

BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
MINUTES
OCTOBER 13, 2011 - 7:30 P.M.

MAYOR'S STATEMENT: Mayor Gerald Mobus called the meeting to order at 7:33 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 Tom Atkins, Attorney Albert Cruz, and Clerk Michelle DeRocco.

There were 12 members of the public present.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. Administration & Finance - Councilman Franklin reported the Administration and Finance Committee is in the process of hiring a Tax Collector, and said he will report on the Borough's revenues at the next meeting.

2. Police - Councilwoman Joren announced the next Police Committee meeting is scheduled for October 21st, and said Chief Wenzel will present his report later in the meeting. She congratulated Chief Wenzel for making the headlines in the Courier News, upon his graduation from the FBI Academy.

3. Public Works - Councilman Nehls reported the Public Works Committee met this morning and has scheduled a meeting with the residents of Edgemont Road and Mountain Drive, to discuss storm-water. He said this meeting will be held on Thursday evening, October 20th, 7:30 P.M. and that we will be looking to our Engineer for possible alternatives. He said the Committee also met this morning with Lee Purcell to discuss the potential sewer project on another portion of Johnston Drive, noting that the funding should be obtained through the NJEIT (NJ Environmental Infrastructure Trust) at a rate of 1%. Councilman Nehls announced the Committee may have some recommendations for changes to the sewer hook-up requirements for the Laws and Ordinance Committee's review, after discussion with the Board of Health. He announced that a break-in occurred at the storage unit at the Texier House, and 2 mowers and a blower were stolen. Councilman Nehls said he and the Mayor thanked the Public Works personnel, and the Rescue Squad members for their efforts during Hurricane Irene.

4. Buildings and Grounds; Recreation - Councilwoman Cassidy said Buildings and Grounds met last week and authorized the purchase of new doors for the Fire House, in addition to the purchase of additional mulch and another lawnmower. She said when the initial improvements to the Texier House were discussed, it was decided that Public Works could do some internal painting, however, since that time, Public Works has been very busy and the Committee is recommending that quotes for this work be obtained. Councilwoman Cassidy said volunteer assistance by an Eagle Scout candidate is still being considered. She reminded all that the Harvest Festival is scheduled for Saturday, October 29th and that the installation of a fence proposed for Blackadar Field will be presented to the Board of Education for their approval.

5. Public Affairs - Councilman Nehls announced the Environmental Commission will be meeting on the 26th, Open Space next Monday, the Board of Health on Wednesday, and the 911 Memorial Advisory Committee on Thursday.

6. Fire - Councilman Black reported the Fire Department provided aid to North Plainfield during a 5-alarm fire at Camp-Out, and then responded to a call to Lucent in Berkeley Heights. He said yesterday, the Department responded to a call for extrication in Warren. He also reported the Department has been installing the hydrant markers, and passed all their pump tests. Councilman Black said this Sunday is the Fire Department's open house, beginning at noon – in celebration of Fire Prevention Week. He said all are invited to attend.

7. Laws/Ordinances - Councilman Pote announced the Laws and Ordinance Committee met this afternoon, and discussed several proposed changes to the tree ordinance, the master plan revision, the dog ordinance, and "McMansions." He said the Library Advisory Committee met last evening and reviewed the preliminary plans received from the Foreman Group and discussed a series of edits. Councilman Pote said he will be suggesting another meeting between Foreman representatives and our library staff, and he'll report back in November.

REPORTS - OTHER:

8. Engineer - No report was presented.

9. Police Chief - Mayor Mobus congratulated Chief Wenzel on completing his FBI training. Chief Wenzel thanked the Governing Body for the opportunity to take this training, and said, without a doubt, it was the best training he has received in his 28 year career. He said in addition to the graduate courses provided through the University of Virginia, he met and trained with people from 48 states and 26 countries. He said he is coming back to Watchung a better leader. Chief Wenzel reported that last week a stolen van and 4 suspects were apprehended, but not without a chase and injuries to three officers. He said there is reason to believe that this arrest may be related to the stolen Public Works equipment.

10. Fire Department - No report was presented.

11. Rescue Squad - Don Monetti said the Squad will be attending the Harvest Festival, and the Fire Department's pig roast. He said preparations for the Tree of Lights are underway, and the Squad intends to invite local businesses and organizations to participate. He said during the past month, the squad responded to 2 CPR calls, both of which resulted in saves. Mr. Monetti said members will be voting on new officers at their November meeting, and 5 members are now certified EMT's. He reported the Squad responded to 33 calls last month, and top responders were Roberto Martinez, Lysandra Plotkin, Gemmy Siegal, Liana Sa and Adam Wexler.

12. Attorney - Mr. Cruz said he had nothing to report, however, he has one item for discussion in Executive Session.

13. Clerk - Mrs. DeRocco thanked Kim Nunn for taking Council photos this evening, and thanked Patricia Kelley for her service to the Borough as a reporter for the Independent Press.

14. Administrator - Mr. Atkins said he would be providing all with a written report on his monthly JIF meetings, noting the JIF is working on their 2012 budget. Mayor Mobus asked if the JIF had any specific recommendations for the Borough and Mr. Atkins replied that none were considered "urgent" however, we will always enhance safety when possible. He also noted that there will be a JIF training session for elected officials on November 16th at the League of Municipalities in Atlantic City.

Mayor Mobus announced that he attended the Freeholder candidate's debate, sponsored by the Somerset County Governing Officials and it was very good. He also reported that after discussion with Council President and Police Commissioner Debra Joren, and Chief Wenzel, a curfew will again be implemented for Halloween and details will be announced shortly.

Councilman Franklin announced the Veteran's Day Ceremony will be held on November 11th at 9:30 AM, and all are welcome to attend.

=====
UNFINISHED BUSINESS
=====

=====
NEW BUSINESS
=====

CONSENT AGENDA: The Consent Agenda listed below 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".

Approval of the following Council minutes:
September 22, 2011

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:
Recreation Minutes - May 11, 2011
Historical Committee - June 8, 2011
Tax Collector's Report - August, 2011
Revenue Report - August, 2011
Open Space Advisory Committee Minutes - June 20, 2011
Building Department Report - September, 2011

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

#63 - Township of Warren 10/11/11 Notice of Public Hearing to be held on October 27, 2011 on proposed Ordinance No. 11-17, recognizing and protecting pre-existing nonconforming development in the R-65 and R-130/65 zones c: M & C, TEA, TH, DS

=====
CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS: The Consent Agenda resolutions listed below were 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".

- R1:10/13/11 Authorize Professional Service Contract / Special Tax Counsel - Richard M. Conley
- R2: Purchases Over \$2,000. - Fun Services, Dr. Marv's Transmissions II, Power Place, Inc., Fibar Systems, MP Overhead Doors, USF/Siemens Water Tech
- R3: Waive Chapter 6-2.11 of the Borough Code / Fireworks - Rescue Squad Tree of Lights
- R4: Authorize Per Diem Expenses - NJ State League of Municipalities Conference
- R5: Authorize Submission of Grant Application to NJDOT- SST-2012 -00041/ Bayberry Lane Pedestrian Crosswalk Lighting Improvements
- R6: Authorize Submission of Grant Application to NJDOT- MA-2012 -00337/ Improvements to Knollwood Drive
- R7: Authorize Submission of Grant Application to NJDOT- MA-2012 -00333/ Improvements to Lakeview Avenue and Cedar Road
- R8: Authorize Participation in the Union County Cooperative Pricing System
- R9: Authorize Clerk to Issue Raffle License - The Albrook School
- R10: Authorize Participation in the Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission Joint Purchasing Cooperative

=====
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.

=====
NON-CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS

Councilman Franklin moved R11, a second was made by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye"; Black, "abstain".

R11:10/13/11 Waive Chapter 2.25 of the Borough Code - Gray's Florist & Greenhouse

=====
PUBLIC PORTION

Rosanne Barr, Mountain Boulevard, presented two petitions to the Governing Body, one asking the Council to rescind the plans for sidewalks on Mountain Boulevard, and one asking Somerset County to discontinue the plans to widen Mountain Boulevard. She urged the Governing Body to listen to the majority of the voters, and said the planned changes to Mountain Boulevard will affect the quality of her life.

Milton Roscoe, High Tor, said he is sympathetic to Mrs. Barr's concerns and the proposed changes will turn Mountain Boulevard into a throughway.

Andrea Stout said she is concerned that this is an unjustifiable expenditure on the part of the County, and that the noise levels will rise on this already noisy street. She also said she is not happy that trees will be taken down. Councilman Nehls explained a total of 31 trees will have to come down for this project, and 2 of them are in Warren. He said this is not the Borough's street and the County will do what they want. He reminded all that sidewalks will not be built in the near future, as the Borough does not have an extra "quarter of a million" dollars to spend.

John Holland, Washington Rock Road, asked if the County's proposal included sidewalks and Councilman Nehls said it did. Mr. Holland said he would like to be on the record as being dead set against sidewalks on Mountain Boulevard.

George Sopko, Winans Lane, said he does not support the construction of sidewalks on Mountain Boulevard, and that it is a residential street, and should be designed appropriately. He said he would support the implementation of traffic calming measures, and Councilman Nehls said he would discuss this concept with Engineer Tom Herits.

Shelly Milstein, Nottingham Drive, said she was here as Board of Education liaison, and Councilwoman Cassidy thanked her for coming this evening.

There being no one else from the public desiring to be heard, Mayor Mobus closed the Public Portion.

Council President Joren moved R12, a second was made by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye".

R12: Executive Session:
Contract Negotiations - County of Somerset Grant Terms and Conditions

Upon return to regular session at 9:29 P.M. all members previously present were again in attendance.

=====

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:31 P.M. to the call of the Chair and to the next scheduled meeting to be held at 7:30 P.M. on Thursday, October 27, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle DeRocco, RMC
Clerk