

**BLAIRSTOWN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE  
ANNUAL REORGANIZATION MEETING  
MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 2018 – NOON  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
M I N U T E S**

**OPENING – Call to Order; Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk Linda Leidner. Those present were Mr. Avery, Mrs. Dalton, Mr. Lance, Mrs. Van Valkenburg and Mrs. Waldron

The **FLAG SALUTE** was conducted.

**INVOCATION**

Rev. David Harvey of the First Presbyterian Church gave the invocation.

**The following SUNSHINE STATEMENT was read by Mrs. Leidner:**

Notice of this meeting has been sent to two newspapers of general circulation in the Township of Blairstown in which notice of the date, time, place and general agenda were set forth in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

**DETERMINATION OF THE WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF CANVASSERS**

Elected Official – Stephen J. Lance

Municipal Clerk Linda Leidner administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Lance

Elected Official – Debra Waldron

Municipal Clerk Linda Leidner administered the Oath of Office to Mrs. Waldron

**NOMINATION FOR MAYOR FOR THE YEAR 2018**

A motion to appoint Stephen Lance as Mayor for 2018 was made by Mrs. Van Valkenburg and seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll call vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Waldron  
All ayes, motion carried.

Municipal Clerk Linda Leidner administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Lance.

**NOMINATION FOR DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE YEAR 2018**

The nomination of Joanne Van Valkenburg as Deputy Mayor was made by Debra Waldron and seconded by Mr. Lance.

Roll call vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance  
All ayes, motion carried.

Municipal Clerk Linda Leidner administered the Oath of Office to Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg thanked everyone for the nomination. She noted that she is very excited about this year. She went on to say that Blairstown has a wonderful Committee and Staff.

## **OATHS OF OFFICE – BLAIRSTOWN HOSE COMPANY NO. 1 OFFICERS**

Calvin Inscho, Chief

Mike Rumsey, Deputy Chief

Eric Usinowicz, Captain

Patrick Ceres, Lieutenant

Municipal Clerk Linda Leidner administered the Oath of Office to the officers of Blairstown Hose Company No. 1.

## **CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS**

- R.2018-001 Various One Year Appointments – Compensated
- R.2018-002 Various Appointments – Non-compensated
- R.2018-003 Cancel Water Utility Balances under \$5.00
- R.2018-004 Appointing Local Emergency Planning Committee Members
- R.2018-005 Fixing the Rate of Interest to be Charged on Delinquent Taxes and Authorize Tax Collector to hold Annual Tax Sale
- R.2018-006 Complying with Open Public Meetings Act
- R.2018-007 Designating Authorized Signatures
- R.2018-008 Authorizing Investment of Idle Funds and Fund Transfers
- R.2018-009 Adopting a Cash Management Plan
- R.2018-010 Contracting for Professional Services with Competitive Bidding in Accordance with the Local Public Contract Law – Municipal Attorney
- R-2018-011 Contracting for Professional Services with Competitive Bidding in Accordance with the Local Public Contract Law – Municipal Auditor
- R.2018-012 Contracting for Professional Services without Competitive Bidding in Accordance with the Local Public Contract Law – Municipal Engineer
- R.2018-013 Designation of Official Newspapers
- R.2018-014 Cancellation of Certain Real Estate Property Tax Balances
- R.2018-015 Authorization for Tax Assessor to File Corrective Appeals and Stipulations and Authorization for Township Attorney to Work with Tax Assessor in Defense of Tax Appeals with the Warren County Board of Taxation
- R.2018-016 Collection of a Fee for Duplicate Tax Sale Certificates
- R.2018-017 Fixing the Rate of Interest to be Charged on Delinquent Water Accounts
- R.2018-018 Contract for Professional Services without Competitive Bidding in Accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law – Municipal Bond Counsel
- R.2018-019 Approving Temporary Appropriations for the 2018 Operating and Water Budget
- R.2018-020 Appointment of Municipal Court Judge
- R.2018-021 Authorization to Enter into Interlocal Agreement with Knowlton Township for Chief Financial Officer Services
- R.2018-022 Authorization to Enter into Interlocal Agreement with the Town of Belvidere for Chief Financial Officer Services
- R.2018-23 Resolution Authorizing Transfer of Funds

Mr. Lance added Resolution 2018-024 – Resolution appointing Kerri Womack as Tax Collector

Mr. Lance asked to remove Resolutions No. 2018-010 and 2018-011 for separate consideration.

Mr. Avery made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda except items 2018-010 and 2018-011 that are being considered separately, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll call vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance  
All ayes, motion carried.

Mayor Lance began the discussion regarding Resolution 2018-010 – Appointment of Municipal Attorney.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg nominated Dorsey and Semrau for the position of Municipal Attorney, which was seconded by Mrs. Waldron

Mr. Avery nominated Benbrook and Benbrook for the position of Municipal Attorney, there was no second to this nomination.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg noted that Dorsey and Semrau came in with a much lower bid for the position. Mrs. Van Valkenburg also noted that they only practice municipal law. Dorsey and Semrau offered to provide a monthly report on what items they are working on for the Township and the status of each. The Township will save about \$10,000.00 by hiring this firm.

Mayor Lance noted that he has been very conflicted about the choice of Attorney's for this year. Benbrook and Benbrook has been the Township Attorney for many years. They have done a good job. Mr. Lance went on to say that recently there have been things that he is very concerned about that haven't been taken care of. Cost is always a consideration as well. Mr. Lance reported that Dorsey and Semrau have a great reputation throughout the area.

Mrs. Dalton also expressed that she has been conflicted with this decision as well. Benbrook and Benbrook have been good to the Township and have given good advice. Mrs. Dalton went on to say that what she particularly likes about Dorsey and Semrau is that they specialize in municipal law. This would serve us well.

Mr. Avery stated that Benbrook and Benbrook have done a great job for the Township over the years. He noted that he appreciated the fact that Kevin Benbrook has a great deal of background in Blirstown.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance  
NAY – Avery  
Motion carried.

Mr. Lance brought Resolution 2018-011 – Appointment of Municipal Auditor up for discussion.

Mr. Lance explained that the Township Auditor for the past few years has been Nisivoccia.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg made a motion to appoint Nisivoccia as the Township Auditor for the year 2018, which was seconded by Mr. Avery.

Roll call vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance  
All ayes, motion carried.

#### **FROM THE COMMITTEE**

**Mrs. Waldron** – Thanked everyone for their support during the election. Mrs. Waldron noted that she will stand behind her promise and will be transparent. Mrs. Waldron offered that she is available by phone or email with any questions or issues that arise. Feel free to reach out.

**Mrs. Van Valkenburg** – Began by noting that we will continue to have the second meeting of the month which is our Workshop Meeting. Mrs. Waldron is also requesting that a Public Information Meeting be hold to give the public the opportunity to be heard regarding different issues. Mrs. Van Valkenburg explained that she would like to inform the residents about the Yards Creek money. She went on to explain that there is currently no Municipal Tax, our taxes are comprised of taxes from Schools, County, Library and Open Space.

**Mrs. Dalton** – Mrs. Dalton congratulated Mrs. Waldron on becoming a member of the Township Committee. She also congratulated Steve and Joanne on their positions of Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Mrs. Dalton went on to say, to piggy back on what Joanne said, we have a fabulous staff here in Blairstown. We have fabulous Firemen and Policemen. They are all team players and work together for the benefit of the Township. Mrs. Dalton thanked everyone for being here today.

**Mr. Avery - Mr.** Avery is very excited about this coming year. Mr. Avery added that he is looking forward to growth and improvements. Blairstown is a wonderful place to live and to raise children. He noted that he would love to see new businesses move into Blairstown. Mr. Avery agrees that we have a terrific staff here. We have ourselves in a very good position right now and we can build on that and he looks forward to being a part of that building. He hopes that everyone will play a part in this positive growth.

**Mr. Lance** – Thanked the Township Committee for electing him Mayor for the year 2018.  
A Full Copy of Mr. Lance’s Mayors Address will be attached to these minutes.

Mr. Lance then announced the following appointments to the various Boards and Committees:

#### Land Use Board:

Joanne Van Valkenburg	1 year term, expiring on 12/31/2018, Class I
Debbie Waldron	1 year term, expiring on 12/31/2018, Class III
Nicholas Mohr	1 year term, expiring on 12/31/2018, Class II
Michael Repasky	4 year term, expiring on 12/31/2021, Class IV
Dominick J. Daleo	4 year unexpired term, expiring on 12/31/2020, Class IV
Steven Sikkes	2 year unexpired term, expiring on 12/31/2019, Alternate 1
Wickliffe Mott	2 year unexpired term, expiring on 12/31/2018, Alternate 2
Marianna Stires	2 year term, expiring on 12/31/2019, Alternate #3
Vacant	2 year term, expiring on 12/31/2018, Alternate #4

Open Space Committee:

Chris D'Amato	3 year term, expiring on 12/31/2020
Roger Gutzwiller	3 year term, expiring on 12/31/2020
Vacant	3 year term, expiring on 12/31/2019

Historic Preservation Committee:

David Harvey	3 year term, expiring on 12/31/2020
Martin Miller	3 year term, expiring on 12/31/2020
Lori Nienstedt	3 year term, expiring on 13/31/2020
Vacant	3 year term, expiring on 12/31/2020

Mayor Lance explained that there are vacancies that need to be filled and if anyone is interested in filling one the can complete a Citizen Leadership Application. These can be obtained in the Municipal Clerk's Office.

Mayor Lance introduced the following:

Eric Usinowicz, Acting Director of Public Works

Christine Beegle, Chair of the Historic Preservation Committee

**FROM THE PUBLIC**

**Carol Cook – Four Corners Road** – Mrs. Cooked stated that she has been involved with the Township since she moved here in 1970 and she knows the members of the Township Committee very well. Mrs. Cook congratulated everyone and noted that she looks forward to working with them in the coming year. She is happy to live here and grateful to the Police, Ambulance, Fire Company and DPW. Mrs. Cook also noted that she enjoys working with Linda, the Municipal Clerk and all of the Municipal Staff.

Calvin Inscho, Chief Blirstown Hose Company – Mr. Inscho congratulated Mr. Lance, Mrs. Van Valkenburg and Mrs. Waldron. He also noted that there will be a meeting January 2 at 7:00pm so whoever is the Fire Commissioner should plan on attending if possible. Mr. Inscho looks forward to another great year. A lot of progress was made last year. An agreement was reached with Hardwick, when Calvin receives the contract he will forward it to the attorney for review.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg thanked Mr. Inscho for his openness. The communication between the Hose Company and the Committee has been outstanding. This is much appreciated.

**Walter Orcutt, Former Blirstown Mayor** - noted he was standing so that the Committee would recognize **Former Mayor Sal Simonetti** who was named the 2017 Man of the Year by Warren County.

Former Mayor Simonetti noted that it has been his pleasure to be a part of the Township Committee in prior years. Good luck to the current members of the Township Committee, I'm sure you will do a good job.

**ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no further comments from the public, Mrs. Waldron made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Avery. All members voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 12:44 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Linda Leidner, RMC  
Municipal Clerk