

# BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

## MINUTES

MAY 14, 2009 - 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, and Star Ledger, and posted at Borough Hall.

### SALUTE TO THE FLAG and SILENT PRAYER

### ROLL CALL

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

Also present were Attorney Albert Cruz, Chief Sean Whelan, and Deputy Clerk Michelle DeRocco. Administrator/Clerk Laureen Fellin was not present.

There were 10 members of the public present.

### REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. Administration & Finance - Councilman Franklin said the Borough intends to introduce the budget at the next meeting, and believes the residents will be happy with the financial prudence.

2. Police - Councilman Mobus said he was in receipt of the monthly Police Activity report, and noted the calls and request for calls are down. He said the Police have been working closely with Public Works on many Borough projects, and have taken a proactive approach on traffic issues, in particular, working with the Board of Education to rectify some issues near Valley View School.

3. Public Works - Councilman Nehls announced the Borough is moving ahead with the installation of speed humps on Brookdale, two by Mobus Field and one in front of the Stirling Road side of Brookdale. He said the paving on Valley Road should be completed in the next week, and after receiving survey results from the residents on Hillcrest, it has been decided to do the milling and paving at night instead of during the day. Deferring to Lt. Wenzel, Council President Mobus confirmed that Green Brook will be proceeding with improvements to Washington Rock Road, therefore, it will be closed at the end of the month. Mayor Ellis thanked Lt. Wenzel for his recent survey of the traffic on Hillcrest, announcing that over 14,000 cars travel it daily.

#### 4. Buildings and Public Affairs

Buildings - Councilman Pote reported the Library Study Committee is preparing their final recommendations and hope to present it to the Governing Body by the end of June. In regard to the Historical Committee, he announced the Memorial Day Services will be held on Monday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, immediately following the Fire Department's service at 9:00 A.M. He said the Committee has been discussing their new home, the Texier House, with Mrs. Fellin and are also getting some input for improvements by local contractors. In regard to the Rescue Squad, Councilman Pote reported their statistics for the month of April, announcing they responded to 29 calls, and 6 mutual aid. He reminded all of the Squad's barbeque on the 17<sup>th</sup> and the wetdown on June 27<sup>th</sup>. Councilman Pote said the Rescue Squad asked him to bring attention to the importance of mutual aid, as in their quest to assist Plainfield, they received 8 calls in one day during a past weekend, and emphasized the fact that they are being stretched. A representative from Plainfield's Rescue Squad and member of the Watchung Rescue Squad, Charles Picnichny, was present and said he was authorized by Plainfield's squad to speak on their behalf. Mayor Ellis advised that this is not the proper forum for discussion, however, he would be open for discussions in the future.

Public Affairs - Councilman Nehls had nothing to report.

5. Fire - Councilman Black commended the volunteers that make up the Fire Department, and said they responded to 2 extrication calls this month, in addition to one mutual aid call. He deferred to Chief Bell, who was present. Chief Bell said all involved in the extrication call on Mountain Boulevard and Brookdale were ok with minor injuries and the helicopter that arrived was not needed. He announced that the County will soon be handling dispatch on all 911 calls. Council President Mobus commended those who were on the scene of the extrication, including the Police and said all did a great job. He commended Chief Bell on his leadership.

6. Laws/Ordinances, and Recreation - Councilwoman Joren announced the Community Picnic will kick-off at noon on May 24<sup>th</sup>, and that registration for the summer program can be done on line. She referred to Mr. DiRosa's resignation correspondence on the agenda and said there is now an opening. She reported Laws and Ordinances met and worked on revisions to the towing ordinance and increasing the fees. She hopes to have the revision on the agenda by June. She said discussions with the Board of Education regarding the parking situation at Valley View School will continue. In regard to Villa Domenico, Councilwomen Joren reported Mr. Cruz met with the builder and his attorney and said discussion on lowering the restriction of age to 55 was positive and it will now be up to the homeowner's association to approve it. Mrs. Joren said the Youth Services Commission is working on grant applications and are hopeful they will get one that will allow for them to run a camp with the Police Department.

**REPORTS - OTHER:**

7. Engineer - Mr. Herits was not present.

8. Police Chief - In Chief Whelan's absence, Lt. Wenzel reported that the Detective Bureau had been working to resolve recent house burglaries and have determined they are related to similar incidents in Warren and suspects have been arrested. He noted that prior to the arrests, one suspect over-dosed.

9. Fire Department - Chief Bell presented the Department's report in the Fire Committee's report.

10. Rescue Squad - Councilman Pote, on behalf of Mayor Ellis, offered a proclamation proclaiming the week of May 1st through May 31, 2009 as Watchung Volunteer Rescue Squad Month in the Borough (Proclamation can be viewed in full on the Borough's website [at www.watchungnj.com](http://www.watchungnj.com))

11. Attorney - Mr. Cruz had nothing to report.

12. Administrator - Mrs. Fellin was not present. Mayor Ellis noted improvements have been made to the Borough's website and invited all to revisit it.

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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 Mobus and a second by Councilman Black.

Approval of the following Council minutes:  
April 30, 2009

Approval of the following Borough Reports:  
Building Department - April, 2009  
Tax Collector's Monthly Report - April, 2009

#41 - Sebastian Kogler 5/6/09 Thanking the Mayor for taking the time to be interviewed c: M & C, LBF

#42 - Phil DiRosa 5/4/09 E-mail Advising of his resignation as a member of the Recreation Commission c: M & C, LBF, MB

#43 - State of NJ, DEP 5/7/09 Notice of Public Hearing/Comment Period re: proposed amendments to the FFY2009 Clean Water Priority System Plan and proposed use plan for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 on May 18th c: M & C, LBF, Post

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**CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS:** The Consent Agenda resolutions listed below were unanimously adopted on roll call following a motion by Councilman Mobus and a second by Councilman Black

R1:5/14/09 Opposing Governor Corzine's plan to transfer money from the EMT Training Fund to the General Treasury

R2: Authorize Clerk to Advertise for Bids - Anderson Road/Stanie Glen Roadway and Drainage Improvements, Bayberry Lane Roadway Improvement

R3: Urging the State Legislature to pass legislation containing substantial reforms

to the binding arbitration process

- R4: Appoint Seasonal Public Works Laborers - Benton, Kaminsky, Jensen
- R5: Appoint Summer Recreation Program Employees - Blackadar, Morrison, Jacques Disch, Gulotta
- R6: Authorize Payment of Certain Purchase Orders - Pumping Services, Inc.

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NON-C

Council President Mobus noted a change in the agenda format, where correspondence received that requires further attention will be individually addressed and acted upon accordingly.

#44 - Mary Ann Walker Martinez 5/5/09 Requesting assistance for a problem receiving mail deliveries due to the parking of vehicles in front of her mailbox during school hours c: M & C, LBF, PD

Council President Mobus said this request has been discussed with the Police Department and options will be further discussed with the Board of Education.

#45 - Mary Ann Walker Martinez 5/5/09 Requesting a response to previous correspondence dated September 13, 2008, expressing her opinion on the Rescue Squad's decision terminate their c: M & C, LBF

extricat

Mayor Ellis said this concern will be addressed by several different Committees, including the Wildlife Management Advisory Committee. Councilman Black said he had met with Ms. Walker Martinez and discussed extrication at great length with her. In regard to the Regional High School per pupil cost, a response will be sent to Ms. Walker Martinez.

Proclamation - National Public Works Appreciation Week / May 17th through May 23rd

Councilman Nehls, on behalf of Mayor Ellis, offered a proclamation proclaiming the week of May 17 through May 23, 2009 as National Public Works Week in the Borough (Proclamation can be viewed in full on the Borough's website [at www.watchungnj.com](http://www.watchungnj.com))

Proclamation - Watchung Volunteer Rescue Squad Month / May (See Rescue Squad report)

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**NON-CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS**

None

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**PUBLIC PORTION**

Terry O'Conner, David Goode, Prospect Street, requested assistance in getting their properties connected to a sewer system, as Mr. Goode has been cited by the DEP for a failed septic system. Councilman Nehls said that the Public Works Committee happens to be meeting in the morning with the Borough Engineer and Consultant Lee Purcell and this will be discussed.

Lynda Goldschein, Sherwood Drive, said she was disappointed when there was a recent water main break and she did not receive any emergency instructions for water boiling, etc. Mayor Ellis said he will determine where the missing link was and follow up for the future. Councilman Nehls stated that Heath Officer Kevin Sumner was not aware of the water main break. In regard to the recent burglaries on Spencer and Johnston Drive, Mrs. Goldschein asked Lt. Wenzel if residents in those areas were notified of the occurrence and he replied they were.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned to the Call of the Chair and the next Special Workshop meeting of the Mayor and Council to be held at 6:30 P.M. on Thursday, May 28, 2009 and followed by the regular meeting of the Mayor and Council scheduled for 7:30 P.M. on May 28, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle DeRocco, RMC  
Deputy Clerk