

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
REGULAR WORKSHOP MEETING
Wednesday, March 22, 2017, 7:30 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 7:30. Those present were Mr. Avery, Mrs. Dalton, Mr. Lance, Mrs. Van Valkenburg and Mayor Shoemaker. Also present were Township Attorney Kevin Benbrook and Municipal Clerk Leidner.

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.

PUBLIC COMMENT – up to 5 speakers, 3 minutes each

NONE

At this time Mayor Shoemaker asked Recreation Director Pat Sagan to bring Mr. & Mrs. Rostkowski forward for a plaque presentation. Mrs. Van Valkenburg joined them.

Mayor Shoemaker thanked Mrs. & Mrs. Rostkowski for bringing the ice skating rink into Blairstown at Sycamore Park and presented them with an appreciation plaque. Mayor Shoemaker explained that the Rostkowski's provided all of the materials for the skating rink. In his opinion it was a huge success. Mayor Shoemaker went on to explain that this was a 24 hour a day endeavor by the Rostkowski's. Their dedication was much appreciated and didn't go unnoticed. Mayor Shoemaker remarked that the real joy was when you went to the skating rink and watched the skaters, everyone had a smile on their face and was truly having a good time. All of the members of the Township Committee expressed their gratitude and thanks to the Mr. & Mrs. Rostkowski not only for the skating rinks and the upgrades they made to the bathrooms and concession stand, but also for the countless hours that they spent maintaining the skating rink.

OLD BUSINESS

1- Main Street – Mayor Shoemaker explained that this discussion pertains to the snow removal on Main Street. Mayor Shoemaker also explained that everyone was aware that the snow was coming, the Police went around to the residents on Main Street to let them know that they should remove their cars to facilitate the removal of snow. The County came and plowed the snow but they were not coming back to clean it up as they have in the past. Individual residents called the County and inquired as to when they would be cleaning up Main Street and they were told that Warren County gave Main Street to Blairstown therefore, they were not responsible for it. Robert Benbrook had a discussion with the County and they are looking for Blairstown to adopt ordinances which are highly specific as to the responsibilities of the residents as far as clearing the sidewalks and the Blairstown

Police regarding enforcing the no parking rules. Mayor Shoemaker noted that he had a meeting with Police director Bob Gara regarding this situation and the kinds of ordinances that we need. Then the Mayor would like to work with Carl Stoddart, Bob Gara and other members of the Township Committee to work on these ordinances. Once there is a draft of the proper ordinances ready they will be sent to the Township Attorney for review. Mayor Shoemaker and Bob Gara will obtain some samples of similar ordinances from other municipalities to work off of as well. Mrs. Van Valkenburg noted that the issue is not the plowing, the issues is the removal of the snow. In the past the County DPW would haul the snow away. As recently as a year ago the Blairstown DPW and the County DPW worked together and got the snow cleaned up. This year our DPW did it on their own. Attorney Kevin Benbrook offered that if Carl Stoddart has a work log as to how many man hours the snow removal took the township can send it to the County for reimbursement.

Mason Dump Truck - Mayor Shoemaker reported that he had another item to report on under Old Business. He received an email from the truck dealer that the build date for the truck is May 30, 2017. Seven to ten days after that the truck will be at Henderson to have the dump body and plow put on the truck.

NEW BUSINESS

1 - Interlocal Service Agreement between County of Warren and the Township of Blairstown for 9-1-1 Telecommunications Services – Authorization for the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to sign the agreement. Effective Feb 1, 2007 and this month we received the letter to renew the agreement for another 10 years.

Mayor Shoemaker made a motion to authorize the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to sign the 9-1-1 Telecommunications Agreement between the County of Warren and the Township of Blairstown, the motion was seconded by Mr. Lance.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYE: Avery, Dalton, Lance Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker
All Ayes, Motion carried.

2 - Proclamation Designating The Third Full Week in March National Poison Prevention Week – Mayor Shoemaker explained that this Proclamation is from Rutgers Medical School - the New Jersey Poison Information & Education System. Mayor Shoemaker read the Proclamation, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Mayor Shoemaker made a motion to adopt the Proclamation Designating the Third Full Week in March Nation as Poison Prevention Week. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

VOICE VOTE: All Ayes, motion carried.

Mr. Avery reported that he and Mrs. Van Valkenburg met with Carl Stoddart, DPW Director to review the list that Mrs. Dalton prepared regarding DPW equipment needs. A list of five items that must be replaced were determined during an inventory of the equipment. They are:

1. Plows
2. Spreaders
3. 1995 John Deer Tractor – Replace
4. Backhoe - Replace
5. 2000 Pick-up Truck - Replace

Mr. Avery made a motion to authorize Christine to ask Bond Council to prepare a Bond Ordinance in the amount of \$275,000.00. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

Roll Call Vote: AYE: Avery, Van Valkenburg
NAY: Dalton, Lance, Shoemaker
Motion not carried.

Mayor Shoemaker and Mr. Lance would like the CFO to make a presentation before the Township Committee to explain the financing of these items and also possibly have Bond Council also in attendance. Attorney Benbrook will see if the Bond Attorney is available to attend the April 12 meeting.

Mayor Shoemaker made note of the Memorandum sent to all Staff and copied to the Township Committee noting days when various staff members will be out of the office and the date of the Staff Meetings. The Mayor thinks that staff meetings are a great idea and having the information on staff schedules is helpful.

Mayor Shoemaker reported that a request was received from Whitman that there is one final form concerning the Walnut Valley Fire House site remediation that needs to be signed by the Mayor which is the Public Notification Certification Form. This form certifies to the State that all of the properties adjacent to the Walnut Valley Fire House were notified of the contamination. The adjacent property owners were notified by a letter sent by Whitman in 2012.

Mayor Shoemaker made a motion authorizing the Mayor to sign the Public Notification Certification Form. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Voice Vote: Aye: Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker
Abstain: Lance
Motion carried.

Township Attorney Benbrook noted that he had spoken to Whitman noting that part of what they were contracted for was to develop bid specs to have the property remediated. Those bid specs are about 95% completed. Mr. Benbrook explained that it would be worth our while to have Whitman come to an Executive Session to determine if it would be a good time to get the bid specs out, and see what numbers come back for the actual remediation. Mr. Benbrook will check with Whitman on their availability to attend a meeting.

Mr. Benbrook reported that the Fair Housing Litigation has been successfully resolved. The Fairness Hearing was held on March 9; nobody came to object. Elizabeth McManus was in attendance. Jessica Caldwell did not have to take the stand. Mr. Benbrook noted that we have about of 120 days to wrap this up, fulfilling the Master's requirements with ordinances that he required. The overlay zone must also be completed. The proposed overlay does not go anywhere unless public sewers are installed. This does not mandate public sewers in any way. Mr. Benbrook noted that expenses for a Planning Board Planner can come from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund balance.

FROM THE PUBLIC

Nothing from the Public.

Mayor Shoemaker made a Motion to go into Executive Session for THE PURPOSE OF Contract Negotiations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lance.

Roll Call Vote: AYE: Avery, Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker
All Ayes, motion carried.

Executive Session began at 8:45pm.

Mr. Lance made a motion to close the Executive Session which was seconded by Mr. Avery
Voice Vote: All ayes, motion carried.

Meeting was re- opened to the Public at 9:04pm

Mayor Shoemaker explained that during the Executive Session a contract discussion was held regarding the liability insurance payments for Blirstown Water Operator Mike Lata.

Mr. Lance made a Motion to pay Water Operator Mike Lata one half of his liability insurance which was seconded by Mr. Avery.

Roll Call Vote: AYE: Avery, Dalton, Lance, Shoemaker
NAY: Van Valkenburg
Motion carried.

Also, as a result of the Executive Session:

Mr. Lance made a motion to RICE Notice Carl Stoddart DPW Supervisor to attend the April 12, 2017 Meeting which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Voice Vote: All ayes, motion carried.

Also discussed was the need for a Court Subcommittee. Mr. Lance and Mayor Shoemaker offered to be part of the sub- committee.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no further comments from the public, Mr. Lance made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Avery. All members voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Submitted by:

Linda Leidner, RMC
Municipal Clerk