

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN  
REGULAR MEETING  
Wednesday, March 13, 2019, 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 Deputy Mayor Van Valkenburg. Those present were Mr. Moorhead, Mr. Sikkes, and Mrs. Waldron. Mayor Lance was absent. Also present were Township Clerk, Linda Leidner and Township Attorney, Dawn Sullivan.

The **FLAG SALUTE** was conducted.

**SUNSHINE 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. This agenda is subject to change by order of the Blairstown Township Committee before and/or during this scheduled meeting.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Resolution No. 2019-039 AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION** – for the purpose of Personnel, Contract Negotiations and Attorney Client Privilege.

Motion made by Mrs. Van Valkenburg to go into executive session at 6:47 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Waldron.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron  
Absent: Lance  
All ayes. Motion carried.

Motion to close executive session was made at 7:34 p.m. by Mrs. Waldron and was seconded by Mr. Moorhead.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron  
Absent: Lance  
All ayes. Motion carried.

A motion was made Mr. Moorhead to not renew the contract for the Back-Up Water Operator, expiring March 31, 2019, seconded by Mr. Sikkes

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron  
Absent: Lance  
All ayes. Motion carried.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Kendrya Close, Stillwater Road** – on behalf of the Foodshed Alliance, Mrs. Close wished to request continued use of the parking lot for the Blirstown Farmer’s Market for 2019. Mrs. Van Valkenburg said that we are scheduled to have some work performed in that area due to the new well.

A motion was made by Rob Moorhead to allow the Foodshed Alliance to hold their Farmer’s Market in the parking lot, seconded by Mrs. Waldron.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron

Absent: Lance

All ayes. Motion carried.

**Wayne Dickson, 52 Four Corners Road** – Mr. Dickson stated his concerns over the poor cell coverage by Verizon in this area.

Mrs. VanValkenburg stated that perhaps we can look into this.

Mr. Dickson raised a second point, asking when his road will be paved. Mrs. Van Valkenburg stated that no commitment has been made yet as to which roads and what procedures will be followed. His final point was regarding the burned down houses still sitting vacant in Blirstown. Mrs. Van Valkenburg explained that we have an active Vacant and Abandoned house program.

**Kathy Treanor, 28 Cooke Road**, expressed about the funding for the North Warren Regional School District as a result of Chapter 67.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

**Yards Creek Upper Reservoir Intake Gate Project** – Timothy Hicks, Plant Manager for Yards Creek and Jackie Espinoza from JCP&L discussed the project, which creates the ability to isolate the upper reservoir and improve the plant’s flexibility for managing water during emergency situations for public safety. The scope was to install two gates that have a leak detection system to operate automatically and remotely. Mr. Hicks apologized for the lack of notification regarding the project and he will be sure to keep the Township Committee and its Officials better informed.

**Rotary** – Bob Law from the Blirstown Rotary explained that there has been a change in Rotary insurance which no longer allows them to sign an agreement with the fireworks company and be a direct provider of the fireworks presentation. Mr. Law stated that the fireworks company will provide a \$5M policy and is hoping that the town can sign the agreement with Rotary funding the fireworks. Mayor Lance communicated to Mrs. Van Valkenburg that we are fine with the insurance and the fireworks display can proceed. The display will be held on Friday, July 5, 2019.

**Blirstown Enhancement Committee** – Bob Law stated that there will be a Village Spring Cleanup Project that will be held on May 17-18, 2019. Roughly 30-40 volunteers from organizations such as the Ashram, Blair Academy, the Garden Club, Girl Scouts, and the Interact Club from North Warren Regional High School. DPW Acting Supervisor, Eric

Usinowicz met with the Committee to help with the program particularly with regard to curb/sidewalk repair, and restrict parking. The plan is to close one side of the street at a time so as to minimize disruptions to business.

Mr. Moorhead stated that we have abandoned cars at the parking lot near 25 Main Street. There is an ordinance stating that vehicles are not to be kept there more than 24 hours so we should address this problem.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg stated that the sidewalks are the responsibility of the owners of the buildings. Mrs. Waldron stated that we could have the owners sign off on something for our DPW to work on the sidewalks. Mr. Sikkes stressed that it is the owner's responsibility so they need to address it.

## **DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

**Scott Hendricks – ACO** – passed around the monthly Animal Control Report for review by the Committee. All reports are sent to Mrs. Leidner and Mr. Moorhead and law enforcement, should they be involved.

**Chief Scott Johnson – Blairstown Police** – stated that we need to revisit the ordinances pertaining to the village area and update them as necessary. Pink patches were ordered for November Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Social archiving for Facebook will cost \$200/month. If the Township does not do it then he will turn off the ability for people to comment.

North Warren Pharmacy is donating four (4) pre-loaded Narcans to the Blairstown Ambulance Corps, who in turn are donating them to the Blairstown Police Department.

There will be a Police vs. Fire Department benefit basketball game in June at the Blairstown Elementary School. The departments are determining the recipients of the funds collected. The police blotter was then shared.

**Eric Usinowicz – Department of Public Works** – there are four furnaces above the Municipal Building and there was an issue with the burner motor. It has since been repaired. All the permits have been filed for the new generator. No date for delivery has been provided as of yet. With regard to the Water Company, Albert completed all of his lead and copper forms for the DEP. Grizzly Electric installed a new breaker at the water tower. Vehicles are being maintained. Potholes are being patched. The third repair to the salt shed has taken place.

**Mark Slater – Fire Department** – 19 calls were answered; 13 in Blairstown, 2 in Hardwick, 1 in Frelinghuysen and 3 in Knowlton. Four members are attending a 3 day vehicle extrication class in April, and several are signed up for a smoke reading class in June.

## **MINUTES**

It was decided to postpone accepting the December 12, 2018 Regular and Executive Session meeting minutes since the absence of Mayor Lance would leave only two members who could vote at the present meeting.

February 13, 2019 – Regular Meeting Minutes  
February 27, 2019 – Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes  
February 27, 2019 – Regular Workshop Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Moorhead to accept the February 2019 meeting minutes as a whole; seconded by Mr. Sikkes.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg,  
Abstain: Waldron  
Absent: Lance  
All ayes. Motion carried.

**ORDINANCES  
FOR INTRODUCTION:**

**ORDINANCE 2019-07 CALENDAR YEAR 2019 ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14)**

Introduction; First Reading

Mrs. Van Valkenburg explained that this is to allow the Township to go up 3% over the previous years budget in 2019.

Motion to approve Ordinance No. 2019-07 was made by Mrs. Waldron; seconded by Mr. Moorhead.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron  
Absent: Lance  
All ayes. Motion carried.

**FOR PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION:**

**ORDINANCE 2019 – 01 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 184 “VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC” SECTION 184-11 “PARKING PROHIBITED AT ALL TIMES ON CERTAIN STREETS” OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN**

Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Mrs. Van Valkenburg explained that this addition was by recommendation of the Acting DPW Director. Township Attorney Sullivan noted that the purpose of the Ordinance was to add Bridge Street, one side of the road from Douglas Street to Route 94.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg opened the Public Hearing. A member of the audience inquired if there will be a signs. Mr. Usinowicz explained that there will be No Parking Signs.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2019-01 was made by Mr. Sikkes; seconded by Mr. Moorhead.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron

Absent: Lance

Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE 2019-02 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 19 "LAND DEVELOPMENT",  
SECTION 19-901 "FEES" OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN**

Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Mrs. Van Valkenburg explained that these recommendations came from the Zoning Officer to get the zoning permit fee structure in line with other Warren County municipalities.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg opened the Public Hearing. There were no comments or questions from the public.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2019-02 was made by Mrs. Waldron; seconded by Mr. Moorhead

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron

Absent: Lance

Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE 2019-03 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 80 "CHARITABLE DONATION  
CLOTHING BINS", SECTION 80-3 "PERMIT AND RENEWAL FEES" OF THE CODE OF THE  
TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN**

Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Mrs. Van Valkenburg explained that this was also a recommendation from the Zoning Officer to get the Charitable Donation Clothing Bin permit renewal fee structure in line with other Warren County Municipalities.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg opened the Public Hearing. Mr. Wasnicki noted that some of the clothing bins should not be considered charitable. Mrs. Waldron explained that when permits are applied for the applicants are indicating that they are charitable.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2019-03 was made by Mr. Sikkes; seconded by Mr. Moorhead.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron

Absent: Lance

All ayes. Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE 2019-04 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING BLAIRSTOWN TOWNSHIP FIRE AND  
RESCUE COMPANY NO. 1 TO SUBMIT REQUESTS FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR THE COSTS OF  
MATERIALS USED IN FIGHTING FIRES AND PROVIDING EMERGENCY SERVICES**

Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Mrs. Van Valkenburg explained that the Township Committee wishes to demonstrate it's support for the Hose Company by recognizing the Hose Company's authority to establish a revenue recovery plan. Those who benefit from the services of the Hose Company when involved in a motor vehicle accident are asked to pay a fair share and reasonable share of the cost of loss and wear and tear of the apparatus, tools, equipment and materials.

Ms. Sullivan noted that there is a minor change in the wording of the Ordinance prior to opening the discussion to the public and that is: Originally in the first Whereas clause says the Blairstown Hose Company #1 "Hose Company" is an independent volunteer fire and rescue company - This is changed to read in an independent **municipal** volunteer fire and rescue company.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg opened the Public Hearing. Mrs. Murray voiced concern that when a resident calls 911 they aren't expecting a charge for the services. Mr. Sikkes explained that the charge would be to a charge to the individuals automotive insurance, this only pertains to the Hose Company responding to a motor vehicle accident. Mr. Moorhead explained that insurance companies already have this calculated in the claims. Many times the funds go unclaimed, this will enable the Hose Company to recoup some of the money to replenish materials.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2019-04 which was made by Mrs. Waldron; seconded by Mr. Moorhead.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron

Absent: Lance

All ayes. Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE 2019-05 BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$133,000 FOR THE ACQUISITION OF VARIOUS VEHICLES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR AND BY THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN IN THE COUNTY OF WARREN, NEW JERSEY AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$124,500 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE TOWNSHIP FOR FINANCING PART OF THE APPROPRIATION**

Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Mrs. Van Valkenburg opened the Public Hearing. A resident questioned how the Bonds are obtained. Mrs. Van Valkenburg explained that the Township has a Bond Council that is used.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2019-05 was made by Mr. Moorhead; seconded by Mrs. Waldron.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron

Absent: Lance

All ayes. Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE 2019-06 BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$37,000 FOR ACQUISITION OF TRUCK WITH PLOW FOR THE WATER DEPARTMENT IN AND BY THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN IN THE COUNTY OF WARREN, NEW JERSEY AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$37,000 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE TOWNSHIP FOR FINANCING PART OF THE APPROPRIATION**

## Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Mrs. Van Valkenburg opened the Public Hearing. There were no comments or questions.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2019-06 was made by Mrs. Waldron; seconded by Mr. Sikkes.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron

Absent: Lance

All ayes. Motion carried.

## CONSENT AGENDA

1 – R.2019 – 040 Authorization to Pay Bills

2 – R.2019 - 041 In Support of Fireworks Display at Blair Academy

3 - R.2019 – 042 Authorizing Transfer of 2018 Budget Appropriations

4 – R.2019 - 043 Awarding a Contract to Purchase a 2019 Ford F350

5 - R.2019 – 044 Awarding a Contract to Purchase a 2019 Ford F350 – Water Utility Fund

6 – R.2019 – 045 Awarding a Contract to Purchase Two (2) 2020 Ford Utility Interceptor Police Vehicles

Motion to approve made by Mr. Moorhead; seconded by Mr. Sikkes.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron

Absent: Lance

All ayes. Motion carried.

## DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Ambulance Corp. – February Report

Animal Control – February Report

Clerk – February Report

Finance – February Fuel Reports

Fire Department – February Report

Police Department – February Report

Tax Collector – February Report

Warren County Health Department – February 11, 2019

Zoning - VAPS February 2019

Motion to accept made by Mrs. Waldron; seconded by Mr. Sikkes.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Mr. Moorhead, Mr. Sikkes, Mrs. Van Valkenburg, Mrs. Waldron

All ayes – Motion carried.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**Walnut Valley Firehouse Remediation** – Mrs. Waldron commented that we are awaiting the new contract to arrive so that we can go forward. We have until 2022 to comply with the DEP requirements to remediate this situation.

**Paulina Lake Dam Inspection** – Township Engineer, Rodman explained that the contract

was signed by Mayor Lance. The inspection should take about a day and the cost is \$3,600.00.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Proclamation declaring March 17-23, 2019 National Poison Prevention Week** – Deputy Mayor Van Valkenburg read the proclamation in full.

**Workplace Policy – Township Attorney, Dawn Sullivan**, explained that the Township Committee in conjunction with the Township Clerk, looked at the office closing policy. The policy was written that the office would be closed whenever the Governor declared a State of Emergency. The policy has been revised to indicate that the Municipal Offices will not be closed each time a State of Emergency is declared. Each instance will be taken on a case by case basis. Employees are to use their best judgement if it is not safe to travel into work. If they have to travel a distance, they do not have to come into work but need to use their own time. The rest of the policy remains as it was.

Motion was made by Mrs. Waldron, seconded by Mr. Moorhead, to accept the revision to the policy.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron  
Absent: Lance  
All ayes. Motion carried.

**COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE** for information and possible action

**Request from American Legion for use of Footbridge Park on May 26, 2019** after 3pm for Memorial Day Festivities.

Motion was made by Mrs. Waldron, to approve the American Legion use of Footbridge Park on May 26, 2019 for the Memorial Day Festivities, which was seconded by Mr. Moorhead.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron  
Absent: Lance  
All ayes. Motion carried.

**Request from the American Legion for a letter of approval** to be sent to DOT for the closure of Route 94 from Cedar Ridge Cemetery to Footbridge Park on Sunday, May 26 from 1-3pm for the Memorial Day parade.

Motion was made by Mr. Sikkes, to authorize this closing, which was seconded by Mr. Moorhead.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron  
Absent: Lance  
All ayes. Motion carried.

**Letter from Green Acres' confirming the offer to purchase Block 1503, Lots 8.13, 8.14 & 9** from Blairstown Township in the amount of \$58,000.00 or \$3,500.00 per acre.



Motion was made by Mr. Sikkes, confirming the sale of Block 1503, Lots 8.13, 8.14 & 9 to Green Acres in the amount of \$58,000.00, which was seconded by Mr. Moorhead.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron

Absent: Lance

All ayes. Motion carried.

**Request for Approval of Application from Knot Just Flies** to hold the 1st Annual Blairstown Fishing Derby at Footbridge Park and Pavilion on May 18th at 10:00am. All appropriate Municipal Departments have reviewed the application.

Motion was made by Mrs. Waldron, to approve the Application for Facility Use from Knot Just Flies, which was seconded by Mr. Sikkes.

Roll call vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron

Absent: Lance

All ayes. Motion carried.

## **GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE**

### **FROM THE TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY**

Ms. Sullivan confirmed that on March 25, 2019, Fred Semrau and Ms. Sullivan will be conducting a Social Media Training course for department heads and any available interested employees. Following that there will be a Newly Elected Officials training.

Regarding the marijuana legalization issue, an eye is being kept on that.

Legislation is being sought to remove the Statute of Limitations on civil actions for sexual abuse allegations. Title 59 immunities do not apply which presents many issues for a municipality. Without a Statute of Limitations, something that happened 15 years ago could be brought up and a suit brought against a municipality and no one who was around then is even around anymore. Work is ongoing to adjust the language so that the impact to municipalities is not so great.

### **FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK**

Clean up Week is scheduled for September 23-28 – Vouchers will be available beginning August 1

### **FROM THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER**

**The well permits** have been submitted and it has been received by the DEP.

**Main Street parking lot** has been reviewed and revised. It was decided that 60 degree parking angle spaces will be installed and this will increase the number of parking spaces to 11. Some changes have been made to the drainage but no word on when it will be implemented.

**Route 94 Bridge construction** has begun.

## **FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE**

### **COMMITTEE MEMBER MOORHEAD**

The first Senior Trip for 2019 is scheduled for Stony Hill Inn in Hackensack to see Smokey Joe's Cafe on Tuesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>. Sign up is on Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. at the Municipal Building. Cost is \$35. For more information, contact Mickey at 908-362-8919.

### **COMMITTEE MEMBER SIKKES**

Land Use Board is reviewing the solar panels that Blair Academy wishes to install by the Paulinskill.

Mr. Sikkes also reported that shipping containers are not permitted in the town as per the Zoning Officer.

### **COMMITTEE MEMBER VAN VALKENBURG**

Mrs. Van Valkenburg has been working on the budget with the goal of finalizing the budget at the Committee Workshop meeting in March. She stated that the current budget is preliminary. Mrs. VanValkenburg is making presentations in the community with groups such as the Blair Woman's Club, BEC, GBBA, and the Blairstown Rotary to keep them informed of the budget and challenges faced by the Township during this budget year.

### **COMMITTEE MEMBER WALDRON**

The Police Department has done a great deal of volunteering throughout the Township, partnering with the BEC, Blairstown CARE, and local schools.

The Fire Department is doing a great job of keeping our residents safe.

The EMTs response time is improving.

### **MAYOR LANCE**

Mayor Lance was not present at this meeting.

## **FROM THE PUBLIC**

**Eugene Woznicki** asked about the landfill closing. Mr. Sikkes corrected him stating that the incinerator is closed, not the landfill. Mr. Woznicki is the North Warren Board of Education President, adding that there will be a preliminary budget hearing on Monday, March 18, 2019 at 6 p.m.. March 29, 2019 will be the public meeting at North Warren Regional High School.

**Dominick Moreo, 17 Deer Run Road**, expressed displeasure over the potential of gradual removal of reimbursement for plowing of private roads.

**Christina DeCeault, 4 Briar Hill Lane**, expressed displeasure over the potential of gradual removal of reimbursement for plowing of private roads.

**Stacey Fluri, Ridge Lane**, expressed concern over the schools in Blirstown with regard to the budget cuts from the State of New Jersey.

**Fred Cooke, Four Corners Road**, stated that we do not have good attendance at our meetings. He asked the attorney to speak to the State requirement regarding providing plowing of private roads.

**Tom Hartman, Bingham Lane**, asked where it is fair and equitable to cut off private road residents from any type of reimbursement. Mrs. Waldron explained that it was merely a discussion and no decisions have been made.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no further comments from the public, Mr. Moorhead made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Sikkes. All members voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Nienstedt  
Deputy Clerk