

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, December 12, 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 at 7:00pm by Mayor Lance. Those present were Mr. Avery, Mrs. Dalton, Mrs. Waldron, Mrs. Van Valkenburg 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. This agenda is subject to change by order of the Blairstown Township Committee before and/or during this scheduled meeting.

Resolution No. 2018-135 AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION for the purpose of Personnel.

Motion; second. Roll call vote.

Motion to authorize executive session was made at 7:00 p.m. by Mrs. Waldron and was seconded by Mr. Avery.

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

All ayes – Motion carried.

Executive Session began 7:01p.m.

Motion to close executive session was made at 7:30 p.m. by Mrs. Waldron and was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

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

All ayes – Motion carried.

Regular Session began at 7:34 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT –

Sharon Cooper – Insurance rate update. Ms. Cooper reported that the Township's assessment for this year is going to be \$144,240.00 meaning that it is a flat renewal. Mrs. Cooper explained that it is based on a 5 year loss ratio which is 48.3%. Workers comp is \$62,335.00 and Property & Liability is \$81,905.00. Ms. Cooper also reported that Blairstown will be receiving a return of surplus check in the amount of \$14,364.00 probably in March.

Jerre Riggs – Mr. Riggs explained that he believes **13 Kishpaugh Road** was issued a CO without the first 25 feet of driveway being paved as required by ordinance. This causes safety issues on the road when it rains and creates icy conditions as well. Mayor Lance noted that the Zoning Officer is

looking into this situation. Mayor Lance also noted that until this is resolved the DPW Supervisor is keeping an eye on the icing issue.

Fred Cook – Four Corners Road – Mr. Cook recommended that a sunset clause be included in the Ordinance to reinstate the position of Police Chief. Mayor Lance noted that there is a Police Chief Employment Agreement being put in place that will cover the term of the position.

PRESENTATIONS –

Mayor Lance took this time to acknowledge the service of the outgoing Township Committee Members - Paul Avery and Cynthia Dalton. Both received a plaque. Mayor Lance and Township Committee members thanked both for their service and noted that they will be missed.

Mayor Lance moved the Presentation of the 125th Anniversary Proclamation being presented to the Blairstown Masonic Lodge #165 to this portion of the meeting. Mayor Lance read the Proclamation in full. Members of the Masonic Lodge were in attendance to accept the Proclamation including Scott Severns - Master – President of the Blairstown Lodge.

Mayor Lance also presented the members of Blairstown Masonic Lodge #165 with a picture of Frank Russell Gibbons who was killed in action 100 years ago during WWI, he was made a Free Mason in 1903.

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

Calvin Inscho, Chief of Blairstown Hose Company reported that the Hose Company held their elections and he was elected Chief and Mark Slater was elected Deputy Chief.

The Hose Company is continuing to look into the cost recovery program.

A brief discussion was held regarding household smoke detectors and the requirement for the installation of 10 year battery life models that is a requirement beginning 2019.

Mr. Inscho requested that a new township physician be appointed in 2019 due to the fact that appointments are difficult to schedule with the current physician.

Cookies and milk with Santa will be held on Saturday.

Fire Warden Weber was in attendance and presented the Township Committee with a check in the amount of \$5,000.00 for the 50/50 match from the Community Wildfire Protection Grant.

Eric Usinowicz, Acting Director of Public Works gave his monthly report. Concession stands have been winterized. Mohican Road has been striped along with the stop bars, Tilcon will be out to fix some of the issues with the road. Mr. Usinowicz also reported that the PEOSHA audit is complete. Wishing Well Road is patched. Storage shed is almost complete.

Captain Johnsen – Captain Johnsen reported on the ACME parking lot. Extra Do Not Enter signs were installed. The only issue is people are running the signs over.

There were 149 motor vehicle stops, 43 summonses, 12 arrests 7 being narcotics arrests.

Joel McGreen, Open Space Chairman - Mr. McGreen gave an update on the **Nonnenmacher** property. He also reported on the three lots that the Township is trying to sell to Green Acres there is a question on one of the lots regarding COAH, this is being looked into. It was determined that **the** Township has no COAH obligation for this property. Mr. McGreen also gave an update on the **Kostenbader** property.

MINUTES

September 26, 2018 – Regular Workshop Meeting Minutes

November 7, 2018 – Regular Meeting Minutes

November 7, 2018 – Executive Session Minutes

Motion to approve minutes as presented was made by Mrs. Waldron; which was seconded by Mr. Avery.

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

ORDINANCES

FOR ADOPTION:

ORDINANCE NO: 2018-25 AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$20,000 FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO MOHICAN ROAD WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE FUNDING THEREOF

Second Reading; Public Hearing; Adoption

There were no comments or questions from the public.

Mrs. Waldron made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2018-25; which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

ORDINANCE NO: 2018-26 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 184 “VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC” TO ADD A NEW SECTION 184-17 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN ENTITLED “COMBAT WOUNDED/PURPLE HEART RECIPIENT PARKING SPACE”

Second Reading; Public Hearing; Adoption

There were no comments or questions from the public.

Mr. Avery made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2018-26; which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Mayor Lance explained that a person with a Purple Heart license plate can have a reserved parking spot on High Street.

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

ORDINANCE NO: 2018-27 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 35 "POLICE DEPARTMENT" OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN TO REINSTATE THE POSITION OF CHIEF OF POLICE"

Second Reading; Public Hearing; Adoption

There were no comments or questions from the public.

Mrs. Waldron made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2018-27; which was seconded by Mr. Avery.

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

ORDINANCE NO: 2018-28 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 19 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN ENTITLED "LAND DEVELOPMENT"

Second Reading; Public Hearing; Adoption

There were no comments or questions from the public.

Mrs. Waldron made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2018-28; which was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

This ordinance specifies what is considered an outdoor animal and what is considered a household animal.

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

FOR INTRODUCTION: NONE

CONSENT AGENDA

1. R.2018-136 Authorization to Pay Bills
2. R.2018-137 Authorizing the Transfer of Funds
3. R.2018-138 Transfer of 2017 Budget Appropriations
4. R.2018-139 Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation
NJSA 40A:4-87 Mohican Road – Overlay
5. R.2018-140 Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation
NJSA 40A:4-87 Gypsy Moth Program
6. R.2018-141 Resolution to Cancel Lien on Property Block 501 Lot 26.01 (Walnut Valley Rd)
7. R.2018-142 Cancellation of Water Appropriations
8. R.2018-143 Transfer of 2018 Water Appropriations
9. R.2018-144 Resolution Calling for the Consent of Stakeholder Municipalities for New Jersey Department of Transportation Projects.

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

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

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Ambulance Corp. - None
Animal Control Report – **None**
Clerk – November Report
DPW – November Report
Finance – November Finance and Fuel Reports
Fire Department – None
Police Department – November Report
Tax Collector – November Report
Warren County Health Department – December 10, 2018
Zoning – Year End Zoning Financial Report

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

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Hose Company – Air Pack Request – Mrs. Waldron and Mayor Lance are working on this request.

ACME Shopping Plaza – Entrance Only – Update on this was given in the Police Captain Report.

Walnut Valley Firehouse – Mrs. Van Valkenburg reported that we are waiting for results from additional testing.

NEW BUSINESS

Proclamation – Masonic Lodge 125th Anniversary – This was moved to the beginning of the meeting.

COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE for information and possible action

Request for approval of Application for Renewal of Blue Light Permit from Joseph DiGrazia and Laura Bolcar of Blirstown.

Mrs. Waldron made a motion to approve the applications for renewal of Blue Light Permits for Joseph DiGrazia and Laura Bolcar, which was seconded by Mr. Avery.

Voice Vote: All ayes, motion carried.

Request for approval of Application for Red Light Permit for Brian H. Walsh of Columbia, 2019 Captain of Blirstown Ambulance Corp.

Mrs. Waldron made a motion to approve the application for a Red Light Permit for Brian H. Walsh, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Voice Vote: All ayes, motion carried.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

No discussion.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY

Ms. Sullivan reported that she has been in communication with Mr. Fricke from Blair Academy regarding the proposed parking lot on Main Street. An agreement between Blair Academy and the Township is being reviewed. Blair will construct the parking lot and the Township will be responsible for maintaining it.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK

Mrs. Leidner asked to confirm that the Reorganization Meeting will be held on January 2 at 6:00pm and the Regular Meeting will begin at 7:30pm.

Mrs. Leidner invited the Township Committee and newly elected Township Committee members to the staff Christmas Luncheon on Friday December 21 at noon.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER

Mr. Rodman reported that there is a new schedule for the well project. The new schedule will go to Mr. Cavanaugh at the DEP. Plans will be submitted to DEP on December 28. Bids for Construction will be done by April 30, 2019 and an As Built and Permit to Operate should be in place July 30, 2019.

Mr. Rodman reported that we received notice that the Township received \$145,000.00 from the state discretionary fund for Belcher Road. In 2013 an engineering proposal to for preliminary embankment work was received in the amount of \$7,750.00. The Township Committee members all agreed that this will be discussed when the budget discussions begin in 2019.

Mr. Rodman reported that all stormwater requirements have been met for 2018.

Mr. Rodman reported on the construction of the Route 94 Bridge over the Paulins Kill has been postponed until further notice.

Mrs. Waldron inquired about 13 Kishpaugh Road regarding flooding due to the apron not being completed. Mr. Rodman reported that he spoke with the State Construction Code Office and no CO was issued on this property.

**FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE MEMBER AVERY –**

Mr. Avery reported that the Christmas Party hosted by the Blairstown Seniors is tomorrow and he was proud to announce this is the best turn out by the Township Committee ever.

Mr. Avery thanked Peg Scanelli, Barbara Green, Lorraine Meister and Mickey Velant for all of their hard work throughout the years that he has been on the Senior Advisory Committee.

Mr. Avery reported that the Township Attorney has researched and found a possible way to deal with the tree in the Union Brick Cemetery. Ms. Sullivan explained that in the New Jersey Statutes there is a specific chapter dedicated to cemeteries. Ms. Sullivan also indicated that the Township has the right to remove the tree, however; whether there is a way to recoup the money is another issue. Ms. Sullivan noted that the Township can see if there are available funds at the State level because there are funds put in for each cemetery.

Mr. Avery noted that this is his last report as a Township Committee member and he wanted to say that he is leaving a Township that is full of wonderful people. He enjoyed working with the committee and remarked that they worked well together.

COMMITTEE MEMBER DALTON –

Mrs. Dalton reported that she attended a school board meeting on Monday and the discussion centered on the school funding reformat. The schools are losing State Aid due to the projected drastic decrease in school enrollment over the next five years. The State of New Jersey is requesting repayment of State Aid that was allocated to the schools and has been deemed to be overpaid to the schools.

Since this was her last meeting Mrs. Dalton had something kind to say to and about each member of the Township Committee, the Attorney, Township Clerk, the Blairstown Staff and the public. Mrs. Dalton also remarked that it has been a pleasure working with everyone.

COMMITTEE MEMBER VAN VALKENBURG

Mrs. Van Valkenburg reported that she will be having a telephone conference with Josh Gottheimers' Office and JCP&L regarding emergency preparedness since Blairstown was not made aware of the meeting that was held and attended by surrounding municipalities. The conference will be done in the Municipal Clerk's Office on speaker phone.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg also noted that she will be asking for funding for two COAH units at \$26,000.00 each. They would have a 30 year deed restriction. If this is approved the Township would only have two more market to affordable units obligations until 2025.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg noted that the Township Recreation Director Pat Sagan goes over and above in her position. During this season especially she and her husband spend hours making Christmas special for children. Even working on Sunday to get the job done. Mayor Lance added that surrounding municipalities know of the great job that Mrs. Sagan does year in and year out!

Mrs. Van Valkenburg reported that the Vacant and Abandoned Properties program has brought in \$41,884.00 this year. During budget discussions Mrs. Van Valkenburg would like to discuss some type of stipend for the Zoning Official who works tirelessly on getting these properties compliant. Mr. Diehl has to go out to every single property and many times he does this on his own time, nights and weekend.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg made a motion to approve funding for two COAH Units \$26,000.00 each with a 30 year deed restriction, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

COMMITTEE MEMBER WALDRON

Mrs. Waldron thanked Captain Johnsen for putting out a police blotter to help make residents aware of the drug situation here in the Township.

Mrs. Waldron reported that the EMT's have been very busy. They will have a new Chief beginning in January, Brian Walsh.

Mrs. Waldron also reported that the Land Use Board has been very busy. The new Land Use Secretary is a great asset to the Land Use Board.

MAYOR LANCE

Mayor Lance announced that the Chief Financial Officer has placed a spending freeze on all purchases beginning on December 5. With the exception of fuel any purchase must be approved by the Mayor and Chief Financial Officer.

Regarding the Historic Preservation Committee, the electric supply is working for the lights on the Footbridge, thank you to Jack Dalton for his assistance.

Members of the Historic Preservation Committee have been contacting long time Blairstown residents to preserve memories of Blairstown as far back as the 1930's. These conversations will be placed in the archives for generations to come.

The Historic Preservation Committee is running out of space for the many artifacts that have been entrusted to them by families. Climate controlled storage is needed and this will be a discussion for the New Year.

Jingle on Main went great. The Christmas tree and Menorah lighting went well.

Mayor Lance attended an Eagle Scout Ceremony for Zack Simonson.

Mayor Lance read Resolution No. 2015-145, regarding the cut in State School Aid, in full. This resolution is calling on state lawmakers to freeze further reductions to state aid funding allocations until appropriate joint legislative committee is convened to address this funding crisis.

Mayor Lance made a motion to approve Resolution 2018-145, which was seconded by Mr. Avery,
Roll Call Vote: Aye – Avery, Dalton, Waldron, Van Valkenburg, Lance
All ayes - Motion carried

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Mayor Lance put the meeting on recess at 9:27pm to enjoy refreshments with the two outgoing Township Committee Members before going back into Executive Session.

Resolution No. 2018-135 AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION for the purpose of Personnel.

Motion to authorize the executive session to re-open was made at 9:46p.m. by Mrs. Dalton and was seconded by Mr. Avery.

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

Executive Session began 9:46p.m.

Motion to close executive session was made at 10:48pm by Mrs. Dalton and was seconded by Mrs. Waldron.

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

All ayes – Motion carried.

Regular Session re-opened at 10:48pm

Mayor Lance explained that Executive Session covered a personnel matter within the Blirstown Police Department.

Earlier in the evening an Ordinance creating the position of Police Chief was adopted. An employment agreement was made with Captain Scott Johnsen who will assume the role of Police Chief as of January 1, 2019.

Mrs. Waldron made a motion to approve the Police Chief Employment Agreement with Scott Johnsen with a term of January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2023, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

All ayes - Motion carried

Mayor Lance also noted that a discussion was held in Executive Session for a promotion of Jarret Bisanzio to the position of Corporal.

Mrs. Waldron made a motion to approve the promotion Jarret Bisanzio to the position of Corporal beginning January 1, 2019.

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

All ayes - Motion carried

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no further comments from the public, Mr. Avery made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton. All members voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:53pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Leidner, RMC
Municipal Clerk