

WEST AMWELL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

May 12, 2014 - 7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER AND STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

The regular meeting of the West Amwell Township Committee was called to order at 7:03 p.m. Present were Mayor Zachary T. Rich, Deputy Mayor George A. Fisher, and Clerk Lora Olsen. Also in attendance were John Cronce, Cathy Urbanski, Hal Shute, Karen Atwood, Sam Jefferis, and CFO Tom Carro. Committeeman John Dale and Attorney Philip J. Faherty III were excused.

Mayor Rich announced that this meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting was included in the Resolution faxed to the Hunterdon County Democrat and Trenton Times on January 6, 2014, was posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building on said date and has remained continuously posted as required under the Statute. A copy of this notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk.

The meeting was recorded via digital recording system.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

Deputy Mayor Fisher led the assembled group in the pledge to the nation's flag.

AGENDA REVIEW BY TOWNSHIP CLERK

The following items were added: 11.A.2 Award of Tub Grinding Quote. (The addition of this action item was unanimously approved.) 11.A.3 Community Day @ South County Park.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were made:

- Last Day to Register for June Primary Election – May 13th
- Municipal Offices Closed May 26th, Memorial Day Observed
- Primary Election – June 3rd, 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., Municipal Building
- Fire Company Chicken Bar-B-Q – June 14th, 4:00-7:00 p.m., Firehouse
- Hazardous Waste Days – July 12th, & November 8th; Electronics Recycling, October 11th, all 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., County Complex, Rt 12
- Please Come to the Table if You Wish to Address the Committee
- Kindly Turn Cell Phones Off During Meeting

PRESENTATION OF MINUTES

The April 23, 2014 Regular and Closed session minutes were unanimously approved on motion from Fisher, seconded by Rich.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC/TOPIC NOT ON THE AGENDA

No one came forward. Topic unanimously closed.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION(S)

None

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE AND/OR PUBLIC HEARING

None

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Open Space

- *Farm Auction*: John Cronce reported that there were no problems encountered at the SADC meeting and the vote was to approve. He expressed appreciation to Mr. Fisher for attending the meeting; the Township Committee for their help; and, Mrs. Olsen and Ms. Haberle for the reports and backup documentation. The current concern involves the closing with Green Acres, something that he is unfamiliar with, and inquired whether Attorney Dragan should be brought as she was involved with the initial purchase of the property. Mr. Cronce was directed to work through Attorney Faherty, who would have access to Attorney Dragan.

- *Toll N/ Report from CADB Meeting/Project Status Updates*: The CADB met last week and Mr. Cronce relayed that the Lambert project was approved and ranked 5th. The project now moves to the next level for funding. Ziegenfuss was not approved due to various issues, including the 18 foot easement through Lambert. Apparently it was determined that the property

is 'self-preserved' via the Lambert preservation, although it can re-apply in another round if a different angle is pursued. Mr. Fisher questioned whether Lambert might be approached about changing the existing easement. The general consensus was that the project chosen was the best in that the soils are better. Hal Shute added that the application now goes to the State for 'green light' approval to proceed with appraisal. Mr. Cronic continued that Toll North was approved and now goes to the County for funding and that the project has good momentum. A booklet from the SADC entitled "New Jersey Agricultural Mediation Program Handbook: A Guide for Farmers, Neighbors, and Municipalities" was presented. This is to assist in handling differences between involved parties.

Mr. Shute relayed that new funding is available through Green Acres, application for which will be discussed at the next Open Space meeting. On this note, Mr. Rich gave an update on the turf field proposed for the high school. Basically the idea under consideration is for the field to be leased to the Township, who would then make application for Open Space or Green Acres funding. This is the only avenue available to the school; the Township would serve only as the conduit for the grant money; and, Maser is working on the paperwork. The opinion of Coach Jefferis was solicited and was favorable in that this would allow all sports to be played on the field in all weather. Currently the number of fields vs the number of activities is insufficient and rain compounds the problem. Mr. Rich continued that the school needs more resources than the Township but as a conduit for grant money, he's willing to do it. It's a good package and the Township is in a good spot to take advantage of what is available. Mr. Shute inquired whether this would be a new grant and separate from what the Township has now so that there would be no conflict. This will be checked.

Mr. Cronic again thanked the Township Committees, past and present, for their involvement and assistance with the Toll endeavor, including office, roads and police department staff, noting that with all the good people providing support, his job is easier.

Environmental

- *Authorization to Post April 10, 2014 Minutes to Website:* Approved

- *Request for Water-Related Education & Outreach Ideas:* Cathy Urbanski requested that a note be posted on the News & Announcements section of the website about household battery collection at the Saturday depot. She then proceeded to relay that there's \$15,000 in the 319h grant for education and outreach, approximately \$1000 of which will be used for the newsletter, but that something else water related needs to be found for the remainder. A chance luncheon between member Janice Zuzov and the high school science teacher has provided a perfect opportunity. The high school classes take field trips to the Alexauken Creek to check pH, insects, etc. and they could use a pH meter and other technology as well as waders. Mrs. Urbanski intends to submit this to the DEP to obtain grant money. The biology teacher at South is also involved with water programs and will be contacted about possible needs in that field. Mr. Rich requested that the school board members be informed once the details are worked out. Mrs. Urbanski also inquired about the proposed Community Day at the South County Park and if Township participation is anticipated.

Parks & Recreation

- *Hewitt Park Fencing:* Mr. Fisher overviewed the mix-up with this committee and that no budget was submitted. The group is hoping to get money for the park for such things as infield mix (previously approved), fence repair, maintenance on the buildings, including a new door, and a security camera that has been recommended by the police due to vandalism. Painting the dug-out and upgrading the playground and ballfield are also on the to-do list. Karen Atwood addressed the fence quote and specs. In order to get a clean slate, *Rich motioned to reject the previously received bid due to not enough money available, and Fisher seconded.* Motion carried unanimously. The project will be re-quoted using revised specifications provided by Ms. Atwood.

- *Other Projects:* Sam Jefferis commented that there's been no money for the park in recent years and there are safety issues that must be addressed, e.g., the washout under the backstop, as well as weeds, bleachers, and the playground area. He said that he's been remiss but is embarrassed about the state of the park. He wants to see Township open space developed for recreation, as there is but one ball field and the soccer field is a swamp. Mr. Fisher relayed that a list of what needs to be done has to be developed and prioritized and urged the committee reps to come up with a wish list. An immediate concern voiced by Mr. Jefferis was for some planking under the back stop to hold the soil from washing away. The matter of infield mix was mentioned and Ms. Atwood relayed that the quote provided included delivery. The status of the order will be checked. Mr. Shute suggested that P & R take their issues 'by the horns' as no one will do it for them. Money can be allocated for park maintenance through the Open Space Trust fund. Mr. Rich advised that the issues raised earlier will be addressed and that he'll contact DPW about the backstop barrier item. Mr.

Jefferis stated that from May 15 through September, there should be at least 4 hours/week devoted to park work and that a maintenance person to keep an eye out for repairs be considered. He would also like to see a trail, basketball court and playing field upgrades be considered and was advised that contact be made with Bill Burr. Ms. Atwood relayed that the door and other security issues have to be addressed and that Joe Petrucci is in the process of getting quotes for the door. The lot adjacent to the park was also briefly discussed as to need and possible uses. Using Green Acres money for the purchase was mentioned and the item will be discussed again at tomorrow night's Open Space meeting.

Ag Advisory

- *Authorization to Post March 6, 2014 Minutes to Website:* Approved

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Possible Appointments - none

Updates – 1) Mr. Rich is kicking ideas around for bringing order to the **construction office**, including an office manager during the day for approximately 30 hours/week. Concern over the current situation with its second job staffing was expressed as well as the legality of the department's hours. He was urged to put together a plan for presentation and discussion. 1.A) John Anderson of JCP&L addressed the Committee at the behest of the mayor. He relayed that a press release has been issued about the project; that they are closing negotiations with property owners; have DEP approval; will be conducting soil borings for tower placement; and, all should be completed by year's end. Mr. Anderson said that he is excited about all of this and what it means to West Amwell and the area. Asked whether there would be any blasting involved with the construction, Mr. Anderson relayed that this would depend on the soil borings but that he's heard nothing about this from preliminary reports. However, should this be necessary, whatever process is needed will be followed. Mr. Anderson promised to provide periodic project updates. 2) Contact was made with Keith Hamilton of SERV and the mayor is now good with having them do another **group home** and amending the previous resolution.

RESOLUTION #75-2014

Amending RESOLUTION #104-2012 WHEREAS, the West Amwell Township Committee has an opportunity to partner with SERV to provide a second group home for persons with special needs; and

WHEREAS, a promising site has been identified with an interested owner; and

WHEREAS, SERV will identify and enter into negotiations for the second site by the end of the year

WHEREAS, SERV requires a maximum total of \$90,000; not to exceed 20% of the total project cost, contribution from the Township

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the West Amwell Township Committee, that \$90,000 is hereby authorized from Township's Affordable Housing Trust Fund as a contribution to SERV for the purpose of creating a second group home within West Amwell Township

The Resolution was unanimously approved on motion by Fisher, seconded by Rich.

3) The **generator** issue was addressed by Mr. Fisher, who has had conversations with both Jeff Ent and Harry Heller. Mr. Ent is ok with a 60 kW unit. The next step is obtaining the State contract number. A conversation with the Township Engineer Roseberry resulted in agreement on a manual switch so as to provide control. A new gas main will be required and Elizabethtown Gas has to be contacted. 4) The **turf field** project was addressed earlier in the meeting. 5) The **equipment auction** resulted in the sale of the Crown Vic, the Dodge Durango and all three air conditioning units, although the largest of the three is missing a portion of the window insert. The buyer of the latter is upset. Mrs. Olsen was directed to advise the purchaser to present the invoice for the missing part and that the Township will split the cost with him. The two gas boys did not sell as the reserve was not met. However, the gentleman who put in the only bid called to inquire whether the Township would take the lesser amount. A brief discussion followed with *Fisher motioning to take the lesser offer in order to remove the liability and Rich providing the second. Motion carried unanimously.* A certification of insurance will be required from the bidder. 6) October 19th has been chosen for West Amwell's participation in the **Hunterdon 300th** celebration. An organized walking tour of Mt. Airy village is planned from noon to 3 p.m. with an invitation to attend the 10:30 a.m. church service.

Historical information and pictures will be displayed. A police presence will be needed to ensure the safety of the pedestrians. Updates will be provided periodically. 7) A flyer for the **fire prevention training** proposed at the last meeting was presented. Mr. Rich relayed that Mr. Fretz will be providing updates.

Budget

Mr. Fisher provided a graph showing budget information from 2007 to 2014. Included were items such as State aid, tax rate, taxes for municipal purposes, and surplus used. Overall, things are flat.

Mr. Rich proceeded to provide his list of variables in order to replace the 7.5% lost salary. This would be accomplished over 1-2 years; be paid at the end of the year, as long as the person shorted is still on the payroll, and dependent on the health of the Township at that time; that the rate be flat for the taxpayer; that \$23,000 be taken off the tax levy; and, that cost controls be implemented, e.g., mayor sign off on all purchases over \$500. This would be in addition to the CFO requisition certifying that money is available for a particular purchase. To meet his goal of a flat rate, an additional \$37,500 would be taken from surplus. Mr. Fisher questioned the lost salary replacement but is ok with the 2.5% raise for this year. What something like this would be called was also questioned. CFO Carro joined the meeting to review the mayor's variables; discussed the use of surplus; amendment scenarios, if needed; and, the 'retro' pay. The latter can't be called a bonus and something pensionable is what is requested. The retro would be rolled into the base salary and would require amendment to the salary and wage ordinance. Given this information, Mr. Rich will reconsider the options. Mr. Carro will need a final decision as to direction in order to prepare the budget amendment(s), if required.

The issue of Kari Drive was raised. The mayor stated that the road was not designed for the truck traffic/loads that are currently employed. The item is on the engineer's list.

Policy & Procedures, continued review - Held

NEW BUSINESS

Resolutions for Consideration

- *No Passing Zone – Route NJ 179:*

West Amwell Township
Hunterdon County

Lora L. Olsen, RMC
Office of the Township Clerk
150 Rocktown-Lamb. Road
West Amwell Township, New Jersey 08530
609-397-8634

West Amwell Township
RESOLUTION #76-2014

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) recently completed a traffic investigation on Route 179 in West Amwell Township; and

WHEREAS, NJDOT recommends a revision to the centerline pavement markings on Route 179 to create a "No Passing Zone" in the vicinity of M.P. 2.15 (Kari Drive); and

WHEREAS, this project will create safer driving conditions in this area of Route 179

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of West Amwell, County of Hunterdon, in the State of New Jersey, that it supports the use of a "No Passing Zone" on Route 179 in West Amwell Township as recommended by NJDOT.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded to NJDOT as requested.

The Resolution was unanimously approved on motion by Fisher, seconded by Rich.

- *Award of Quote for Tub Grinding:*

RESOLUTION #77-2014

WHEREAS, the collection of resident brush has reached epic portions; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that additional assistance is needed to reduce this recyclable commodity to produce a viable product for use by the residents; and

WHEREAS, quotes for tub grinding were solicited with the following results:

L & S Contracting	\$3,100.00
Britton Industries	No response
Rick Buxton	No response

WHEREAS, the apparent low bidder is L & S Contracting and a Certificate of Insurance will be required prior to the start of any work; and

WHEREAS, a Business Registration Certification has been received; and

WHEREAS, the CFO has certified that sufficient money is available in Clean Communities grant for this activity

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the quote for the tub grinding of brush is hereby awarded to L & S Contracting, subject to the submission of a Certificate of Insurance.

The Resolution was unanimously approved on motion by Fisher, seconded by Rich.

Rocktown-Lamb. Road NJDOT Grant

The Township has been awarded a \$160,000 grant for fiscal year 2014 for the Rocktown-Lambertville Road phase 2, which is great news. Authority for the application and whether bond money is available for this road project will be investigated.

Community Day @ South County Park

No objection was raised should a Township group wish to participate. Registration is required.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mr. Cronce questioned the fire prevention training and why the Township is paying the freight.

Mr. Shute inquired about the new COAH regulations. He has read that towns with low density were punished given the amount of open space within their municipality. At first glance the numbers are worse. He was advised that Consultant Shirley Bishop is reviewing the new rules and will be providing further information.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Treasurer – None

Tax Collector –

RESOLUTION #78-2014

WHEREAS Tax Sale Certificate #4-2010 for Block 23 Lot 13; 370 Route 31 assessed to Joseph Helewa Jr. was sold on July 13, 2010 to Royal Tax Lien Service, LLC; and

WHEREAS the amount of \$63,644.33 has been received from Joseph Helewa, the owner of the property for the redemption of this certificate

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Treasurer be authorized to prepare, and the Mayor, Clerk and Treasurer be authorized to sign a check in the amount of \$63,644.33 payable to Royal Tax Lien Services, LLC.

The Resolution was unanimously approved on motion by Fisher, seconded by Rich.

The April 2014 monthly report was received showing receipts in the amount of \$482,368.18.

Construction – The Permit Fee Log details (20), Tax Assessor Report-Permits (20), Monthly Activity Report-Permits, Payment summary Report (\$9,095.00/34 records), Payment Audit Report (33), Tax Assessor Report-Certificates (29), Monthly Activity Detail Report-Certificates (29) and Monthly Activity Report-Certificates (29) were received for PermitsNJ.

Police – The April 2014 Monthly Report showing 972 incidents, 166 summonses and 1 warning was received. Also noted were 36 summonses issued in East Amwell in line with the shared services agreement.

Website Review – None

The reports were unanimously accepted as received.

CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence as listed on the Agenda was ordered filed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:25 p.m. on motion from Fisher.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora Olsen, RMC
Township Clerk

APPROVED: May 28, 2014