

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, January 10, 2018, 7:00 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 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.

Resolution No. 2018-025 – AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION – for the purpose of Contract Negotiations/Litigation.

Motion to authorize executive session was made by Mr. Avery and was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

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

All ayes – Motion carried.

Executive Session began at 6:57 p.m.

Motion to close executive session was made at 7:41 p.m. by Mr. Avery and was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

All ayes – Motion carried.

Regular Session began at 7:42 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT – up to 5 speakers, 3 minutes each

Sharon Cooper – At the December meeting, options available for deductions for liability and auto were requested. Sharon explained that with Statewide, the financial structure is such that some of the coverages are self-insured up to a certain limit and some of the coverages are given to an insurance company. Deductibles for liability and auto were not available for coverages under the self-insured part. It is not offered.

For the public official liability and employment practices liability last year we had a \$25k deductible. This year they were quoted a \$20k deductible because that is what Pace was quoting. The savings to go back up to a \$25k deductible is \$1750.00 and we had to make that decision by January 1, 2018. Sharon made that decision for us, totaling in a savings of \$37k this year.

Bob Halberstadt – White Lake is now open for ice skating and ice fishing at your own risk.

DEPARTMENT SUMMARIES

Summaries were read by the following department heads:

Eric Usinowicz - DPW – December 2017 Report

Fire Chief Calvin Inscho - Fire Department – 2017 Annual Report

Police Captain Scott Johnsen - Police Department – December 2017 Report

MINUTES

December 1, 2017 – Special Workshop Meeting Minutes. Prior to voting,

Mr. Avery made a motion to approve the December 1, 2017 minutes with changes outlined by Linda Leidner, Clerk. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg

Roll call vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Lance

ABSTAIN – Mrs. Waldron

Motion carried.

December 13, 2017 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Dalton made a motion to accept the December 13, 2017 Meeting Minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Avery.

Roll call vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance

ABSTAIN – Mrs. Waldron

Motion carried.

ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE 2018 – 01 AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN, COUNTY OF WARREN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN TO REPEAL AND REPLACE EXISTING CHAPTER 55 UNDER GENERAL LEGISLATION ENTITLED, “AFFORDABLE HOUSING”

Introduction, First Reading

Mayor Lance asked if there was any comment from the Committee to which Mrs. Van Valkenburg stated that she has conferred with Theresa Tamburro with questions regarding this Ordinance. Mrs. Tamburro answered Mrs. Van Valkenburg’s questions to her satisfaction. Ms. Sullivan commented that she has reviewed the Ordinance and shared it with both the Planner and Special Master. Both reviewed and accepted it. She added that there were no substantive changes.

Mayor Lance informed the audience that this Ordinance is part of the COAH settlement. He added that at the next Township Committee Meeting on February 14, there will be a public hearing and the public will be able to have input.

Mrs. Dalton had a quick question regarding whose responsibility it is to ensure individuals are meeting requirements. Mrs. Van Valkenburg replied that it is Mrs. Tamburro’s responsibility.

Motion to approve was made by Mrs. Van Valkenburg and seconded by Mrs. Waldron.

Roll call vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Waldron, Van Valkenburg, Lance

All ayes - Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1 – R.2018 – 026 Authorization to Pay Bills
- 2 – R.2018 – 027 Refund of Taxes Due to Totally Disabled Veteran Status on B202, L5.04
- 3 – R.2018 - 028 Governing Body Certification of Compliance with the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s “Enforcement Guidance on the Consideration of Arrest and Conviction Records in Employment Decisions Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964”

Motion to approve was made by Mr. Avery and seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll call vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Waldron, Van Valkenburg, Lance
All ayes - Motion carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Clerk – December 2017 Report
DPW – December 2017 Report
Finance – December 2017 Finance and Fuel Reports
Fire Department – 2017 Annual Report
Police Department – December 2017 Report
Tax Collector – December 2017 Report and Annual Report
Warren County Health Department – December 11, 2017
Zoning

Mrs. Dalton said she had concern regarding the Warren County Health Department report. She commented that the report has been exactly for the same for two years. She wanted to know why this was and sought clarification on this. She obtained contact information for Tracey Hess and/or Peter B. Summers and will be reaching out to them.

Motion to approve Department Reports was made by Mr. Avery and seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll call vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Waldron, Van Valkenburg, Lance
All ayes - Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE for information and possible action

1 – Letter of Resignation from Regina McKenna, Tax Collector, due to Retirement on December 31, 2017.

Motion to accept the resignation (with regret) made by Mayor Lance and seconded by Mr. Avery.
All voted aye. Motion carried.

2 – Membership Application for the Blairstown Hose Company #1 from Brian Walsh, 13 Farm Meadows Road. Motion to accept the application for Brian Walsh for the Blairstown Hose Company #1 made by Mrs. Waldron and seconded by Paul Avery.

Roll call vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Waldron, Van Valkenburg, Lance
All ayes - Motion carried.

3 - Letter from Warren County Planning Department regarding Blair Academy Incomplete Application, File #17-030-SP

Ted Rodman covered during his report.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY

Dawn Sullivan thanked the Township Committee for her appointment. She looks forward to serving the Township of Blirstown.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER

The Well - Ted Rodman reported that the well was completed on December 19th. The depth was 190ft., an 8" casing was set at 134 feet, the pump was installed at 136 feet. The 24 hour testing began on Dec 27th. 70 gallons per minute, after 24 hours it was a 90% recovery in less than 10 minutes.

The lab tests were submitted and should be back by the January 15th and will direct how they proceed from there.

Stormwater - completed 12 points. DEP audited us and everything looked okay. We are under the \$2,500.00 estimate and will submit a bill for that.

Maple Lane - the final paperwork has been submitted and final payment should be received soon.

North Warren Landscaping – a plan has been submitted. It is being reviewed to see if it meets the requirement of the previous approval.

11 Douglas Street – Handicapped parking space. Ordinance 184-15 covers handicapped parking. Mr. Rodman believes that the Committee may have to amend it if they decide to go forward with it. We will have to put up signs and mark the pavement. Mrs. Van Valkenburg added that we should also add a handicapped parking spot on Main Street.

Park Street Parking Lot Project– The planning board found the application incomplete. Mr. Rodman spoke with Jim Frick from Blair Academy and Freeholder Smith. It was found incomplete for two reasons:

1. Township Committee has not approved the concept yet. The Township Planning Board approved it on September 22, 2015. They then forwarded it to the Township Committee on that date and nothing has happened since then. The county is looking for approval of the concept by the Township Committee.

Mr. Rodman suggested that the Township Committee simply approve it again. Mayor Lance asked for a motion to accept the project of a parking lot at the end of Park Street across from the Post Office.

Motion was made by Mrs. Van Valkenburg to accept the project of a parking lot at the end of Park Street across from the Post Office which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

All ayes - Motion carried.

- 1) There are technical items in the letter which Jim Frick said he will handle. Freeholder Smith indicated his desire to meet again with the Township Committee. Steve suggested Ted set up the meeting with Freeholder Smith.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBER AVERY

DPW is doing an excellent job.

Blairstown Senior Citizens Advisory Committee had their Christmas Party in December at the Panther Valley Country Club. The event was well-received and they are meeting shortly to plan for 2018.

COMMITTEE MEMBER DALTON

Due to the confusion on social media regarding the closing of Municipal offices but not of local schools during the last snow storm, Mrs. Dalton stressed the point that the Township is responsible for Township employees and services. The School system is its own entity, making decisions independent of the Township Committee.

Mrs. Dalton took action after receiving a phone call from DPW Supervisor Eric Usinowicz informing her that a statement went out from North Warren Regional to parents, telling them that the secondary roads were not passable. Mrs. Dalton immediately called NWR Superintendent, Sarah Bilotti, and explained that she found this communique confusing considering the DPW had been plowing and salting roads for 36 hours.

Mrs. Dalton shared that two outputs came from the conversation with Ms. Bilotti:

- 1) Ms. Bilotti agreed to have a meeting of key stakeholders in the next few weeks create a plan when determining whether or not the schools should be open, delayed, or closed. These key stakeholders are as follows: Ms. Bilotti, Bruce Leal (BES Principal) or Mark Saalfeld (BES Superintendent), Captain Johnsen, State Police Lieutenant (interface with NWR), Eric Usinowicz, Tom Campbell (Hardwick), Brian Peck (Knowlton) Calvin Inscho (Fire Chief), Nick Mohr (OEM).
- 2) Ms. Bilotti agreed to put together a media blast, which Mrs. Dalton read aloud, thanking those who keep our roads safe.

Mrs. Dalton received a report from Mr. Leal regarding the Blairstown Elementary School. In December, the 6th graders went to Barn Hill, sang to the senior citizens, and brought them cookies. The first grade class, in conjunction with Project Self Sufficiency, collected over 183 toys for children in need in Warren County. Lastly, Mrs. Dalton shared a letter of recognition from Mr. Leal to the Township Committee for Board of Recognition Month. The Committee was praised for their dedication and support of the children in our community.

COMMITTEE MEMBER VAN VALKENBURG

Water - Mrs. Van Valkenburg and Paul Avery will be meeting with Albert Schwartz and John Zukoski of our DPW. Albert has his Water Operator's License regarding the water company. The meeting will

be held to determine what needs to be focused on going forward. In the last month, the water quality has improved due to the method they are using to flush the system and the new filter.

Budget and finance discussions will begin soon.

Recreation – The recreation program is being adeptly managed by Pat Sagan. Mrs. Sagan coordinates a year-round schedule of programs generating revenue.

Zoning – zoning is continuing with registration of vacant and abandoned homes, which is generating revenue. If people see homes that are vacant and abandoned not being cared for, people should inform the Zoning Officer, David Diehl.

COAH – We have \$118k in COAH. We have four units that we have to meet on market to affordable. Mrs. Tamburro reached out to the public and an individual has come forward who wants to do two 2-bedroom apartments that will cost us roughly \$50k. It is a 30-year deed restriction on the home.

We are committed to \$125k for ARC for a home. Mrs. Dalton asked how long that has been under discussion. Mrs. Van Valkenburg replied approximately 4 years. She said we may want to table that project, however, and then if and when it comes up again we can bond.

Discussion ensued regarding when there is a 30-year deed restriction on a home and that home is sold, the deed restriction travels with the home and we are supposed to collect 2% back to the housing administrator. It is not known if that has actually occurred previously.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg's biggest concern is that there is a specific property where there are two 30-year deed restricted units that has been vacant for at least 10 years. The owner was paid for the property to be deed-restricted and Mrs. Van Valkenburg questioned how we get the owner to move on this or if we can foreclose on it.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg said that she is fairly certain it is in foreclosure. Ms. Sullivan said that we cannot foreclose under the current ordinance but she will look into it.

COMMITTEE MEMBER WALDRON

Mrs. Waldron is remaining on the Land Use Board as liaison. The Land Use Board is starting to see a resurgence in applications, not just for reconstruction but for new building, which is a positive sign for our area. People are starting to buy lots and homes.

Mrs. Waldron has been working with the Police Department, Jim Perry, and the State Police on a drug program for the schools and on the Township Committee level. The goal is to begin having real, informative discussions with parents, senior citizens, older children on the cost of drugs is in our community. The cost not being measured in dollars, but on personal relationships and the like.

Public Safety and Fire/Ambulance– Mrs. Waldron has reached out to Joe DiGrazia and indicated her desire to have a sit down with the Ambulance Squad to review facts and information on operating times and such. Some issues from the public have been brought forward to the Township Committee and Mrs. Waldron would like to mitigate those.

A meeting with the Deputy Police Commissioner will be happening shortly and Mrs. Waldron will be reporting back to the Township Committee on the outputs.

MAYOR LANCE

Budget and finance will be discussed at the Workshop meeting with the CFO.

Police Department – the Police blotter was shared.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg and Mrs. Waldron reached out to the Mayor regarding a problem on High Street. The Mayor called the County and detailed the problem on High Street. Within an hour the County responded and salted the road. Mayor Lance commented on how responsive they were.

On Main Street and High Street, cars were not moved as per the ordinance and you could see where plows had to go around vehicles. Mrs. Van Valkenburg stated that in the past, the Police Department hung posters and there are signs on the street itself. Mrs. Dalton suggested that we put a reminder on the website of the Ordinance and inform people that they can park at the Fire House and the Elementary School.

Historic Preservation has had a series of delays due to weather and illness. They are currently working on the restoration and history of a 200+ year old grandfather clock donated late last year by an old, local family. Cornwall Clocks is currently working on the restoration of the clock.

Gypsy Moth spraying meeting on the January 17 at the Jefferson Municipal Building which the Mayor will attend. Mrs. Dalton offered to assist him, particularly in managing school bus times and after-school activities.

There is a County Governing Officials meeting on January 29. Michael Darcy, executive director of the NJLDM, will be speaking. The meeting is being held at Mama's Café Baci in Hackettstown.

As discussed earlier, we received a request for a handicapped parking area at 11 Douglas Street from a citizen with Cerebral Palsy. Ms. Sullivan will review it so that at the next meeting the Committee can have a first reading. In the meantime, we can notify the requestor that their request is in-process and they will be getting the handicapped parking area sometime soon.

We have interest in the alternate #4 position on the Land Use Board from Norm Talley. Norm is on the Civilian Emergency Response Team (CERT) and 4th of July Committee.

Motion made by Mayor Lance to appoint Norm Talley to the alternate #4 position of the Land Use Board, seconded by Cynthia Dalton.

Roll call vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Waldron, Van Valkenburg, Lance
All ayes - Motion carried.

Mrs. Dalton recounted an incident at the Municipal Building today where an irate citizen had gotten out of control and had to be arrested by the Police. She felt that this incident proves that money to install the security gate for the safety of our staff was well spent.

FROM THE PUBLIC ADJOURNMENT

Bob Haberstadt introduced the Committee to Fernya Klindt, Standing Vice-President of the Ambulance Corps and chief liaison to the Township Committee from the Ambulance Corps. Mayor Lance welcomed Mrs. Klindt.

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 9:24 pm.

Submitted by:

Linda Leidner, RMC
Municipal Clerk