

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, May 9, 2018, 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 Lance. Those present were Mr. Avery, Mrs. Dalton, Mrs. Van Valkenburg, Mrs. Waldron, and Mayor Lance. Also present were Township Clerk, Linda Leidner, and Township Attorney, Dawn Sullivan.

The **FLAG SALUTE** was conducted.

SUNSHINE STATEMENT

Mayor Lance 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 No. 2018-063 AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION – for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations, litigation and personnel.

Motion to authorize executive session was made at 6:26 p.m. by Mrs. Waldron and was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.

All ayes – Motion carried.

Executive Session began 6:26 p.m.

Motion to close executive session was made at 7:29 p.m. by Mrs. Waldron and was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.

All ayes – Motion carried.

Regular Session began at 7:29 p.m.

Results of the executive session were detailed by Mayor Lance. They included discussion with the Knowlton Court regarding finances within the court. Additionally, the police department discussed the formation of a canine unit.

Resolution 2018-067 – RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN, COUNTY OF WARREN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING THE COMMENCEMENT OF A K-9 PROGRAM WITHIN THE BLAIRSTOWN TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE NEGOTIATION OF A CONTRACT WITH SOUTHERN TIER POLICE CANINE ASSOCIATION, INCORPORATED AND LOCATION OF AN APPROPRIATE CANINE FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM

Motion to approve Resolution 2018-067 was made by Mrs. Waldron and Seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.

All ayes – Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT –

1. Bob Halberstadt discussed the medical usage of cannabis, adding that we should consider the facts about medical usage for people who really need it before any final decisions are made. Mr. Halberstadt presented information from the AMA which he left with Mrs. Leidner to share with the Committee.
2. Cheryl Paulson and Bob Law presented on the Blirstown Enhancement Committee's providing Pet Waste Stations for the Main Street Area, including Footbridge Park. As these are being provided for free to the Township from the BEC, the only assistance that is needed is with installation of the stations. The DPW has indicated they can help with the install. A motion to approve the installation of Pet Waste Stations was made by Mr. Avery, seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance
All ayes – Motion carried.

Mr. Law indicated that Blair Academy is supervising a Day of Service on May 18th with 20 Students to clean up the sidewalks on Main Street.

3. Cynthia Mardin of Buzzworks and Mike Campbell of Dale's Market discussed the issue of lack of parking in the downtown area. They requested the Committee consider options for parking on a regular basis in the form of public parking. Additionally, Ms. Mardin and Mr. Campbell detailed their reasons for coming before the Committee initially, namely the out lash on social media that was initiated by an event coordinator who was unhappy with Ms. Mardin's and Mr. Campbell's desire to mark their parking spaces as being for patrons only.

Mayor Lance indicated that the proposal by Blair Academy to create 15 parking spaces across from the Post Office will alleviate some of the issue. Mr. Avery suggested that the field behind Alpine be used for parking for events being held on Main Street.

Mr. Campbell concluded that they support events that strengthen the community but that help is needed with accommodating parking for event attendees.

4. As a show of appreciation, Susan Tilley, Executive Director of the Ridge and Valley Conservancy, presented a large, framed map of the Open Space Land in Blirstown. The map was drawn up by Bob Canace. Ms. Tilley encouraged all to drop by their offices on Main Street and learn more about their projects and programs.

The Committee expressed their appreciation for the accomplishments of the Ridge and Valley Conservancy, including those of Joel Green, head of our Open Space Committee.

PROCLAMATION – Mayor Lance issued a proclamation declaring May 2018 "History Month" and presented a certificate to members of the Blirstown Historic Preservation Committee. Members included Christine Beegle, Chair, Barbara Green, Recording Secretary, Lori Nienstedt, Corresponding Secretary, and Martin Miller, Liaison to Blair Academy.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS – The DPW, Open Space, Police, and Fire Department heads presented their individual department reports.

A motion to go out for bids on the DPW storage shed was made by Mr. Avery, seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance
All ayes – Motion carried.

MINUTES

March 28, 2018 – Regular Workshop Meeting Minutes

Motion; second. Roll Call Vote

March 28, 2018 – Executive Session Minutes

Motion; second. Roll Call Vote

April 11, 2018 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion; second. Roll Call Vote

April 11, 2018 – Executive Session Minutes

Motion; second. Roll Call Vote

April 25, 2018 – Workshop Meeting Minutes – Public Open Forum

A motion to approve Regular and Executive Session meeting minutes was made by Mr. Avery, seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.
All ayes – Motion carried.

FOR ADOPTION:

ORDINANCE NO: 2018-08 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 19 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN ENTITLED “LAND DEVELOPMENT” - Tabled from April 11, 2018

Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Motion to approve; second. Roll call vote.

Ms. Sullivan was asked to address the potential farming issue which would be another amendment to this same section. Since this was tabled at the last meeting, Ms. Sullivan advised that the Committee could adopt Ordinance 2018-08 today and do another amendment to be introduced at another meeting or withdraw this one that is on for a second reading and introduce the revised version today and then it would be published and go for a second reading.

A motion to withdraw Ordinance 2018-08 was made by Mrs. Waldron, seconded by Mr. Avery.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.
All Ayes – Motion carried.

A motion was made to introduce **ORDINANCE NO: 2018-12 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 19 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN ENTITLED “LAND DEVELOPMENT”** by Mrs. Waldron, seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

The Second Reading and Public Hearing for this ordinance will be held on June 13, 2018.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.
All Ayes – Motion carried.

ORDINANCE NO: 2018-09 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 84 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN ENTITLED “CONCERTS AND FESTIVALS, OUTDOOR”

Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Mayor Lance explained that this is the Second Reading and Public Hearing on this Ordinance. There were no public questions or comments.

Motion to approve Ordinance No. 2018-09 was made by Mrs. Waldron; seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.

All Ayes – Motion carried.

ORDINANCE NO: 2018-10 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 143 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN ENTITLED “PEACE AND GOOD ORDER”

Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Mayor Lance explained that this is the Second Reading and Public Hearing on this Ordinance. There were no public questions or comments.

Motion to approve ORDINANCE No. 2018-10 was made by Mrs. Waldron; seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.

All Ayes – Motion carried.

FOR INTRODUCTION:

ORDINANCE NO: 2018-11 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SALARY ORDINANCE

First Reading, Introduction

Second Reading and Public Hearing on this Ordinance will be held at the Workshop Meeting to be held on May 23, 2018.

Motion to approve ORDINANCE NO. 2018-11 was made by Mrs. Van Valkenburg; seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.

All Ayes – Motion carried.

FOR POSSIBLE INTRODUCTION:

ORDINANCE NO: 2018-13 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 147 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN ENTITLED PROPERTY MAINTENANCE.

First Reading, Introduction

Ms. Sullivan explained that this amendment is meant to be a notice to property owners when there are repeated calls to their properties due to tenants committing offenses. This pertains to convictions, not arrests. It helps make sure that property owners are aware of what is going on in their dwellings.

By amending the code to permit notification and posting of a bond, owners are on notice if there are expenses expended by the Township for repeated visits. There will be consequences to the owner for not enforcing their role as a landlord.

Second Reading and Public Hearing on this Ordinance will be held at the Workshop Meeting to be held on May 23, 2018.

Motion to approve the introduction of ORDINANCE NO. 2018-13 was made by Mrs. Waldron; seconded by Mr. Avery.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.
All Ayes – Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1 – R.2018 – 064 Authorization to Pay Bills
- 2 – R.2018 - 065 Appointment of Fund Commissioner
- 3 - R.2018 - 066 Redemption of Certification of Sale No. 2017-004

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Mrs. Van Valkenburg; seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.
All Ayes – Motion carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- Clerk – April Report
- DPW - April
- Finance – April Finance and Fuel Reports
- Fire Department – March and April
- Police Department – April Report
- Tax Collector – April Report
- Warren County Health Department – April 3, 2018
- Zoning -

Motion to approve the Department Reports was made by Mrs. Van Valkenburg; seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.
All Ayes – Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. ACME Shopping Plaza – Captain Johnsen stated there is nothing new to report.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion regarding parking during events held in the Village area was discussed earlier in the meeting. Mr. Avery further suggested that we should try to utilize the grassy area behind Alpine. Mrs. Waldron added that it is crucial to know that these events are happening to begin with as it is the Committee's role to mitigate any potential issues. In the most recent instance of an event held on Main Street, there was no application for the event therefore the police were put in a position to be reactive rather than proactive, businesses were affected negatively, and the Post Office had accessibility issues.

Ms. Sullivan stated that this issue would have to be added as an amendment to **ORDINANCE 2018-09**.

COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE for information and possible action

1. Blue Light Permit **Initial** Application request from Blaiirstown Ambulance Corp Member Katie Reiger of Columbia.

Motion to approve Blue Light Initial Permit submitted by Katie Reiger from the Blaiirstown Ambulance Corp. was made by Mrs. Waldron; seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.

All Ayes – Motion carried.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY

An update on the in-rem litigations – a notice was published in the paper. Pursuant to the statute, all of the possible interested property owners were sent notices. They have 45 days to object to the petition, and that date is June 8, 2018. If no objections are received by June 8, 2018, the Township then applies to the court for a final judgement to get ownership to the Township. This is for the seven (7) properties that we had sufficient title searches on. We are still waiting for the title company on two of the properties. They have not given any reason for the delay.

Regarding editing Wikipedia, Ms. Sullivan commented that it is a very easy task that anyone can do.

Regarding the Lackawanna cut-off, Ms. Sullivan commented that she spoke with a gentleman at New Jersey Transit. As far as he is aware, the plan is for Blaiirstown to be a stop after Andover. He was not optimistic that it would be soon based on how long it took for Andover to get to where it is.

Regarding Social Media, Ms. Sullivan reminded the Committee that everything that happens in Executive Session and in the Municipal Building amongst the employees should remain Confidential.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK

- Nothing to report.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER

- Rt. 94 potholes have been filled by the State Department of Transportation. They are scheduled to pave Route 94 this summer.
- A problem statement was submitted to the DOT regarding the structural safety of the Route 94 bridge. No reply has been received.
- Whitman is requesting answers as to what the Township would like to do regarding the Walnut Valley Firehouse. Whitman noted that remediation is due by 02/28/2022. Whitman is saying that much work has to be done prior to 2022 and that they are already very behind if they wish to make the due date.
- Regarding Mohican Road, we are awaiting approval from the State on minor change in scope.

- Dave Simmons, Albert Schwartz, and Ted Rodman met to discuss trying to get Albert more involved in the construction of a 20x15 foot building. It was noted that the new well is in a flood hazard area.

There are several different types of permits that can be applied for with regard to the well house building; a) Permit by Rule #13 – you do not have to do anything if you are under 200 sq. ft., b) Permit by Certification #5 – there are no fees and you can do it online, however the building has to be under 750 sq. ft.. The positive is that it can fit a generator. The DEP said it has to be a separate building, not wood, with separate entrance and security.

Regarding extra room for the Fire Department. Chief Inscho and Mr. Avery visited Givens-Belet. Chief Inscho felt that this is not a viable option for regular meetings.

Mr. Rodman indicated that in two weeks he should have a rough idea on the cost for the Fire Department addition. It is going to be limited to what is left over from the generator and the building. The generator will be on a slab in the back of the firehouse

1. FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE COMMITTEE MEMBER AVERY

Regarding the Seniors group, the next trip will be on May 27th to Silver Birches in Hawley, PA. They had 42 people attend their first trip of the year.

COMMITTEE MEMBER DALTON

Gypsy Moth Spraying will take place sometime between May 16 and June 15th. We have a no spray time of 7-8 a.m. each morning. The planes will likely be done spraying by 6:30 a.m. As details are communicated by the State of New Jersey with regard to a solid date, they will be shared.

North Warren Regional's Art show is being held on May 22 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. The FFA held their annual Barnyard Day event and it was very successful.

On May 11th, the Mighty Quinn fundraiser is being held to benefit Todd Quinn, who is battling ALS. It is \$25 per person.

Blairstown Elementary School has a survey online for parents regarding a School Resource Officer being hired for the school.

Additionally, the Board of Education needs members. There are three seats available. Petitions should be submitted to the Warren County Clerk by July 30.

COMMITTEE MEMBER VAN VALKENBURG

Mrs. Van Valkenburg wants a resolution or ordinance going to Hardwick, Knowlton regarding contributions for the Fire Department, Recreation, and the DCA. Ms. Sullivan had given samples on how we can create an ordinance for the fields. Mrs. Waldron state that we need to invite representatives from those town to meet with us so they understand that the costs are such that we cannot afford to maintain our fields, equipment and such any longer. We can propose that they each contribute 1/3. Mrs. Leidner noted that if all of the elected officials from all of towns meet the meeting will have to be advertised as a joint meeting.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg said that the DCA will not contribute. They will leave if we charge them. Ms. Sullivan said that we can have them sign an agreement and said that she can reach out to the DCA on behalf of the Township as there are other towns that charge them a fee.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg said that she would like to have an electronic sign out by the road to advertise our events. Mayor Lance said that he recommended this previously and the idea was not well received. Mrs. Waldron said that we often share information on the website and on our Facebook page as well other town Facebook pages. Mrs. Van Valkenburg indicated that she feels an electronic sign will be better and can help advertise senior events, historic events and more.

The United Methodist Church on Stillwater Road has an outreach for those in need with regard to house painting, wheelchair ramp construction. Information on that program can be obtained in the municipal building.

COMMITTEE MEMBER WALDRON

Mrs. Waldron expressed her concern over COAH fees. She stated that she is a business owner who donates one house per year to someone whose home has been destroyed. She has organized a group of people who help restore these domiciles.

She explained that COAH fees are meant for new homes and new business to supply the town with a way to pay back our state mandate. Homeowners are responsible for COAH fees, which are roughly 2.5%. Roger Thomas, attorney for the Land Use Board that we need an ordinance be adopted to prevent this from happening again. The Committee agreed to pursue this.

MAYOR LANCE

Mayor Lance reported that Century Link is planning a \$30M internet upgrade with 12 newer internet service devices will be completed by the end of July if not sooner.

The resident on Douglas Street for whom we implemented a handicap parking spot sign wrote a letter to thank the Township for our efforts.

Mayor Lance attended two JCP&L meetings last week. The first meeting was about the outage reporting activity. Mayor Lance and Mrs. Waldron began calling JCP&L to report Outages. This is no longer allowed and now must go through our OEM Director, Nick Mohr, who will then share it with the county OEM, who will place a ranking on the outages. State highways will receive priorities followed by county roads, then municipal roads will be addressed. The consensus is that this new process will be much worse with regard to response time for our local roads. JCP&L will institute regional calls with their representatives.

The second meeting was a county OEM meeting with JCP&L. They are going to cut down all of the ash trees due to the invasion by the Emerald Ash Borer. Mrs. Waldron expressed concern over the number lines around the area that have tree branches laying on them.

Blairstown Girl Scouts would like to expand Sycamore Park. Mayor Lance directed them to the Mom's Club.

Mayor Lance participated in the Grand Opening at 4-Track Bicycles on Main Street.

The County Overlay Plan –

2021: County Rt. 521 from the railroad bridge down to Rt. 94

Cedar Lake Road, from the Railroad culvert to the intersection with Lambert Road

2022: Mt. Hermon Road through the railroad trestle at Vail to Rt. 94

Mayor Lance detailed the events taking place during History Month.

Memorial Day Parade is May 27, 2018.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Kevin Doell, 111 Heller Hill Road. Mr. Doell asked for clarity on how long it is anticipated before the township will go into a deficit. Mr. Doell asked how long it will be before we are in trouble. Mrs. Van Valkenburg stated that in her opinion we are in trouble and she felt that the town should have had a 1 cent tax in 2018 which would have brought in roughly \$71k.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made to reconvene the Executive Session at 10:27 p.m. by Mr. Avery, seconded by Mrs. Waldron.

Voice Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

Motion to close executive session was made at 10:56 p.m. by Mr. Avery and was seconded by Mrs. Waldron.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.

All ayes – Motion carried.

Regular Session reconvened at 10:56 p.m.

A motion was made for a road exchange with the County by Mrs. Waldron, seconded by Mr. Avery. The exchange is as follows: Main Street, High Street, Bridge Street in exchange for our portion of Stillwater, Polkville, West Crisman Roads and culverts with descriptions detailed in the proposed Ordinance that will be introduced at the June 13th Township Committee Meeting.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance.

Nay - Dalton

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no further comments from the public, Mrs. Dalton made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg. All members voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Leidner, RMC
Municipal Clerk