

# BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

## MINUTES

FEBRUARY 23, 2006

**MAYOR'S STATEMENT:** Mayor Ellis called the meeting to order at 7:30 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**

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

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

There were 3 members of the public present.

### **REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:**

1. Administration & Finance - Councilman Franklin said the budget meetings will be held later than usual this year, as the Borough is waiting to hear from Trenton regarding State funding.
2. Police – Councilman Black had nothing to report this evening.
3. Public Works - Councilman Mobus said he attended a pre-construction meeting yesterday for the Johnston Drive and Stirling Road projects, and will be meeting with residents on March 1<sup>st</sup> to further discuss the project prior to the start of construction. He said the Anderson Road and Joan Drive/Phillip Lane/Ridge Road drainage projects will begin soon and Anderson Road in April.
4. Buildings and Public Affairs

Buildings - Councilman Pote announced that the Borough will be moving forward with the replacement of the lights behind the Firehouse, which have been missing for some time now and are needed for safety and security reasons. He said he is scheduled to meet with the Art Center on March 10<sup>th</sup> to discuss options for another long term lease. He reported the Department will begin preparation and field maintenance next week. In regard to the Library, Councilman Pote said the Board continues to work on the proposal for the governing body and hope to present it at the March 9<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. He said the Historical Committee will be meeting next week.

Public Affairs - Councilman Nehls said he will be attending an Environmental Commission meeting on Monday night, and announced that the Board of Health will be meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

5. Fire – Councilman Nehls announced that he will be attending a Fire Department meeting on Tuesday where he will observe a fire drill.

6. Laws/Ordinances, and Recreation - Councilwoman Joren said, in regard to Recreation, the basketball program is in full swing with a Coaches Banquet to be hosted by the Commission on March 26<sup>th</sup>. The Rutgers safety clinic for coaches and assistants has been scheduled for several dates in March and April. This is a mandatory certification for all volunteer coaches. More information is available on the website or by calling Borough Hall. She said the Commission is already working on their summer programs which include the Community Picnic on May 28<sup>th</sup>, an outdoor concert in early June and something new this year. She explained Watchung will be teaming up with Warren to host a big-screen outdoor movie night in August. Councilwoman Joren explained that these programs will be in addition to the summer camps, tennis lessons, softball and baseball programs. In regard to Laws and Ordinances, the Committee just met with Borough Planner Mark Healey and mapped out a plan for the Land Use revision. She reported the grease trap ordinance will be ready shortly; they just received a draft on the fire and carbon monoxide ordinance; and will be revising the penalty ordinance shortly as well.

### **REPORTS - OTHER:**

7. Engineer – No Report.
8. Attorney – Mr. Cruz had nothing to report this evening.
9. Administrator – Mrs. Fellin announced that the Planning Board secretary will be retiring soon and she will begin the interview process. She said it has been very busy at Borough Hall as the employee evaluation process is underway, the auditors are in, and today CFO Bill Hance held a BAN sale, and was happy to report that the Borough received a very good rate of 3.470%.

Mayor Ellis said he will be meeting with the Engineer and the Traffic and Beautification Commission to discuss Spratford Park and wants to have a time line for this project. Councilman Mobus announced that on Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, the Borough will be dedicating the Public Works Facility to Donald Scotti in recognition of his 48 years of service. Mr. Mobus said an informal reception will be held afterwards at his home and all are invited.

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Public Hearing of OR:06/02 entitled "AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING AN ACCESS AND UTILITY EASEMENT FROM PHILLIP C. WHITTING AND DOROTHY F. WHITTING TO THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG" Councilwoman Joren called for a second and final reading of the ordinance. The Clerk read the ordinance by title and produced an affidavit of publication, certification of posting and availability of copies. Councilwoman Joren moved a public hearing be held with a second by Councilman Black and unanimously carried on roll call.

With no one from the public desiring to be heard, Councilwoman Joren moved the public hearing be closed, the ordinance be adopted, and the Clerk be directed to publish the notice of adoption. Councilman Black seconded the motion, which carried unanimously on roll call.

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**NEW BUSINESS**

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

Approval of the following Council minutes:  
Reorganization Meeting of January 1, 2006  
Special Meeting of February 16, 2006

Approval of the following Borough Reports:  
Police Activity - January, 2006

#10 - Borough of Bound Brook 2/9/06 Invitation to participate in Bound Brook's 325th Anniversary Parade on May 6th c: ASE, PD, FD, RS, OEM

#11 - Julia Gunther 2/21/06 Letter of Resignation from Recreation Commission c: M & C, MB

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

R2:2/23/06 Endorsing proposed improvements identified in the Route 22 Transit Enhancement

R3: Opposing Senate 319 and Assembly 1030, and urging the Legislature to provide local government officials with the management tools necessary to hold down spiraling employee cost

R4: Authorizing release of Irrevocable Letter of Credit - Watchung Square

R5: Purchases Over \$2,000. - International Salt Company, Watchung Electric, LLC

R6: Authorizing the Borough Attorney to negotiate an Escrow Agreement and close on the Acquisition of the Ness Property and Authorizes Mayor and Clerk to execute Escrow Agreement

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Introduction of Bond Ordinance OR:06/03 entitled: "BOND ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 1 OF THE BOND ORDINANCE (ORD. OR:03/04) ENTITLED: "ASSESSMENT BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE UNDERTAKING OF THE COREY LANE, ORCHARD ROAD, OLD SOMERSET ROAD, EATON ROAD, SUNBRIGHT ROAD AND VALLEY ROAD PUBLIC WATER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT IN, BY AND FOR THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, A LOCAL IMPROVEMENT, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$602,700 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO MAKE A DOWN PAYMENT, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS", ADOPTED MARCH 27, 2003." Councilwoman Joren moved the ordinance be given its first reading. So ordered. Councilwoman Joren 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 Councilman Black and unanimously carried on roll call. Public hearing will be held on March 23, 2006. Mrs. Fellin explained that the purpose of this ordinance the removal of three properties from the original list of benefiting properties, as they were unable to connect as originally planned for this project.

~~Introduction of OR:06/04 entitled: "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 1 ENTITLED 'GENERAL PROVISIONS,' SPECIFICALLY SECTION 1-5.1 ENTITLED "MAXIMUM PENALTY" OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, ADOPTED 2003, AS HERETOFORE SUPPLEMENTED AND AMENDED" — WITHDRAWN~~

Proclamation - NJEA's Read Across America (copy attached)

Mayor Ellis read the proclamation and said this is a wonderful program and he has a lot of fond memories of reading to the children in school, and hopes that the governing body participates.

Proclamation - Honoring Virginia Tobey, recipient of the Somerset County Commission on the Status of Women's Education Award (copy attached) Mayor Ellis read the proclamation and

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**NON-CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS**

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

			<u>Offered</u>
R1:2/23/06	Adoption of OR:06/02 - Accepting an access and utility easement - Block 40.01, Lots 6.01, 6.02, 6.03 and 6.04	Joren	Black
R7:	Introduction of OR:06/03 - Amendment to OR:03/04: Assessment Bond Ordinance - Deletion of three (3) properties	Joren	Black
R8: <del>Withdrawn</del>	<del>Introduction of OR:06/04 — Amending and Supplementing Borough Code Maximum Penalty</del>		
R9:	Acknowledging the longtime service of Gren Bunker	Black	Franklin

Mayor Ellis commented that beside being a long time servant of the Borough, Gren Bunker is a very good friend and his family roots go back a long time in Watchung, as his father served on the Planning Board and his wife Willa was on the Board of Education. He said they are a nice family and will be missed and he wished him well on his retirement to Peachtree, Georgia.

R10:	Payment of Bills		Franklin
	Mobus		

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**PUBLIC PORTION**

Lynda Goldschein, Sherwood Drive, queried Julia Gunther's letter of resignation from the Recreation Commission, and Mayor Ellis explained that her resignation is nothing more than her being busy raising children and getting her son off to college, as she has done a great job.

Mrs. Goldschein commented that she was glad to see the Ness property acquisition finalized and asked what the next step would be, and Mayor Ellis explained that first the Borough must close on the property which hopefully will be the first week of March, and then he plans to form a committee who will review the options. Councilman Mobus thanked Mr. Cruz and Mayor Ellis for doing a great job on behalf of the Borough and for putting it all together.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 P.M. to the call of the Chair or the next regularly scheduled meeting of March 9, 2006 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle DeRocco  
Deputy Clerk