

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, September 13, 2017, 6:00 PM**

MINUTES

Regular meeting begins at 7:30 pm or immediately following Closed Session, whichever comes last.

OPENING; ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Shoemaker at 6:08pm. Those present were Mr. Avery, Mrs. Dalton, Mr. Lance, Mrs. Van Valkenburg and Mayor Shoemaker. Also present were Clerk Leidner and Attorney Kevin Benbrook.

The **FLAG SALUTE** was conducted.

SUNSHINE STATEMENT

Mayor Shoemaker read the following statement: Notice of this meeting has been sent to two newspapers of general circulation in which notice was given of the date, time, place and general agenda in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

RESOLUTION 2017 - 096 AUTHORIZING AN EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PERSONNEL, CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS, and POTENTIAL LITIGATION

Motion was made by Mr. Lance and was seconded by Mr. Avery

Roll Call Vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker.

All ayes: Motion carried.

Executive Session began at 6:09pm.

Mr. Lance made a motion to re-open the Regular Meeting at 7:28 pm. The Motion was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll Call Vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker.

All ayes: Motion carried.

Mayor Shoemaker requested a Moment of Silence in memory of 3 former Blairstown Mayors that recently passed away. Elwin Barker, Carl Race and Richard Jones.

PRESENTATION – Eagle Scout Project – Trey Baldwin

Mr. Baldwin thanked the Township Committee for allowing him to come before them this evening to present his Eagle Award Project idea. He explained that he is a Life Scout and belongs to Boy Scout Troop 140. Mr. Baldwin explained that he has noticed over the years that the Welcome to Blairstown sign is in very poor condition and he would like to rebuild it. He feels that the sign is your first impression of Blairstown, and he feels that you only have one chance to make a good first impression. Mr. Baldwin distributed examples of signs to the members of the Township Committee. The Township Committee thinks his project is a great idea and they gave him some ideas as to where the sign might work best.

Mr. Avery left the meeting at 7:42pm due to a family emergency.

Mayor Shoemaker noted that there are two Proclamations this evening.

Proclamation: National Domestic Violence Awareness Month October 2017 requested by the Domestic Abuse & Sexual Crisis Assault Center. Mayor Shoemaker read the Proclamation in full and the Proclamation will be attached to these minutes.

Mrs. Dalton made a motion to adopt this Proclamation, which was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.
VOICE VOTE: All ayes, motion carried.

Matt Hardy, Education Coordinator for the Domestic Abuse & Sexual Assault Crisis Center of Warren County was present to receive the Proclamation. He thanked the Township Committee for passing this Proclamation.

Proclamation: Designating Constitution Week September 17 - 23 – requested by the Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Mayor Shoemaker read the Proclamation and it will attached to these minutes.

Barbara Green was present to accept the Proclamation on behalf of the Belvedere Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg made a motion to adopt this Proclamation, which was seconded by Mr. Avery.
VOICE VOTE: All ayes, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT – up to 5 speakers, 3 minutes each

Sharon Cooper – Public Entity Advocates – Ms. Cooper explained that from 1994 -1997 the Township was a Charter Member of Statewide Insurance for Workers Compensation only. The Township was the commercial market for property and casualty insurance. In 1997 PACE became available and the Township moved from Statewide into PACE for the entire account and remained with PACE until 2012. The Township has been with Statewide since 2012. Ms. Cooper explained that we are in the 3rd year of a 3 year commitment and if the Township would like to submit a request to withdraw from Statewide a letter needs to be sent to them by October 1 letting them know that we will be seeking proposals.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg made a motion to put Statewide on notice that we will be obtaining competitive bids. Mrs. Dalton seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker
All ayes: Motion carried.

Ms. Cooper went on to say that in addition to that when you belong to a Joint Insurance Fund if there is money left over after all of the claims are paid that money goes back to the members on a pro-rated basis. Ms. Cooper presented the Township Committee with a check in the amount of \$18,357.00.

Jim Chenard - 68 Dry Road – read the text of a letter that he sent to the Township Clerk and asked that it be included in the minutes. The letter will be attached to the end of these minutes. The letter was in reference to a burglary at his home. It also was a commendation for the Police Department

on the way they handled this case. Mr. Chenard also wanted to bring up the need for 24/7 police coverage. Mr. Chenard added that the Township has a fine group of officers. The police coverage will also aid when the ambulance squad or fire department get called out during the night. They don't know what situation they are going to face when they arrive on a scene and having a Police Officer present would really be comforting. He explained that he will keep coming before the Township Committee in order to get this problem solved.

MINUTES

May 24, 2017 - Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve the minutes as presented with one correction on page 5, the 60 years should be 6 years, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker

All ayes: Motion carried.

July 12, 2017 – Regular Meeting Minutes

July 12, 2017 – Executive Session Minutes

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve the above minutes as presented, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker

All ayes: Motion carried.

August 9, 2017– Regular Session Minutes

Mrs. Van Valkenburg wanted to have a discussion about a section of the minutes of August 9, 2017. On page 3 at the bottom of the page. There was a roll call vote regarding the filling of the pools. In the minutes it noted that a no vote means that the Hose Company will continue to fill pools. Mrs. Van Valkenburg interjected, using our town water. Mr. Avery, Mr. Lance and Mayor Shoemaker voted no, Mrs. Van Valkenburg and Mrs. Dalton voted yes. Mrs. Van Valkenburg repeated, for the record, that this means that the Hose Company can continue to fill pools with the town's well water for a \$100.00 contribution. They used 80,000 gallons and the Township pays for the water. There are 5 other locations for the Hose Company to fill the trucks. Mrs. Van Valkenburg does not want the town water being used, unless it is an emergency, to fight a fire or fill a pool.

Mrs. Dalton explained that the reason this came up was that there was a report that indicated that the Hose Company used 80,800 gallons of water last quarter. The Township pays for this water usage. Mrs. Dalton does not approve of this either.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg made a motion to approve the minutes of August 9, 2017 as presented, which was seconded by Mayor Shoemaker.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker

All ayes: Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1 - R.2017 – 097 Authorization to Pay Bills
- 2 - R.2017 - 098 Approval to Send an Additional Asset to Warren County Auction
- 3 - R.2017 - 099 Refund of Tax Overpayment B 202, L 20.05
- 4 - R.2017 – 100 Adopting Notice of Claim Procedure
- 5 - R.2017 - 101 Submission of Housing Element and Fair Share Plan to Superior Court

In a Request for a Judgement of Compliance and Repose

Mayor Shoemaker explained that every year Warren County holds an auction that municipalities can participate in to legally get rid of items that are no longer needed in the town. He explained that the Committee already approved 2 items for auction at the last meeting. If any of the items are not sold at auction the County takes care of disposing it. If it is sold at auction the Township receives the proceeds. Municipal Clerk Leidner noted that she received word that the three items that the Township sent for the auction were sold, however, she did not have a dollar amount as yet.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg asked that R.2017-101 be pulled for discussion.

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve items 1-4 of the Consent Agenda, which was seconded by Mayor Shoemaker.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker
All ayes: Motion carried

Discussion was held regarding Resolution No. 2017- 101. Mrs. Van Valkenburg explained that she had meeting with Theresa Tamburro, Affordable Housing Liaison and CFO Christine Rolef. There are major money issues coming up, she will bring this issue up for discussion later in the meeting.

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve item #5 of the Consent Agenda, which was seconded by Mayor Shoemaker.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker
All ayes: Motion carried

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Animal Control – January –March 2017
Clerk – August Report
DPW - None
Finance – August Finance and Fuel Reports
Fire Department – None
Police Department – August Report
Tax Collector – August Report
Warren County Health Department – August 14, 2017 Report
Zoning Officer – None

Mrs. Dalton made a motion to approve the Department Reports, which was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker
All ayes: Motion carried

PRESENTATION: Recognition of Police Officers Choe, Herzer and Corporal Bee. These Officers have been involved in Narcan saves and during a traffic stop the passenger became very ill and the quick actions of the Officer probably saved her life.

Mayor Shoemaker, Deputy Mayor Lance and Captain Johnsen presented Plaques to the following Officers:

Officer Choe and **Officer Herzer** for the Motor vehicle stop/medical emergency where these officers performed CPR and saved a life. These Officers also received a plaque for an incident that happened on June 9 at an address on Four Corners Road. They administered Narcan to an unconscious male, began CPR and saved his life.

Corporal Bee on June 26 went to an address on High Street along with Captain Johnsen, there was a man unconscious on the bed both Officers administered Narcan and saved his life.

Captain Johnsen asked Police Records Clerk Lisa Whitesell to come forward so that the public can put a face to the voice they hear when they call the Police Department.

Mayor Shoemaker then explained that the Township Committee received a recommendation from Captain Johnsen to promote Corporal Bee to Sergeant. Mayor Shoemaker read the letter of recommendation. Mayor Shoemaker went on to say that Corporal Bee also does many things that weren't mentioned in the letter. Mayor Shoemaker believes that this promotion is well deserved.

Mayor Shoemaker made a motion to promote Corporal Bee to Sergeant Bee, which was seconded by Mr. Lance.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker
All ayes: Motion carried

Mr. Lance explained that he was here when Sergeant Bee was hired 12 years ago. This promotion is well overdue. Mr. Lance also said that he has done a great job over the years. This promotion will strengthen the chain of command in this Police Department.

This promotion will be effective October 1, 2017.

Sergeant Bee was sworn in by Mayor Shoemaker. Sergeant Bee's family was present for the swearing in. His sons Liam and Calvin held the Bible.

The members of the Township Committee congratulated Sergeant Bee.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg explained that most residents want to expand our Police Department. She thanked Lisa Whitesell for information that she had presented to the Township Committee earlier. Mrs. Van Valkenburg feels that night time police coverage is essential to the Township. Blairstown and Mansfield are comparable in size and population. Blairstown has 6 police officers and Mansfield Township has 15 police officers. Mrs. Van Valkenburg also noted that in 2003 there was a Director, Captain, 11 officers, and a police dog. Next year she is hoping the Township Committee will host a Public Meeting with the residents to talk about issues and the possibility of an expanded Police Department. She also indicated that soon a municipal tax will need to be implemented to achieve these goals. She stated our Police Department is wonderful.

Mr. Lance remarked that Blairstown is unique in that it has the one of the lowest taxes in the state. He is opposed to hiring additional employees and creating a municipal tax.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1 – Back Up Well Update - This is covered in the Township Engineer’s Report.

NEW BUSINESS –

1 – 2017 Best Practice Worksheet

Mrs. Rolef explained that right now we are in compliance and are eligible to receive 100% State Aid. Mrs. Rolef went on to explain that initially there were 50 questions, last year there were 30 and this year there were 25. The Township would have to answer 21 questions with a yes or N/A to receive 100% State Aid. If you only answer 20 questions correctly you experience a 25% reduction in State Aid. In order to avoid this reduction in State Aid we must adjust the personnel manual and the Tax Assessors job description.

Mr. Lance read the following section of the personnel Policy that needs to be changed:
Employees are allowed to hold outside employment as long as it does not interfere with their Township responsibilities. **Any Employee that holds outside employment must report it to their immediate Department Head in writing. The Department Head is then required to give the outside employment notice to the Office Manager who will make a determination as to whether or not a conflict of interest exists.** Employees are prohibited from engaging in outside employment activities while on the job or using Township time, supplies or equipment in the outside employment activities. The Office Manager may request employees to restrict outside employment if the quality of Township work diminishes. Any employee who holds an interest in, or is employed by, any business conducting business with the Township must submit a written notice of these outside interests to the Office Manager.

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve the change in the Conflict of Interest – Outside Employment of the Personnel Policy, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker
All ayes: Motion carried.

Mayor Shoemaker noted that the other change would be to the Tax Assessor Job Description adding the following duty:

Required to notify the CFO and the Governing Body in writing of all tax appeals upon filing by June 1st of each year.

Mr. Lance made a motion that the Tax Assessor be required to notify the CFO and the Governing Body in writing of all tax appeals upon filing by June 1st of each year, which was seconded by Mayor Shoemaker.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker
All ayes: Motion carried.

Mrs. Rolef asked if there were any questions regarding the Best Practices Worksheet, the Committee had none. The Committee thanked Mrs. Rolef for a job well done.

COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE for information and possible action

1. Memo from Captain Scott Johnsen recommending Corporal Bee to be promoted from Corporal to Sergeant. This was done earlier in the meeting.
2. Applications for Blue Light Permits from the following Ambulance Squad Members – Deborah J. Ankelein, David Cribb, Ryan Kise, Paul McNamara, Kayla Rusak

Mr. Lance made a Motion to approve the Blue Light Permits received from Ambulance Squad Members Deborah J. Ankelein, David Cribb, Ryan Kise, Paul McNamara, Kayla Rusak, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

VOICE VOTE: All ayes, motion carried.

3. Letter from Domestic Abuse & Sexual Assault Crisis Center request for a Proclamation: National Domestic Violence Awareness Month October 2017. This was done earlier in the meeting.
4. Special Events Application received from Blirstown PTG to close portions of roads for their annual Paws to Pavement Run/Walk, Saturday, October 14, 2017 from 8:30am to 11:00am.

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve the Application to close portions of Roads for the Paws to Pavement Run/Walk, which was seconded by Mayor Shoemaker.

VOICE VOTE: All ayes, motion carried.

5. Resignation from the Blirstown Historic Preservation Committee received from Cynthia Montes. This was done at the August 9, 2017 meeting.
6. Applications for Social Affair Permits from Blirstown Live Arts, Inc., Mark Clifford, Roy's Hall for Non-Profit Membership Drive Fund Raisers for the following dates Sept. 15, Oct. 6, 7, 13, 14.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg made a motion to approve the Social Affair Permits from Blirstown Live Arts, which was seconded by Mr. Lance.

VOICE VOTE: All ayes, motion carried.

7. Social Affair Application from Ridge and Valley Conservancy for their Fall Festival being held at Givens-Belet on October 8. Township Committee previously approved Facility Use Application.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg made a motion to approve to approve the Social Affair Permit from Ridge and Valley Conservancy, which was seconded by Mr. Lance.

VOICE VOTE: All ayes, motion carried.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

1. Letter from Warren County Planning Department, Public Hearing Notice, draft Freeholder resolution, proposed amendment to Warren County Solid Waste Plan. Public Hearing, September 27 at 7:30pm

Freeholders Meeting Room, 165 Route 519, Belvidere.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY

Mr. Benbrook reported that Joel McGreen, Chairman of the Open Space Committee received 3 quotes for the Phase 1 Environmental Audits relating to the potential expansion of Footbridge Park. The lowest responsible bidder is PK Environmental for \$3,250.00.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg made a motion to approve the PK Environmental quote of \$3,250.00, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker
All ayes: Motion carried.

Mr. Benbrook also mentioned the possibility of weight restrictions on Maple Lane. Maple Lane runs into Hardwick, therefore in order to place weight limit signs would require approval from Hardwick as well. Mayor Shoemaker will reach out to Mayor Perry.

Mr. Lance inquired about the status of the letter that was sent to Warren County regarding Main Street snow removal. Mr. Benbrook has reached out to them and still has not gotten a response.

Mr. Benbrook also noted that a month ago he sent the Sidewalk Agreement to the County and still has not hear anything back. Mr. Benbrook will reach out to the Warren County Planning Board Secretary regarding the status of this request.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg requested an update on the foreclosures. Mr. Benbrook explained that the complaint is drafted, one was redeemed since the process started. He is still waiting for the searches, he can't legally file the complaint without listing in the complaint the last recorded deed, book and page, for a property.

Mayor Shoemaker inquired about a memo that was received regarding the Blairstown Museum and Historic Preservation Committee. In looking at the Blairstown Museums website, it indicates that it is the only Historic Museum in the Township of Blairstown which creates the opportunity for confusion in that if someone would like to make a donation of an artifact to the Township and they donate the item thinking it is being donated to a public entity, when in fact it is being donated to a private non-profit entity. Mr. Benbrook recommends requiring the Blairstown Museum to place the following disclaimer on their website, Artifact Donation Agreement, and any literature disseminated by the museum:

THE BLAIRSTOWN MUSEUM IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH OR A PART OF THE OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN OR THE BLAIRSTOWN HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Mrs. Van Valkenburg made a motion to request that the above disclaimer be placed on the Blairstown Museum website, Artifact Donation Agreement, and any literature disseminated by the museum, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker
All ayes: Motion carried.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK

Reminder Clean-Up Vouchers are available during the hours of 8am -4 pm Mon-Fri
Free Rabies Clinic will be held on Saturday December 2, 2017 9am-Noon at the DPW garage.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER

The back up well specs will be going out on Monday. Mr. Lance inquired as to whether we are on track with the DEP deadline for the placement of the backup well.

The Cobblewood Road project has been completed. The 36inch pipe was lined with concrete. The company had to go in and replace the floor of the pipe because parts of it were rusted, this was all done by hand. The project was completed at what the quote amount, which was \$38,000.00.

Mr. Rodman reported that we are in need of three more points for the Storm water management requirement, he is continuing to work on completing the points.

Mr. Rodman explained that the State Aid Application is due by October 6 for the next round of grants for next year. He needs a recommendation of a road from the Township Committee. A lengthy discussion was held regarding roads that would possibly qualify for the State Aid. The Committee will do some research and give the recommendation to Mr. Rodman at the Workshop Meeting on September 27.

Mr. Rodman also reported that the Maple Lane project is finished. The Stripping is scheduled. Warren County has placed a membrane over the 2 culverts and this project was finished under budget as well. Mr. Rodman spoke with the County regarding the culverts and they let him know that they are up to standard. Mr. Rodman also reported that he inquired with the county about placing weight limits on roads and he believes that the Township would need state approval to do so. He will look into this further.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBER AVERY

Mr. Avery left the meeting earlier, no report.

COMMITTEE MEMBER DALTON

Mrs. Dalton reported on the LED project for the Municipal Building. The Municipal Clerk met with Cliff from Lulo Electric on August 29 and he will submit his quote to compare to the previous quote that was received.

The Mayor and Mrs. Dalton reviewed the resumes that were received for the DPW Director position and selected several candidates to be interviewed on September 25. The goal is to select 2 candidates to bring before the full Township Committee on October 11 to make a final selection.

Mrs. Dalton wanted to recognize Bobby Kise for stepping up and taking over the DPW Directors duties during this time of transition. He is doing a fabulous job and the other DPW employees are also doing a great job. Work is getting completed and Mr. Kise needs to be recognized formally. The consensus of the Township Committee is that he needs to be compensated for his efforts. The Committee will discuss next meeting.

Mrs. Dalton reported that she and Mrs. Leidner met with Ray O'Brien regarding the office security project. A couple of changes were made, hopefully we will have the final plans and the estimated cost by the next regular meeting.

Mrs. Dalton met with North Warren Regional High School Superintendent Sarah Bilotti at this week. Mrs. Dalton also reported that met the new Principal Jeanene Dutt. Mrs. Dalton noted that Ms. Dutt has great goals and objectives for North Warren Regional High School. Mrs. Dalton has copies of the strategic plan for the years 2017-2020 and informed the public that there are copies on the table in the back of the meeting room and it has been placed on the Township website.

Mrs. Dalton also reported that Blirstown Elementary has started a project to help support the victims of hurricane Harvey. The details of the project can be found on the Blirstown Township Elementary website. Two new signs are being placed on their property, one is being designed by an Eagle Scout, the other is being financed by the Parent Teacher Group. Principal Leal asked that Mrs. Dalton recognize John and Pat Kennedy who made a substantial contribution to the school so that teachers can get additional training to enhance programs for the students.

COMMITTEE MEMBER LANCE

Mr. Lance reported that there was big news in the Police Department this month, they made several drug arrests. Only one of the people arrested was from Blirstown possibly one other, they had a Columbia address so there is a possibility they were from Blirstown. The others were from Phillipsburg, Mt. Arlington, Stanhope, Belvidere and Hardwick. Other Police Department activities included 80 traffic stops, 20 summons were issued.

Mr. Lance reported on Historic Preservation Committee. The Historic Preservation Committee had an exhibit of Fire Department and Police Department artifacts at the EMS Day on August 25. On October 13, there will be a showing of Friday the 13th at Roy's Hall on Main Street. They will be having a cemetery tour at Cedar Ridge Cemetery on October 28, there will be 2 separate tours at 1:00 and 3:00. Mr. Lance also reported that 4 people donated items to the Historic Preservation Committee over the past month. He also noted that on September 21 former Historic Preservation member, Doug Pitchell, will be doing a presentation at the Public Library for Constitution Day.

Mr. Lance wished Mayor Shoemaker a Happy Birthday tomorrow. Everyone wished him Happy Birthday as well.

COMMITTEE MEMBER VAN VALKENBURG

Mrs. Van Valkenburg announced that the new Department of Recreation program schedule is posted on the Blirstown website. Mrs. Van Valkenburg remarked that Mrs. Sagan does a great job securing and scheduling these programs.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg also shared information regarding donations to causes and how the funds are distributed. Mayor Shoemaker added that there is a website Charitynavigator.org that will help people make the proper choice as to where the greatest portion of their donation will be used for the actual cause.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg also noted that if residents would like to donate to the Hose Company they accept PayPal. She also informed the public about the cost of outfitting a fireman which is almost \$10,000.00. Breathing apparatus is about \$5400.00.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg reported that she had a meeting with Theresa Tamburro, COAH Liaison and Christine Rolef, CFO, regarding affordable housing. Mrs. Tamburro asked Mrs. Van Valkenburg to ask the Committee about 37 Hope Road. She would like a motion to have 37 Hope Road be a part of the Affordable Housing program, which may result in two market to affordable housing units which would have a 30 year deed restriction. They are 2 bedroom, one of which would be a low income unit. Mr. Benbrook noted that he will review and process any of these type properties so that the Township is assured that everything is in line. He went on to explain that with every rental unit there are bonus credits involved. Mrs. Van Valkenburg asked Mr. Benbrook to be more specific on the deeds to be sure that they are consistently rented out.

Mr. Lance made a motion to allow Theresa Tamburro to proceed with the process of qualifying 37 Hope Road to be part of the Affordable Housing Program, which was seconded by Mayor Shoemaker.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker
All ayes: Motion carried.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg asked to have some time to discuss COAH. She reported that since the start of this lawsuit the Township has spent over \$40,000.00 on professionals and we are not done. The Township is permitted only to allocate 20% over the life of COAH to administrative costs. That 20% equals \$92,520.00. That leaves \$18,000.00 up until 2025 that the Township is allowed to spend on administrative costs. After the funds are exhausted it comes out of the Township budget. There is a balance in the fund of about \$118,000.00, we are \$7,000.00 short of a commitment that was made for a group home which is \$125,000.00. We may have to Bond to do additional affordable housing units that the Township has to do. Mrs. Van Valkenburg explained that if we obtain money from the In-Rem foreclosures, the Township could give land to the group home and then they could put a modular on the property and we would not have to Bond.

Mr. Benbrook explained that this is going to be a 10 year repose and there is no specific timeframe within that 10 year period that the Township has to satisfy its obligation. There should never be a scenario where the Township would be required to obtain a Bond. There will be periodic development over the next decade from which affordable housing monies will be generated. From that the fund will be rebuilt. If there is not enough money, you do not do the unit.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg asked that the following be on the record:

Why did we just go through court and spend the money for attorney fees and planner fees. Four professionals looking at the same documents, why did the Township go through all of that if we do not have to meet these requirements?

Mr. Benbrook noted that there were discussions about dismissing this lawsuit several times. The reason we did this is so that the Township can retain local control. If the Township didn't participate in this process nothing may happen over the next decade or as Mr. McGreen indicated there are hundreds of acres in Blairstown that are potentially developable with high intensity development of onsite to ground water systems. If the Township chose to dismiss this lawsuit and not have the repose protection for the next decade then that 5 acre zoning that is in place, a developer brings a lawsuit in

Superior Court then that would be 10 units per acre, 5,6,7 hundred units. Mr. Benbrook also explained that the Township got out of the litigation relatively early and stopped paying the fees for the joint experts. The answer is why you don't have to do it is that it is a plan. In the settlement document, five years into the plan the Township gives an update. Mr. Benbrook explained that he would never recommend that the Township Bond for the COAH obligation. Nothing in the order requires the Township to Bond. No court would ever make us Bond.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg noted that in the settlement Mrs. Tamburro is required to advertise. Mrs. Van Valkenburg explained that we have a \$125,000.00 obligation to build a group home. That money is supposed to be put aside.

Mrs. Rolef explained that If Mrs. Tamburro goes forward with the two units for this year or next year for the cost of about \$55,000.00 the Township is not able to fund them. If the Township Committee does not tell Mrs. Tamburro to cease and desist we do not have the money to cover that currently.

Mr. Benbrook explained that the Township could be here in 2025 with the same COAH number, the same duration adjustment going another ten years but at least we will have local rule and the zoning ordinances won't be subject to challenges by developers. The next round should not be this costly. He went on to explain that a lot of the things the Township did now will serve us well into the future as long as there is COAH. This was a NJ Constitutional obligation that had to be met.

Mr. Lance noted that this process is basically an insurance policy against a builders remedy.

Mr. Benbrook explained that the Township should stay with the repose and only chase COAH units as the Township has money in the fund. It is not an obligation it is a plan.

Mr. Benbrook is going to email Mrs. Tamburro and let her know that it is not worth going forward with the Affordable Housing income qualification process because the Township does not currently have money to fund it.

Mr. Lance made a motion to withdraw the previous motion authorizing Mrs. Tamburro to proceed with the process of qualifying 37 Hope Road to be part of the Affordable Housing Program, which was seconded by Mayor Shoemaker.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg - No, Shoemaker
Motion carried.

MAYOR SHOEMAKER

Mayor Shoemaker reported that the Greater Blairstown Business Association has gone through some changes due to most of its officers resigning.

Mayor Shoemaker reported that two quotes were received for the repair of the salt shed and they were:

Belton Carpentry \$11,780.00 Kise Carpentry \$8,275.00

Mayor Shoemaker explained that the CFO spoke with the auditor and funding can come from the Reserve for FEMA account.

Mayor Shoemaker made a motion to accept the quote from Kise Carpentry for the salt shed repair, which was seconded by Mr. Lance.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg , Shoemaker
Motion carried.

Mayor Shoemaker also reported that the DPW has submitted a request to purchase a gas Welder and Torch. Two quotes were received and they were from:

Wilson Products \$4,914.19
All Gas and Welding Supply Co. \$4,690.73

CFO Christine Rolef and DPW is requesting the Township Committee to accept the quote from Wilson Products because the product has a larger gas tank and better attachments.

Mayor Shoemaker made a motion to accept the quote from Wilson products in the amount of \$4,914.19 because the product has a larger gas tank and better attachments, which was seconded by Mr. Lance.

Roll call vote: AYE – Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg , Shoemaker
Motion carried.

Mr. Lance inquired about the purchase of the backhoe that was approved a few meetings back. Mrs. Rolef explained that the DPW is looking into backhoes and will hopefully have one chosen by the October meeting. It will be under State Contract or Nation Contract so there should be a quick turnaround.

FROM THE PUBLIC

Debra Waldron – spoke in favor of expanding the Police Department and their hours. Mrs. Waldron feels a meeting with residents to discuss the Police Department is needed. She also feels that this expansion is needed especially for the protection of EMT's and Fire Department when they answer calls after hours. Mrs. Waldron wanted to remember the following members of the community that recently passed away, Carl Race was an icon in the community. Dick Jones was a wonderful man, he had a very difficult life. Gary Teal was a farmer here in Blairstown, he was a wonderful family man. She asked that the community keep their families in their prayers.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no further comments from the public, Mrs. Dalton made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Lance. All members voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 pm.

Submitted by:

Linda Leidner, RMC
Municipal Clerk