

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday May 8, 2019 7:30PM
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. Moorhead, Mrs. Van Valkenburg and Mayor Lance. Mr. Sikkes was absent. Also present were Clerk Leidner and 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. This agenda is subject to change by order of the Blirstown Township Committee before and/or during this scheduled meeting.

Resolution No. 2019-062 AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION – for the purpose of Personnel and Contract Negotiations.

Motion to authorize executive session was made by Mrs. Waldron and was seconded by Mrs. VanValkenburg.

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

Executive Session began at 6:03 p.m.

Mr. Sikkes arrived at 7:25PM

Motion to close executive session was made by Mrs. Waldron and was seconded by Mr. Moorhead.

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

Regular Session began at 7:47 p.m.

**PRESENTATIONS:
Joel McGreen**

- The three lot sale is going forward through Green Acres.
- Nonnemacher farm - the Township was ready to close on April 11, 2019. However, Mr. Nonnemacher passed away on April 9, 2019. It will likely take roughly six months to complete this sale.
- The Mohican Road property deal is no longer viable. An offer was made to the owners based upon two appraisals that Ridge and Valley Conservancy prepared. They said it was too low and not worth their time to counter-offer.
- The Open Space plan was approved. A Recreation and Open Space Inventory needs to be completed.

Mayor Lance presented the results of Executive Session, there was a personnel matter discussed and contract negotiations.

Mayor Lance asked for a motion to execute agreement with Green Acres to sell them Block 1503, Lots 8.13, 8.14,9 located on Sandhill Road.

Motion made by Mrs. Waldron, seconded by Mr. Moorhead.

Roll Call Vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance

All ayes – Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT – up to 5 speakers, 3 minutes each

Pat Kennedy – BEC – 25 Amackassin Road – Mrs. Kennedy spoke regarding the clean-up weekend that has been organized between the BEC, Blair Academy, Rotary Interact Club, North Warren Regional High School and other organization for May 17 and 18, 2019. The Main Street area of the village is the focus for this event. Mrs. Kennedy stated that there will be plantings, including an ornamental tree near the new sign that was installed on Main Street by Trey Baldwin.

Jeanette Iurato – 2 Heller Hill Road – Mrs. Iurato stated that the application that she submitted for Historic Blairstown Day needed to be revised to reflect the proper date of the Public Hearing. Ms. Sullivan advised that no action be taken, the event will be re-noticed, and that Mrs. Iurato should return at the June meeting.

Linda Liebler – Maple Lane – Mrs. Waldron recused herself. Mrs. Liebler stated that she presented a petition signed by 24 residents of Maple Lane to the Police Department to enforce the noise ordinance due to noise being created from the riding of a dirt bike by a neighboring youth. Mrs. Liebler stated that Ms. Sullivan advised her to take the issue to court. Ms. Sullivan interjected that the Police and Zoning officer cannot issue summons' unless they witness the activity. Mr. Sikkes stated that it seems to be a more civil issue than a public one. Mrs. Liebler played a recording for the Committee. Mrs. Van Valkenburg encouraged the residents to file suit.

Donna Hostermann – Maple Lane – Mrs. Hostermann spoke in support of her neighbors on Maple Lane with regard to the noise issue. She added that they were burning construction material.

ADOPTION OF 2019 BUDGET (Pending Approval from State of NJ Division of Local Government Services)

CFO Christine Rolef and Auditor Bill Schroeder were present. Mrs. Rolef explained that every three years the State is required to review the Township budget. Due to a holdup at the State level, they have not reviewed our budget. Mr. Schroeder stated that we can go forward with the Public Hearing but a vote cannot be taken to adopt the budget at this time.

R.2019 – 063 Resolution Authorizing Budget to be Read by Title Only

Motion authorizing the budget to be Read by Title Only made by Mr. Sikkes, seconded by Mr. Lance.

Roll Call Vote: Aye – Mr. Sikkes, Mrs. VanValkenburg, Mrs. Waldron, Mayor Lance
Nay – Mr. Moorhead
Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING – Copies of the budget have been made available to the public requesting same and a synopsis has been published in the New Jersey Herald on 4/24/2019.

R.2019 – 064 Final Adoption of 2019 Budget

Motion to approve; second. Roll call vote. REVISED 05/07/2019

Calvin Inscho, Chief of Blairstown Hose Company - spoke regarding the cutting of funds from the Hose Company, requesting that the amount cut be reinstated. Mayor Lance did explain that although \$17,000.00 was removed from the Hose Company Operating Budget, \$15,000.00 was moved to Capital. Mr. Inscho then spoke in his role as Deputy OEM and the impact of the removal of his \$4,000.00 stipend for that role. Mr. Inscho requested that this stipend be reinstated.

Mrs. VanValkenburg stated that she will not be able to support the budget as it is currently but will support a budget that includes a municipal tax to start building. Mrs. VanValkenburg explained that we are currently in a deficit position, we are losing money, and our surplus is being depleted. Mrs. VanValkenburg added that our roads are in horrible condition and must be repaired. Mrs. Waldron added that in order to be eligible for grants, we have to have a Municipal Tax.

Mayor Lance stated that we have received two grants for road repair this year. The roads are Belcher Road and Mohican Road. Mayor Lance added that we have a \$451k road budget this year which is up from \$40k last year. \$150k funded from the Municipality and roughly \$300k from the State. Mayor Lance expressed his concern over having to pay higher school taxes on

top of a Municipal Tax to increase our Fund Balance and as such is not in support of adding municipal tax.

Mr. Moorhead stated that we cannot go forward and fix all the roads that need to be fixed. Mr. Moorhead addressed the issue of the need for instituting a Municipal Tax, adding that our current budget allows for zero growth and enhancement for the Town with no roadmap for the future. Unforeseen expenses continue to drain our surplus. Mr. Moorhead stated that we need to let our residents have some investment in its town adding that to worry about what future committees will do with the tax is futile and short-sighted. Mr. Moorhead summarized by requesting that the Committee vote down the proposed budget and introduce a new budget that includes a Municipal Tax.

Mayor Lance asked what the next steps would be. Mr. Schroeder replied that the Committee cannot vote tonight to adopt a budget. The Committee can vote to introduce an Amendment but cannot vote to adopt that Amendment. There are certain parameters that if the Amendment then changes the amount of taxes by more than 5% in the amount of the line item by more than 10%, it must be advertised and go to the next meeting.

A copy of the proposed Amendment was distributed to the members of the Committee. Motion made by Mrs. VanValkenburg to introduce an Amended Budget, seconded by Mrs. Waldron.

Roll Call Vote: Aye –Mr. Moorhead, Mrs. VanValkenburg, Mrs. Waldron
Nay - Mr. Sikkes, Mayor Lance

Motion carried.

There will be a public hearing on the Amendment at the June 12, 2019 Regular Meeting.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

DPW – Acting Director, Eric Usinowicz

- Buildings, grounds, and vehicles are all being maintained. Turf Pro has been contracted for lawn mowing services.
- Water Company – the first hydrant flush resulted in the location and fix of two leaks.
- Roads – catch basins and hot patch are being performed. Washouts were fixed.
- Jones Farm Barn – Mayor Lance asked if we can secure the barn as people have been going there to take pictures and the site is unstable.

POLICE – Chief, Scott Johnsen

- Officer Herzer and Detective Choe are receiving an award from the 200 Club for performing CPR on a passenger in a vehicle.
- Officer Risvani has been credited for saving a life for helping a male who fell off a roof
- The Police will be carrying epi-pens in the next few months. Officer Risvani has taken a class and so there will be currently taking the class for administering this.
- The Police Department is moving forward to the CLEAR program which is the narcotics program where people can come to the Police Department to get help. In the next 3-4 months something will be in place.

- There was one injury that was incurred to a Police Officer who broke through a car window to save a baby trapped in a car.
- Detective Choe will be attending Top Gun school from June 2-7. Mrs. Waldron asked if the Committee needed to approve the hotel costs associated with the class.

Mrs. Waldron made a motion for the approval of hotel costs not to exceed \$1000.00 for Detective Choe to attend Top Gun School in Monmouth County from June 2 through June 7, 2019. Seconded by Mrs. VanValkenburg.

Roll Call Vote: Aye –Mayor Lance, Mr. Moorhead, Mr. Sikkes, Mrs. VanValkenburg, Mrs. Waldron

All Ayes - Motion carried.

Ambulance Corps – Fernya Klindt

- Statistics:
 - Volunteer hours: 354
 - Calls responded to: 99 calls
 - 42 in Blirstown, 23 in Hope, 20 in Hardwick, 8 in Frelinghuysen, 6 in Knowlton, 0 in Walpack
 - Number of patients: 75 patients

Animal Control – Scott Hendricks

- Mr. Hendricks presented the monthly incident report
- Mr. Hendricks is working with Dog Licensing Official, Maureen DeSimone, to pursue delinquent owners to reach 100% compliance.
- Mrs. VanValkenburg asked what is done with a repeat dog-at-large incident. Mr. Hendricks stated that Mrs. Leidner sends out a letter quoting the Ordinance showing the non-compliance and after three incidents they are issued a summons and have to appear in court.
- Mr. Lance referred to the earlier issue stated by Mrs. Liebler regarding a dog continually barking on Maple Lane. Mr. Hendricks stated that he spoke to Mrs. Liebler prior to the meeting and obtained information on the neighbor with the barking dog. Upon investigation, the dog is not licensed. The dog is also at large.

Fire Department – Calvin Inscho

- The Comedy Show will be held May 18, 2019
- Guns and Hoses Basketball Competition will be held May 31, 2019
- The Drafting Competition is July 27, 2019
- Cost Recovery Program is up and running and three claims have been submitted to insurance companies
- Annual Testing
 - Pump Testing – May 16, 2019
 - Aerial Ladder – May 17, 2019

- Hose and Ground Ladder – May 21, 2019
- Four fireman completed an advanced extrication class in April
- The stand pipes were tested for flow
- Underground water storage tanks were tested with one issue at Scenic Hills where the tank was empty. The Homeowners Association President was contacted who is having it inspected.

MINUTES

April 10, 2019 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve made by Mrs. Waldron; second by Mr. Moorhead

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

April 24, 2019 – Executive Session Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve made by Mrs. Waldron; second by Mr. Sikkes

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

April 24, 2019 – Regular Workshop Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve made by Mrs. Waldron; second by Mr. Moorhead

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

ORDINANCES

FOR INTRODUCTION:

ORDINANCE 2019-10 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 184 ENTITLED “VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC “OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN

Introduction; First Reading

Motion to approve by Mrs. Waldron; second by Mr. Sikkes

Roll Call Vote: Aye - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance
All Ayes – Motion carried.

ORDINANCE 2019-11 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 184 ENTITLED “VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC “SECTION 184-13 “PARKING TIME LIMITED ON CERTAIN STREETS AND MUNICIPAL PARKING LOTS” OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN

Introduction; First Reading

Motion to approve by Mrs. Waldron; second by Mr. Sikkes

Roll Call Vote: Aye - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance
All Ayes – Motion carried.

FOR PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION:

ORDINANCE 2019-08 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART II “GENERAL LEGISLATION” OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN TO ADD A SECTION 108 ENTITLED “FIRE INSURANCE CLAIMS”

Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Mayor Lance opened the Public Hearing. There were no comments or questions from the public.

Motion to adopt by Mrs. Waldron; second by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

Roll Call Vote: Aye - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance

All Ayes – Motion carried.

ORDINANCE 2019-09 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 184-20 “STOP INTERSECTIONS OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN

Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Mayor Lance opened the Public Hearing. There were no comments or questions from the public.

Motion to adopt by Mrs. Waldron; second by Mr. Sikkes

Roll Call Vote: Aye - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance

All Ayes – Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

1 – R.2019 – 065 Authorization to Pay Bills

Motion to approve Consent Agenda was made by Mrs. Waldron; second by Mr. Moorhead

Roll Call Vote: Aye -Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance

All Ayes – Motion carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Ambulance Corp. – April Report

Animal Control – April Report

Clerk – April Report

Finance – April Fuel Reports

Fire Department – April Report

Police Department – April Report

Tax Collector – April Report

Warren County Health Department – April 8, 2019

Zoning - VAPS April 2019

Motion to accept Department Reports was made by Mrs. Waldron ; second by Mrs. VanValkenburg

Roll Call Vote: AYE - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance
All Ayes – Motion approved

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Walnut Valley Firehouse Remediation – Mrs. Waldron stated that no decisions were made at this time. GeoWorx has stated what the cost factor would be. The two remediation reports have been reviewed by Ms. Sullivan. Mrs. Waldron would like to share the remediation reports with an outside vendor without fee, without charge, to get his opinion on the cost factor.

According to GeoWorx, we were eligible for a grant under Whitman Associates to cover the remediation but Whitman Associates never applied for it so we lost that grant. There is now a DEP grant that is available for loan value and the loan value will be 50% of the cost of the remediation and 50% will be forgiven. GeoWorx is checking to see if we are eligible for this grant.

2. Paulina Lake Dam Inspection – is covered in the Engineer’s report.

NEW BUSINESS

COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE for information and possible action

Application received from Blairstown Museum to hold the Third Annual Historic Blairstown Day. Application has been reviewed by all departments. Fees determined. Applicant has published Event with the wrong date. All other requirements have been met.

Jeanette Iurato stated that the event was moved one week later so as to not coincide with the Warren and Sussex County fairs. Signatures were received from 43 of the businesses on Main Street and the Route 94 Coordinator. Fliers were posted. A Facebook event was posted. The Blairstown Museum is carrying the insurance.

Because the event is on a Sunday, the Blairstown Museum would like to close Main Street from the Post Office to the Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Van Valkenburg asked where residents are supposed to park on Main Street. Mrs. Iurato stated that Blairstown Elementary School gave the Blairstown Museum permission to park next to the Fire Department. Mrs. Van Valkenburg stated that may be a problem. Mrs. Waldron added that the well is being dug throughout the entire parking lot and so it would depend on that. The Alpine field will not be used.

Frank Diehl from Blairstown Power Sports offered his parking lot for overflow parking.

A motion was made by Mrs. Waldron to allow a 20'x20' tent to be erected for a Princess Doe tent; second by Mr. Moorhead.

Roll Call Vote: Aye - Moorhead, Sikkes, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance
All Ayes – Motion carried.

Request for approval of Initial Application for Blue Light Permit for Brian A. Black of Blairstown and Renewal Application for Blue Light Permit from Edward Belcher of Blairstown.

Motion by Mrs. Waldron; second by Mr. Sikkes
Voice vote, All Ayes – Motion carried

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

No discussion.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY

Ms. Sullivan spoke regarding door-to-door salespeople and modifying solicitation ordinances. There is an organization that has high-powered attorneys that is challenging municipalities and has been making headway in their efforts. If a situation should arise in Blairstown and there is pushback, Ms. Sullivan said to contact her immediately.

In reviewing the meeting calendar, Ms. Sullivan is out for the August 7 meeting and was wondering if the Committee would be amenable to changing the meeting to August 14. The Committee agreed.

Mrs. Waldron is going to be away in June and has requested to move the vote for the budget to the work session meeting. Ms. Sullivan said it is best for the whole Committee to be present. When Mrs. Leidner publishes the Amended Budget, she will publish that the public hearing date will be the June 26, 2019 meeting. The Amended Budget has to be sent to the State for review and approval.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER

Ted Rodman stated that the DEP wanted the original specs for drilling the well. Mr. Rodman stated that it was sent to them. Mrs. VanValkenburg asked if we have to wait for the DEP to go to bid for the building. Mr. Rodman replied that he does not see why that would be necessary, but he will check on that.

Belcher Road has State Aid and we did receive an award for that. We applied for \$176k we received \$145k.

Main Street parking design has been submitted by VanCleaf. Mr. Rodman is unaware as to when the construction will begin. Mrs. Waldron asked if there is a plan for lighting in that area.

There is a problem with a driveway at 13 Kishpaugh Road. The Certificate of Occupancy was issued by Construction which Mr. Rodman said was a mistake. The first 25 feet of the driveway was not paved. He requested that Ms. Sullivan draft a letter to the owner as Mr. Rodman has attempted to speak to the owner about fixing this issue and the owner said they are not about to do anything to fix this. Mrs. VanValkenburg stated that it is a drainage issue. Ms. Sullivan requested the information so that a letter can be constructed.

Paulina Dam report – four copies were given to Beth Styler Berry for review. The report indicates that the Dam is not in good shape. On May 22, 2019 a work meeting with Chris Mark from French & Parrello Associates, P.A. will be present. Mrs. VanValkenburg indicated that Beth Styler Berry would be there also. Mayor Lance stated that Mr. Rodman and he are the only people left who were a part of the original discussion 10 years ago regarding the removal of the Dam so it is critical that Beth Styler Berry attends the meeting.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBER MOORHEAD

Mr. Moorhead reviewed the Senior trip schedule.

COMMITTEE MEMBER SIKKES

Nothing to report.

COMMITTEE MEMBER VAN VALKENBURG

Mrs. VanValkenburg stated that she spoke with Albert Schwartz of the Water Company regarding the leaks that were found during their inspection.

The Blaiirstown Recreation Program is ready for their Summer Day Camp program, a main feature this Summer being Castor, the Blaiirstown Police Department K-9. The program featuring Castor was financed by the North Warren Municipal Alliance program with grant monies from the State of New Jersey.

Regarding personnel, interviews were held this evening. Mr. Lance stated that further discussion will need to be held regarding this.

COMMITTEE MEMBER WALDRON

Mrs. Waldron stated that she and Mr. Moorhead were meeting with the BEC on Monday, May 13, 2019.

Mrs. Waldron asked if Mayor Lance could meet with Chief Johnsen to discuss providing more space in the Municipal Building for the Police Department.

MAYOR LANCE

Mayor Lance stated that there was a meeting last Friday with the Mayors sent some township committee representatives from the sending municipalities to North Warren, some North Warren Representatives, and an attorney from south Jersey who has handled feasibility studies, consolidations, regionalization, etc.

The Governor's office has agreed to pay for the feasibility study. Three out of four of the municipalities were in strong support of this. The attorney involved said that each municipality and each school board has to adopt a resolution to request the Governor's office to pay for the feasibility study. In the case of the one municipality that is not in strong support, it might be possible to not include them in the feasibility study and they would be a sending district without being a part of the regional process.

This is a multi-year project that is very fluid. If we had everything on board at this time, the feasibility study would be done this year. However, the current situation with one municipality not in support will push the timeline out.

Mayor Lance asked if the Committee would like to enact a resolution at this at this meeting so that it can be forwarded to the school board tomorrow. The Committee agreed.

Motion to approve resolution to participate in a feasibility study as facilitated by Blairstown Township which will be reimbursed by the State of New Jersey made by Mrs. VanValkenburg; second by Mrs. Waldron.

Roll Call Vote: Aye - Mr. Moorhead, Mr. Sikkes, Mrs. VanValkenburg, Mrs. Waldron, Mayor Lance

All Ayes – Motion approved

Mayor Lance stated that Hardwick and Frankford Township have introduced ordinances about limiting importation of soil. Mrs. VanValkenburg understood that there are regulations with the DEP regarding importation of soil due to instances of contaminated soil being brought in. Mayor Lance shared information for the Committee and Ms. Sullivan to review. Mrs. Waldron stated that we should have a clean fill ordinance with a certification program. Mr. Rodman added that Hope Township has such an ordinance.

Ms. Sullivan asked if she needed to develop an ordinance for review. Mrs. Waldron said that Ms. Sullivan should and then Land Use can review it and approve it.

Mrs. Waldron said that she will have the Land Use Board Attorney, Roger Thomas, review it.

The Blairstown Historic Preservation Committee received a grant in the amount of \$1k to produce a video on the life of John I. Blair.

FROM THE PUBLIC

Dave Paulson stated the Post Office Postmaster was amenable to putting a bulletin board outside of the Post Office which the community can use.

Mayor Lance queried the Committee on the matter of returning to Executive Session to address the matter held earlier. The Committee said they preferred to table it to the May 22, 2019 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no further comments from the public, Mrs. Waldron made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. VanValkenburg. All members voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Everett Falt, RMC
Municipal Clerk/Manager