activity statistics will not be available until January. He welcomed the two new police officers and wished the two retirees well. He said he has been happy to serve as Police Commissioner for the past two years.

3. Public Works - Councilman Mobus said Public Works has been quite busy during the holidays, especially during the December 23rd ice event, noting that one truck is now out of commission as a result, and 93 tons of salt were used. He reported the Committee met to fine-tune the 3 to 5 year project plan.

4. Buildings and Public Affairs

Buildings - Councilman Pote thanked the Public Works Department for the fine job they did during the recent ice event. He reported substantial progress with the Bonus Room renovation and anticipates moving the departments from the Texier House by the end of January or February. He said the Historical Committee will be working on plans for their anticipated move to the Texier House.

Public Affairs - Councilman Nehls announced the Board of Health's next meeting is January 21st and Environmental Committee will be meeting on January 26th. He said Middle-Brook has received a "satisfactory" performance evaluation from the State but noted that this is the highest rating the State gives.

5. Fire - In Councilman Black's absence, Councilman Mobus noted the appointment of 3 new members to the Fire Department on the agenda.

6. Laws/Ordinances, and Recreation - Councilwoman Joren was not present this evening.

REPORTS - OTHER:

7. Engineer - Tom Herits provided a recap of what was a busy and productive year for the Engineering Department, and spoke of projects anticipated for next year, including improvements to Stanie Glen, Bayberry, and Johnston Drive. He said the County will be busy in Watchung over the next several years with projects that include bridge replacement on the circle, the gateway project, and improvements to Mountain Boulevard.

8. Police Chief - Police Chief Sean Whelan said he was happy to report that the Department has completed their ICS300 training.

9. Fire Department - No report.

10. Rescue Squad - No report.

11. Attorney - Mr. Cruz reported that URS has performed the final inspection of the Rock Slope remediation project and the final report was good, therefore, URS has recommend the release of the maintenance bond.

12. Administrator - Mrs. Fellin had nothing to report this evening.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS
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NEW BUSINESS
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CONSENT AGENDA: The Consent Agenda listed below, was unanimously accepted on roll call following a motion by Councilman Franklin and a second by Councilman Black.

Approval of the following Council minutes:
December 11, 2008, Regular and Executive Sessions

Approval of the following Borough Reports:
Building Department - November, 2008

#112 - Chris Blackadar, Recreation Chair -12/8/08 On behalf of the Recreation Commission, request to transform Texier House into a Recreation Facility c: M & C, LBF

#113 - Somerset County Board of Freeholders 12/10/08 Invitation to attend annual Organization Meeting to be held on Friday, January 9, 2009 at 3:00 PM c: M & C, LBF

#114 - Township of Scotch Plains 12/10/08 Notice of Public Hearing on Proposed Housing Element

#115 - Linda Woessner 12/11/08 Letter providing information on using birth control as an alternat

#116 - NJ American Water 12/11/08 Notification of Approved Rate Increases c: M & C, LBF, WH

#117 - Watchung Historical Committee 12/11/08 Letter confirming their interest in obtaining the Texier House as their new home in the new year c: M & C, LBF, AC

#118 - Franklin Township 12/12/08 Resolution endorsing Senate Bill No. 1816, authorizing counties

#119 - Township of Warren 12/15/08 Notice of Adoption of Ord. #08-22 - Affordable Housing Development Fees c: M & C, LBF, Pl. Board

#120 - State of NJ - Public Advocate, Division of Rate Counsel 12/17/08 Notice of Filing of Petition

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CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS: The Consent Agenda listed below, was unanimously accepted on roll call following a motion by Councilman Franklin and a second by Councilman Mobus.

R1:12/29/08 Appointment of Probationary Police Officers - Sherif Zaiton, Kyle Poulsen

R2: Appointment to Volunteer Fire Department - Michael Giordano, Robert Rodeck

R3: Authorize Salary Adjustments - Reorganization of Public Works Personnel

R4: Authorize Mayor to sign CY2009 Municipal Recycling Agreement w/Somerset County

R5: Authorizing Inter-Municipal Services Agreement and Execution of Developer's Agreement - Sanitary Sewer Connection of one (1) Borough Property to the Township of Scotch Plains

R6: Authorize Change Order #2 - Compass Construction / Best Lake Dam

R7: Purchases Over \$2,000. - Napco Copy Graphic Center

R8: Authorize Execution of a Lease Agreement for the Phillips Field Property / Watchu

R9: Authorizing Settlement for Engineering Services / URS

R10: Opposing NJ American Water Company's Petition to Implement a Distribution System

R11: Authorizing Expansion of Contract - Maser Consulting/ Environmental Services - Block 3.01, Lot 29

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NON-CONSENT AGENDA

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NON-CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS

The resolutions listed below were unanimously adopted on roll call with offering and seconding as follows:

	<u>Offered</u>	<u>Second</u>
R1:12/29/08 Payment of Bills	Nehls	Franklin

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PUBLIC PORTION

Dorothy Addario, Rock Road, spoke on behalf of the Historical Committee in regard to an article she read in the Courier pertaining to the future use of the Texier House, and urged the Governing Body to follow through on the original plan to make it the new home for the Historical Committee. Mayor Ellis explained that the plan for the new Library will include a spot for the Seniors and said he would like the Recreation Commission to look to the schools for additional space.

Jim Koch, representing the Green Brook Historical Committee, spoke in support of the need for the Watchung Historical Committee to have a place to call home.

Mrs. Addario discussed the correspondence on the agenda regarding birth control for deer, stating that it was her understanding that this was not a viable option in Watchung, and Councilman Nehls concurred.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM to the call of the Chair or the next scheduled meeting to be the annual Reorganization Meeting and will be held on January 1, 2009 at 12:00 noon, with the next regular Council meeting scheduled for January 8, 2009 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle DeRocco, RMC
Deputy Clerk