

BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

MINUTES

JUNE 9, 2005

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

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

Councilwoman Joren arrived at 8:00 P.M. Also present were Borough Attorney Albert Cruz, Borough Administrator/Clerk Lauren Fellin, Chief Finance Officer William Hance, Bob Swisher from the Borough's Auditing Firm of Suplee, Clooney & Co., and Deputy Clerk Michelle DeRocco

There were 8 people in the audience.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. Administration & Finance - Councilman Franklin reported the 2004 audit has been received and distributed to the governing body and is scheduled for adoption on July 21st. Mayor Ellis said it was important to note that there were no recommendations. Councilman Franklin announced that the public hearing on the 2005 budget will be held tonight.

2. Police - Councilman Black said he attended an interesting demonstration at Police Headquarters on high tech surveillance concepts and added that he would like to see this come to fruition in the Borough, particularly in the schools.

3. Public Works - Councilman Mobus reported that the project for reconstruction of Rock Road East resumed on Monday. In line with the resolution establishing the sewer fees on tonight's agenda, Councilman Mobus said he wished to remind residents that seniors 65 and over may be eligible for a reduced fee and to call the tax office for more information. He also noted that the bond ordinances being introduced tonight are important to improving and maintaining the Borough's infrastructure.

4. Buildings and Public Affairs

Public Affairs - No report.

Buildings - Councilman Pote reported the Buildings and Grounds Committee met last week and authorized the temporary installation of individual air conditioning units as they await the installation of the central air unit currently on order. Councilman Pote said he, Mrs. Fellin and Mrs. Bachert met with representatives from Little League and Pony Tail League to better define the responsibilities of the maintenance of the ball fields at Phillips Field. He said he met with the Library Advisory Board and continued discussions on the options for the future of the Library and will bring their suggestions to the Building and Grounds Committee. Councilman Pote also reported that the Historical Committee is working on putting together an oral history of the Borough along with the history of the naming of the roads. He said the Memorial Day Observance was successful and thanked the Boy Scouts and Stephanie Stambaugh for their participation.

5. Fire - No report.

6. Laws/Ordinances, and Recreation - Councilwoman Joren said the Laws and Ordinance Committee met this week and are planning to meet every Tuesday morning to review the Land Use Ordinance revisions in hopes of having it finalized by the end of the year. In regard to Recreation, Councilwoman Joren said this is a busy time of year for the Committee and at their last meeting, a representative from the Green Brook Recreation Committee came and spoke about combining their 7th and 8th grade participants with Watchung's. Council President Black and Mayor Ellis both commended the Recreation Committee on the very successful Community Picnic.

REPORTS - OTHER:

7. Engineer - No report.

8. Attorney - Mr. Cruz said he has one item to discuss in Executive Session.

9. Administrator - Mrs. Fellin reported that she received notification that the Borough will receive the Smart Growth Planning Grant from ANJEC for preparation of an Open Space and Recreation Plan. Also on the agenda is a resolution to participate in a share grant application which will totally fund equipment needed to implement a portion of the Borough's Stormwater Management Plan at no cost to the Borough.

Mayor Ellis announced that a planting seminar for residents, "Not Tonight, Deer", will be held at 10 am to 12 noon on Saturday, June 18th in the Mobus Field parking lot. He explained that this presentation will be given by Steve Parker of Parker Greenhouses in Scotch Plains who will give recommendations on deer-proof landscaping. Mayor Ellis also reported the State has a tuition-free education program for all National Guard members and reminded everyone that June is "curb hunger" month and interested residents should put their donations out with their recycling. He reminded everyone that Tuesday, June 14th is Flag Day and will ask Public Works to put the flags up around the Borough.

=====

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Public Hearing - 2005 Municipal Budget

R1A:6/9/05 Determining the budget shall be read by title was read into the minutes by Councilman Franklin and moved for adoption. Councilman Black seconded the motion and upon roll call vote, unanimously carried.

R1B:6/9/05 Budget Amendment, was read into the minutes by Councilman Franklin and moved for adoption. Councilman Black seconded the motion and upon roll call vote, unanimously carried.

R1C:6/9/05 Resolution of Adoption
Councilman Franklin called for a second and final reading of the budget. The Clerk produced an affidavit of publication, certification of posting and availability of copies. Mr. Franklin moved a public hearing on the 2005 Municipal Budget, seconded by Councilman Black and unanimously adopted on roll.

Lee Ehrenworth, Canterbury Lane, questioned the amount the Borough pays in health care costs and pensions, and asked if the Borough has a plan for the future. Borough Auditor Bob Swisher explained that the Borough spent approximately \$970,000. for health care in 2004, and \$85,000. on police and firemen's pensions. Mayor Ellis said the Borough is actively pursuing other health care options.

Al Rebmann, Johnston Drive, said the Public Works Department does a wonderful job, particularly on his street in the winter.

No one else from the public desiring to be heard, Councilman Franklin moved the Public Hearing be closed and offered Resolution R1C, Resolution of Adoption. Councilman Black seconded the motion which upon roll call, the vote was as follows: Black, Franklin, Mobus, Joren, Pote: "Aye".

=====

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 Mobus.

Approval of the following Council minutes:

Approval of the following Borough Reports:

- Historical Committee - 2004 Annual Report and Organizational Document
- Recreation Commission - May 4, 2005
- Tax Collector - May, 2005

#76 - Catherine Rock 5/26/05 Expressing gratitude for expression of congratulations on her retirement c: M & C, LBF

#77 - Operation Kill-A-Watt 5/31/05 Requesting the Borough's participation in a Statewide Effort to promote energy conservation on June 16, 2005 c: M & C, LBF

#78 - Don Pote 5/26/05 Letter of Resignation from the Open Space Committee c: M & C, LBF

#79 - Borough of Wharton 6/1/05 Resolution supporting legislation imposing comparable spending limitations

#80 - Township of Berkeley Heights 6/06/05 Notice of Adoption of Stormwater Mgt. Plan c: M & C, LBF, Planning Board

=====

CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS: The resolutions listed below were adopted on roll call following a motion by Councilman Black and a second by Councilman Mobus with all voting in favor.

- R2:6/09/05 Adopt and Authorize Submission of Environmental Commission's Community
- R3: Appointment to Open Space Committee
- R4: Appointment to Youth Services Commission
- R5: 2005 Base Salaries
- R6: Establish 2005 Sewer Fee
- R7: Authorizing participation in Share Grant Application with Somerset County

Councilwoman Joren said she was happy to see the approval of R4 which is the appointment of Nicole Fabris to the Youth Services Commission. She said she is a fourth grade teacher who took on the "Girls on the Run" program and did a wonderful job. She said Ms. Fabris did a lot for the program when she was not a member and is sure she will continue to do great things for the Commission and the community as a member.

=====

NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Introduction of OR:05/05 entitled BOND ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING IMPROVEMENTS TO BEST LAKE IN THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY AND APPROPRIATING \$75,000.00 AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$71,250.00 IN BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF 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 June 23, 2005.

Introduction of OR:05/06 entitled BOND ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACQUISITION OF VARIOUS COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT IN THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY AND APPROPRIATING \$225,000.00 AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$213,750.00 IN BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF 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 June 23, 2005.

Introduction of OR:05/07 entitled "BOND ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING VARIOUS PUBLIC WORKS IMPROVEMENTS IN THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY AND APPROPRIATING \$1,471,000.00 AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$1,397,450.00 IN BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF" 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 June 23, 2005.

Introduction of OR:05/08 entitled "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 138, ENTITLED ZONING, SECTION 138-107 (AS RENUMBERED BY ORDINANCE NO 98/15), ENTITLED DEVELOPMENT FEE SCHEDULE OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG" 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 June 23, 2005.

Don Monetti - Proposal for Expansion of Rescue Squad

Mr. Monetti thanked Councilman Pote for his input and thanked the governing body for their time. He said he wished to bring the governing body up to speed on the Rescue Squad's plans.. He explained that the Rescue Squad building, as it stands now, has lavatories which date back to 1965, leaky doors and there is a need to permanently house a vehicle known as "8-0". Mr. Monetti said the three options are 1) to do nothing; 2) demolish the building and to start over; and 3) to work the best with what is already there. He explained that most of the money the Rescue Squad raises is earmarked for their goal of obtaining a new rig every 5 years. He said they are a very frugal group who plan to be around a long time. He said their plans consist of Phase I which will be to expand the building to be able to house "8-0" and possibly install central air conditioning. Phase II will be to expand the back of the building.

Mayor Ellis said these are good ideas and knows the Rescue Squad has success in their fundraising efforts and wished them luck. Councilman Mobus congratulated them and Councilman Pote said that he is very proud of this organization, that they are a fine group who donate a lot of time for residents.

Proclamation - Proclaiming June as Myasthenia Gravis Month

Mayor Ellis read the following proclamation into the minutes (copy attached) and explained that this is a very serious disease that can affect children as well as adults.

=====

NON-CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS

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

		Offered	Seconded
R1A:6/09/05	Determining Budget to be Read by Title	Franklin	Black
R1B:	Budget Amendment	Franklin	Black
R1C:	Adoption of 2005 Municipal Budget	Franklin	Black
R8:	Introduction of OR:05/05 - Bond Ordinance authorizing improvements to Best Lake	Joren	Black
R9:	Introduction of OR:05/06 - Bond Ordinance authorizing acquisition of Communication Equipment	Joren	Black
R10:	Introduction of OR:05/07 - Bond Ordinance authorizing various Public Works improvements	Joren	Black
R11:	Introduction of OR:05/08 - Amending and Supplementing Chapter 138 of the Borough Code - Development Fee Schedule	Joren	Black
R12:	Authorize refund of Tax Sale Certificate #4-2001, Block 7010, Lots 4.01/4.02	Mobus	Black
R13:	Executive Session: Litigation - Disch vs Borough of Watchung	Black	Franklin

=====

PUBLIC PORTION

Donna Walid, Pine Lane, said that the Borough Engineer had advised her to speak to the Mayor and Council in regard to a septic system on the property of her new home on Valley Road. Councilman Mobus said he had just visited the site in question and would speak to Ms. Walid after the meeting.

John Shpunder, Ellison Road, spoke about an unpleasant incident he said he had when asked to review documents in the Engineering office.

Lynda Goldschein, Sherwood Drive, asked Councilman Black if he would be moving forward with an effort to obtain more signage for traffic around the circle and Councilman Black said the Police Department did not want to recommend more signs, however, he was still going forward with the efforts to obtain a portable radar machine for the Borough. Mrs. Goldschein said she remembers hearing that the County agreed to lower the speed limit on one of the streets going into the circle and Councilman Black said the County is still working on that. Mrs. Goldschein said with all of the bond ordinances the Borough has recently approved, she was curious to know if the Borough is paying off any debt. Mayor Ellis replied that the Borough has a very active debt reduction program.

Deb Stuart, High Tor, asked when the work on Phillip Lane, Ridge Road, and High Tor will be completed and Councilman Mobus replied the conceptual plans are done, however, there is an issue in regard to belgium block curbing. He said there will be a neighborhood meeting before any work is started.

Marvin Pinn, Phillip Lane, stressed the importance of completing the work on Phillip Lane before the winter and Councilman Mobus explained that the plans need to be reviewed, and then put out to bid and guessed that the earliest a shovel could be in the ground would be August or September.

Lynda Goldschein, Sherwood Drive, said she really wants to sign up for the Borough's new e-mail program, however, was concerned that everyone else who signs up can see her address. Mrs. Fellin explained that Bill Hance is correcting that problem.

Al Rebmann, Johnston Drive, said that he wants works done on his street and the new engineer hasn't done anything for him since he has been here. Mayor Ellis told Mr. Rebmann that he is aware of his concerns as this has discussed for eight years and over those years, several solutions have been offered. Lee Ehrenworth, Canterbury Lane, asked when the governing body might be moving forward with the net and bolt method of deer reduction and Mayor Ellis said that he plans to have some discussion on it at the next meeting.

Ms. Stuart said this is the first Council meeting she has attended and has a whole new respect for the governing body.

Councilman Black offered R13:6/09/05 authorizing an executive session, with a second by Councilman Franklin and unanimously approved. Upon return to Regular session at 9:14 PM, all members previously present were again in attendance.

=====

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:16 P.M. to the call of the Chair or the next regularly scheduled meeting of June 23, 2005 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle DeRocco
Deputy Clerk