

BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

MINUTES

MARCH 24, 2011 - 7:30 P.M.

MAYOR'S STATEMENT: Mayor Gerald Mobus called the meeting to order at 7:34 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 a MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR OUR TROOPS

ROLL CALL

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

Also present were Administrator/Clerk Lauren Fellin, Attorney Albert Cruz, Engineer Tom Herits, and Deputy Clerk Michelle DeRocco.

There were 3 members of the public present.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Eagle Scout Requests

The scheduled Scouts were unable to attend due to illness. This presentation will be rescheduled to the next meeting to be held April 14, 2011.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. Administration & Finance - Councilman Franklin reminded all that the Budget Workshop meeting will be held this Saturday afternoon, at 1:00 PM.
2. Police - Councilwoman Joren announced Chief Wenzel has completed his orientation, and spoke of her recent experience when she accompanied officers on a ride-along last Saturday night. She said she has always respected our police department and now even more so. Councilwoman Joren noted a recent arrest and an on-going investigation involving suspects from New York City and the Secret Service.
3. Public Works - Councilman Nehls reported on the Department of Public Work's statistics for the month and said he has been assured that the Borough has ample salt to get through the rest of the year, and that the Department earned \$1400. in safety award money from the JIF. Mayor Mobus questioned the Department's use of bioxide and Councilman Nehls explained it is required for odor control by PARSA.
4. Buildings and Grounds; Recreation - Councilwoman Cassidy said the JIF's report recommends the placement of a fence by Scotti Field, and she will discuss this with the school board. She said the tennis courts will be locked until repaired. She said all options are being considered, including possibly using monies from the Open Space Trust fund for the tennis court repairs. She said bids will be received on April 7th for the renovations for the Texier House, and that she is looking forward to the Budget Workshop meeting to discuss long range plans.
5. Public Affairs - Councilman Nehls announced that Operation Pride will take place this Saturday.
6. Fire - Councilman Black said the Fire Department is anticipating two new members, and reported Chief Bell is waiting for samples of the color-coded hosing for his inspection, prior to its purchase. He said the Department has been busy, noting Chief Bell had 3 drills in March, they responded to a mutual aid call last Sunday, and tended to an extrication last night. Councilman Black read a letter from Chief Wenzel into the minutes commending the actions of Chief Bell in response to an accident on Hillcrest Avenue.
7. Laws/Ordinances - Councilman Pote announced the Laws and Ordinance Committee had been very busy, despite his being ill, and noted the introduction of five ordinances on tonight's agenda.

REPORTS - OTHER:

8. Engineer - Engineer Tom Herits reported he will be attending a meeting next week at the DOT in Freehold to learn of the scope of work proposed in the notice of improvements for Rt. 22. He said the improvements on Johnston Drive are moving along, and that he works closely with Bob Burns and Public Works to investigate residential complaints, which are mostly about water. He said the scope of the work for the Texier House renovations has been revised and new bids will be received on April 7th. He also reported he visited the tennis courts at Camp Endeavor with a contractor, and that he will be assisting Chief Bell in trying to obtain FEMA grants. Mr. Herits said Chief Bell would like to expand the Fire House parking lot, and he believes this may be able to be done by Public Works. He advised that he will be submitting a proposal for the environmental work at the Ness Property.

9. Police Chief – No report was presented.

10. Fire Department – No report was presented.

11. Rescue Squad – No report was presented.

12. Attorney – Mr. Cruz said he has one item for discussion in Executive Session.

13. Administrator – Mrs. Fellin said she, along with CFO Bill Hance and IT consultant Ed Horsfall, met with a web-site vendor to discuss the Borough's website. Mrs. Fellin said she hopes to be ready to introduce the new personnel manual at the next meeting and will provide all employees with the manual on a disk, as it is quite large. She advised of recent notification by PSE&G and their intent to replace all of the current lattice towers with a monopole and said she will be asking a representative from PSE&G to make a presentation at an upcoming Council meeting. Councilman Black expressed concern over not just the height of the poles but of the "EMF" readings, explaining the electro-magnetic field reading is a controversial issue. Council President Joren questioned the lights along Somerset Street and asked if smaller bulbs can be installed. Mrs. Fellin advised some "pro" letters were received, in addition to the "con" letters and Mr. Herits said he is waiting until all of the lights are installed before reaching out to PSE&G.

Mayor Mobus announced that it was with great sadness that he accepted the resignation of Borough Administrator and Clerk, Laureen Fellin, who will be retiring as of June 1st. He said everyone is aware of how much she has meant to the Borough, and Mrs. Fellin said it was not an easy decision.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

CONSENT AGENDA: The Consent Agenda listed below, with the exception of #14, was unanimously accepted, following a motion by Councilwoman Joren, a second by Councilman Nehls, and upon roll call as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye":

Approval of the following Council minutes:

March 10, 2011

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:

Historical Committee - Minutes of February 9, 2011, Annual Report - 2010,
Strategic Plan - 2011, and Highlights - 2010

Environmental Commission - Community Forestry Management Plan, Summary
of Accomplishments - 2010

#10 - Township of Bridgewater 5/3/11 Notice of adoption of Master Plan Reexamination Report
C: M & C, LBF, TH, DS

#11 - Wayne Otto 3/8/11 Email regarding County-run police departments, in particular an
article written by Mitchell Sklar, executive director of the NJ State Association of Chiefs
and published in the Courier-Post c: M & C, LBF

#12 - Somerset County Planning Board and Engineering Department 3/11/11 Notice of Public

Hearing on Tuesday, April 12, 2011 for Proposed Land Development Review Resolution, Public Works Handbook and LDO Review Fee Schedule c: M & C, LBF, TH, DS

- #13 - Geoffrey D. Soriano, Somerset County Prosecutor 3/8/11 Advising local police department's participation in the County-wide Narcotics Task Force is mandatory, not optional c: GM, LBF, DJ, SP, TF

Mayor Mobus requested the following item be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion:

- #14 - Timothy Stys, WHRHS Business Administrator 3/15/11 Resolution supporting the elimination of a public vote on school district budgets that are within the 2% cap c: M & C, LBF

The Governing Body discussed the pros and cons of the proposed legislation to exempt the school budget from a public vote and the consensus was to not take a position at this time.

- #15 - Middle Earth 3/15/11 Requesting permission for the annual Frank "Nap" Torpey, Memorial "Hills of Somerset County" Cycling Classic to pass through Watchung on Saturday, May 28, 2011 c: M & C, LBF, TW

- #16 - Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc. 3/18/11 Notification of proposed installation of a cell wireless communications tower at the True Value site, 351 US Highway Route 22 in North Plainfield, and requesting any historical resources near the site c: M & C, LBF, Historical Committee

CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS: The Consent Agenda listed below, with the exception of R1, was unanimously accepted, following a motion by Councilwoman Joren, a second by Councilman Black, and upon roll call as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye":

Mayor Mobus asked for the following item be removed from the Consent Agenda:

R1:03/24/11 Honoring Paula Heilman upon Retirement - 25 years of Service

Council President Joren read R1 into the minutes (copy attached), and Councilman Franklin said that Paula Heilman has worked closely over the years with the Administration and Finance Committee, and called her a valuable and efficient employee whose void will be hard to fill. Councilman Black said it is sad to see Paula go, and Reenie too – that it will take many, many years to regain the efficiency and loyalty shown by these two employees, and added that loyalty is a word you don't hear in municipal government.

Council President Joren moved for the adoption of R1, Councilman Nehls seconded the motion and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls and Cassidy, "aye."

- R2: Demanding that the State Fund its Share of the Pension
- R3: Appointment of Deputy Treasurer/Payroll Clerk/Benefits Manager - Jessica Rutishauser
- R4: Authorize Stipend for Acting Foreman / Public Works - Andrew Baldassarre
- R5: Appointment to Public Works Department - Jason Stopper
- R6: Authorize Clerk to Advertise for Bids - Mobus Field Tennis Court Resurfacing;
Chain Link Fencing at Blackadar Field

NON-CONSENT AGENDA: Items listed below will be individually addressed and acted upon accordingly. Council reserves the right to refer an item to Committee for further review and discussion.

Proposed Ordinance OR:11/02 entitled "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER VI OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG TITLED "POLICE REGULATIONS" BY ADDING A NEW SECTION, TITLED "DO NOT KNOCK LIST." was introduced. Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be given its first reading. So ordered. Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be adopted on first reading and the Clerk be directed to publish the ordinance and notice of public hearing. The motion was seconded by Franklin and unanimously carried on roll call. Public Hearing to be held April 14, 2011

Proposed Ordinance OR:11/03 entitled “AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 10-8b, TITLED “NOTICE TO OWNER OF IMPOUNDMENT”, TO REQUIRE THE DOG OWNER TO PAY ALL IMPOUNDING FEES, AND SECTION 10-15, TITLED “VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES”, TO MAKE THE PENALTIES CONSISTENT WITH THE GENERAL PENALTY PROVISION, OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG.” was introduced. Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be given its first reading. So ordered. Councilman Pote explained this ordinance will ensure proper notice in writing is given to pet owners giving them financial responsibility in the event that their dog is impounded. Mayor Mobus questioned if this ordinance addresses the fees associated with euthanasia in the event a pet is abandoned and the owner is known and Councilman Pote advised it does not, and Council President Joren said a “Poundmaster” is referenced in this ordinance and the Borough will need to designate one. Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be Tabled at this time. Councilman Franklin seconded the motion and upon roll unanimously approved.

Proposed Ordinance OR:11/04 entitled “AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 14-45.1, TITLED “SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL FROM SIDEWALKS AND DRIVEWAYS”, OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG TO INCLUDE CLEARING FIRE HYDRANTS.” was introduced. Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be given its first reading. So ordered. Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be adopted on first reading and the Clerk be directed to publish the ordinance and notice of public hearing. The motion was seconded by Black and unanimously carried on roll call. Public Hearing to be held April 14, 2011

Proposed Ordinance OR:11/05 entitled “AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 7-8.3, TITLED “TEMPORARY PARKING PROHIBITION FOR SNOW PLOWING AND REMOVAL”, OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG BY PROHIBITING ALL VEHICLES BEING PARKED ON ANY OF THE STREETS OR HIGHWAYS WITHIN THE BOROUGH FOR SNOW PLOWING AND REMOVAL.” was introduced. Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be given its first reading. So ordered. Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be adopted on first reading and the Clerk be directed to publish the ordinance and notice of public hearing. The motion was seconded by Black and unanimously carried on roll call. Public Hearing to be held April 14, 2011

Proposed Ordinance OR:11/06 entitled “AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING A RIGHT-OF-WAY DEED OF DEDICATION AND A SIGHT RIGHT EASEMENT AGREEMENT FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 142 WASHINGTON DRIVE AND KNOWN ON THE TAX MAPS OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG AS BLOCK 17.02, LOT 7.01 TO THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG” was introduced. Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be given its first reading. So ordered. Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be adopted on first reading and the Clerk be directed to publish the ordinance and notice of public hearing. The motion was seconded by Black and unanimously carried on roll call. Public Hearing to be held April 14, 2011

Proclamation - Donate Life Month / April

Councilman Pote, on behalf of Mayor Mobus, offered a Proclamation proclaiming April as “Donate Life” Month in the Borough.

Proclamation - Poison Prevention Week - March 20 - March 26, 2011

Councilman Nehls, on behalf of Mayor Mobus, offered a Proclamation proclaiming the week of March 20th through March 26, 2011 as Poison Prevention Week in the Borough.

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ON-CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS -The resolutions listed below, were adopted and upon roll call the vote was as follows:

R7:03/24/11 Introduction of Ordinance OR:11/02 – Amending Code / Pote Franklin
“Do Not Knock” Regulations

Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, “aye”

R8: Introduction of Ordinance OR:11/03 – Amending Code /

Borough of Watchung
2011

Dog Impounding Fees **TABLED**

R9: Introduction of Ordinance OR:11/04 - Amending Code / Pote Black
Snow and Ice Removal from Sidewalks

Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye"

R10: Introduction of Ordinance OR:11/05 - Amending Code / Pote Black
Temporary Parking Prohibition for Snow
Plowing Removal

Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye"

R11: Introduction of Ordinance OR11/06 - Accepting Pote Black
Right-Of-Deed Dedication and
Sight Right Easement Agreement /
142 Washington Drive, Block 17.02, Lot 7.01

Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye"

R12: Payment of Bills Franklin Black

Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye"

R13: Executive Session: Joren Black
Council / Personnel

Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye"

PUBLIC PORTION

No one from the public desired to be heard.

Council President Joren offered R13:03/24/11 authorizing an executive session, with a second by Councilman Black and unanimously approved. Upon return to regular session at 10:06 PM, all members previously present were again in attendance.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned to the Call of the Chair, and to the next Budget Workshop Meeting to be held on Saturday, March 26, 2011 at 1:00 PM, the next Special Workshop Meeting to be held on Thursday, April 14, 2011 at 6:30 PM, and the next regular scheduled meeting to be held at 7:30 P.M. on Thursday, April 14, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle DeRocco, RMC
Deputy Clerk