

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN  
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING  
Wednesday, December 13, 6:30PM**

**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 Shoemaker at 6:30pm. Those present were Mr. Avery, Mrs. Dalton, Mr. Lance, Mrs. Van Valkenburg and Mayor Shoemaker. Also present were Clerk Leidner and Debra Waldron, incoming Township Committee Member. Township Attorney Kevin Benbrook arrived at 7:15pm.

The **FLAG SALUTE** was conducted.

**SUNSHINE STATEMENT**

Mayor Shoemaker 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 2017 - 127 AUTHORIZING AN EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS**

Motion was made by Mr. Avery and was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg  
Roll Call Vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Lance, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker.  
All ayes: Motion carried.

Executive Session began at 6:35pm.

Mr. Lance made a motion to close the Executive Session and re-open the Regular Meeting at 7:26pm. The Motion was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

Mayor Shoemaker explained that contract issues were discussed in Executive Session. Discussed an ongoing contract negotiation and no decisions were reached.

**PRESENTATION TO MAYOR SHOEMAKER – Not listed on the Agenda**

Mr. Lance began with saying that since this meeting is Mayor Shoemakers last Blairstown Township Committee Meeting. Mr. Lance presented Mayor Shoemaker with a plaque from the Township Committee marking his years of service as a member of the Township Committee Member as well as serving as Mayor. The plaque also included his service on the Planning Board and Land Use Board.

Mr. Lance noted that the Committee appreciates the time that he has put into the Township Committee as well as other boards. Mr. Lance also wished Mayor Shoemaker luck with his membership in the Rotary Club and all of his future endeavors.

Mayor Shoemaker thanked everyone, noting that the time went quickly and it's been a pleasure. He remarked that he has been on the Township Committee for 6 years. Mayor Shoemaker went on to

say that it has been fun, although at times it was difficult. He said when he got on the Committee his goal was to do something to make the town better and he thinks that his goal was met. Thank you for the opportunity. Mayor Shoemaker noted that Eric and the DPW, Calvin and the Hose Company, Linda and her crew are doing a great job.

Mr. Avery said that Mayor Shoemaker has served this community well. He has enjoyed serving with him and is very proud of what the Mayor has done.

Mrs. Dalton said it was a privilege to sit next to Mayor Shoemaker. She noted that he is a gentlemen and is kind and thoughtful. He taught her a lot about being a Committee person. Mrs. Dalton thanked Mayor Shoemaker for his insight, wisdom and most of all his friendship.

The meeting was paused at 7:33pm.

The meeting resumed at 7:48pm.

Mayor Shoemaker noted that the next item on the Agenda is presentations and one not listed is a presentation from Adele Starrs, Mayor of Knowlton Township. Mayor Starrs is here regarding an item that is listed on the Agenda as Resolution No. 2017-135 RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE NOMINATION OF THE BYWAY.

Mrs. Starrs explained that she is in attendance as a representative of the Knowlton Township Environmental Commission. When the initial presentation was made to the Blirstown Township committee by Jaime Murray a sample resolution was given to the Township Committee but was never acted on by Blirstown.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg inquired as to how Blirstown will be part of this process. Mrs. Starrs explained that once the Route is approved and all towns involved are onboard, the next step would be called the Corridor Management Plan. Knowlton's Environmental Commission would take the lead role in this. The Corridor Management Plan gives recommendations for planning purposes to keep the scenic byway looking beautiful but is non-binding. To develop this Corridor Management Plan it is expensive. There are Grants available and the Knowlton Township Environmental Commission would dedicating themselves to working on obtaining these grants. They have 5 years to do this. When the Corridor Management Plan is actually in place, Blirstown would be asked to provide a representative to give input for the plan. Once the route is dedicated as a Scenic Byway, it will be placed on the National Registry of Scenic Byways. Mrs. Starrs went on to explain that the only thing this is very restrictive about is billboards.

Mr. Lance made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2017-135 RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE NOMINATION OF THE BYWAY, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

#### **PRESENTATIONS:**

**Sharon Cooper - Township Insurance Agent**

Ms. Cooper explained that the reason she is before the Township Committee is to review the insurance information that she previously sent to the Committee Members and asked them to make a decision on whether to go with PAIC or Statewide because the renewal is due.

Ms. Cooper explained the formation and purpose of Statewide Insurance Fund and PAIC and what each of them offers municipalities.

Mr. Lance inquired as to whether there was a way to increase the deductible on the General Liability portion of the Statewide Policy. Ms. Cooper said she would get a quote, then the determination can be made as to whether the Committee would like to assume the greater deductible. Ms. Cooper will come to the January 10 meeting with information in increasing the deductible.

Mayor Shoemaker made a motion to renew the Townships participation in Statewide Insurance and authorize Ms. Cooper to get a quote on increasing the general liability deductible, which was seconded by Mr. Avery.

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

Ms. Cooper also noted that the Risk Management Consultant needs to be named at this meeting. Mrs. Leidner questioned as to whether this should be done in January with a change in Township Committee Members coming. as did Mr. Lance. Ms. Cooper noted that it could be done at the Reorganization Meeting.

Mr. Avery made a motion to Appoint Sharon Cooper as the Township's Risk Management Consultant, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Roll Call Vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Shoemaker.  
NAY: Lance

Mr. Lance felt that this should be done at the Reorganization Meeting. Ms. Cooper agreed that it could. It was decided that votes would not change at Reorganization, the majority would rule therefore:

Motion carried

**Dave Beck (Hose Company Truck Committee) and Calvin Inscho (Fire Chief)** of the Blairstown Hose Company explained that they are present to continue discussion regarding the purchase of a new Fire Truck. They came before the Committee with last year. Mr. Beck distributed an update copy of the truck specs with a breakdown of the cost of the truck this year. The company projects the cost of the truck to go up 5% each year. The price of the truck is the Texas Inter-local Agreement that can be used when purchasing a fire truck. The Committee asked the Hose Company to obtain a separate quote breaking down the cost of the truck and then the itemized cost of equipment when they came before them last year. The new quote has that breakdown. This truck has a stainless steel body which give it a life of 20 years. The actual price of the truck is \$634,000.00.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg inquired as to whether the Township should be in negotiation with the other municipalities that the Hose Company services, asking them to contribute towards the purchase of the truck. Mr. Benbrook explained that if the truck is going to be used in other municipalities the State Statute calls for a Joint Meeting Entity between the municipalities and a written agreement

needs to be made as to the specifics as to contributions. The Truck Title would be held by the Joint Meeting Entity.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – up to 5 speakers, 3 minutes each  
None.

#### **DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

##### **Calvin Inscho, Chief Blairstown Hose Company:**

Mr. Inscho explained that he has forwarded the contract for the Hose Company to provide fire service to Hardwick Township to Mr. Benbrook for review. Mr. Benbrook noted that he sent a red lined and clean copy of the contract back to Chief Inscho. Mr. Benbrook explained that the contract is between the Hose Company and Hardwick. The Township Committee should be involved in the Capital contribution portion of the contract. The Committee need time to review the contract. Mr. Benbrook removed the Township as a party to the contract. This is an agreement between the Hose Company and Hardwick Township. Mr. Benbrook will forward the corrected Agreement to Hardwick Township on behalf of the Hose Company.

**Eric Usinowicz, Acting Director of Public Works** reported that the DPW has been filling pot holes. The asphalt plants have closed for the winter so they will be using cold patch when needed. Holes have been patched on Westview, Union Brick Road and the intersection of Lambert and Route 94. The DPW also put the Christmas lights up in town and put trees up in the foyer of the Municipal Building and in the front of the building. While they had the rented lift they replaced bulbs in the parking lot light fixtures. There were some issues with removing plastic covers so there are 3 lights that were not able to be fixed. Mr. Usinowicz reported that the new DPW employee Albert Schwartz is working out really well. Mr. Schwartz and Mr. Zukoski have been working on replacing the water meters. There are only about 10-15 left to install. Mr. Sullivan, town mechanic has been working on police cars and he has replaced two oil pans one on a mason dump and the other on a pickup truck. Snack stands at Walnut Valley and Sycamore Park and bathrooms at Sycamore Park have been winterized. Leaves have been removed from all of the drains and roadways.

Mr. Avery inquired if North Warren Regional High School has taken any salt for their parking lots and if so what are we charging them. Mr. Usinowicz said yes they have taken 2 loads and they are being charged \$55.45 per ton, same as the Township cost.

#### **MINUTES**

**October 25, 2017** – Regular Workshop Meeting Minutes

**November 8, 2017** – Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve the minutes of October 25, 2017 and November 8, 2017 as presented, which was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

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

Mrs. Van Valkenburg inquired about items that were in the minutes of November 8, 2017 regarding the Generator Grant and Nick Mohr reaching out to the County to see if there are any more funds available, what is the status. Mrs. Leidner noted that Mr. Mohr did reach out and most of the Grant Money is gone. Mrs. Leidner went on to explain that someone else reviewed the specs and Mr. Mohr

was going to go back to the Engineer to see if any modifications can be made to the specs before going out to bid.

## **ORDINANCES**

### **ORDINANCE NO. 2017-06 AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL CHAPTER 76 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN ENTITLED "BURNING, OUTDOOR"**

Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Mrs. Van Valkenburg has a concern as to how the public is going to be informed that they must obtain a permit from the State for all open burning.

Eric Weber, State Fire Marshall was on hand to explain that the state is already enforcing the State Forest Fire Laws and Open Burning Laws. They have done about 150 permits in Blairstown. When a permit is obtained the resident must call Warren County Communication each time it is used.

Mayor Shoemaker opened the Public Hearing on this Ordinance.  
Mayor Shoemaker closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Lance made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2017-06, which was seconded by Mr. Avery.

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

All ayes: Motion carried.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- 1 - R.2017 – 128 Authorization to Pay Bills
- 2 - R.2017 – 129 Resolution to Cancel Lien on Property known as Block 601 Lot 42.04
- 3 - R.2017 – 130 Resolution Refund of 2017 Overpayments
- 4 - R.2017 – 131 Resolution to Transfer 2017 Budget Line Items
- 5 - R.2017 – 132 Resolution to Cancel Capital Ordinances
- 6 - R.2017 - 133 Resolution to Cancel 2017 Budget Appropriations

Mr. Avery made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

All ayes: Motion carried

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

- Animal Control – April - September
- Clerk – November Report
- DPW - November 6 – December 8 Report
- Finance – November Finance and Fuel Reports
- Fire Department – None
- Police Department –November Report
- Tax Collector –November Report
- Warren County Health Department – November 13, 2017 Report
- Zoning Officer – Year to Date – 2017 Report

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve the Department Reports, which was seconded by

Mrs. Dalton.

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

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE** for information and possible action

1. email from Jaime Murray, Knowlton Township Environmental Commission to pass the following Resolution: 2017- 135 RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE NOMINATION OF THE BYWAY  
This was acted on earlier in the meeting.
2. Requesting Authorization for the Mayor to sign Applications for Blue Light Permits received from Patrick Ceres (Blairstown Hose Company) and Rebecca Novak (Blairstown Ambulance Corps)

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve the Blue Light Permit Applications from Patrick Ceres (Blairstown Hose Company) and Rebecca Novak (Blairstown Ambulance Corps).

Voice Vote: All Ayes, motion carried.

3. New Jersey Conference of Mayors is requesting the Mayor to sign a PLEDGE TO SUPPORT THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY'S FIGHT AGAINST OPIOID ADDICTION

Mrs. Van Valkenburg noted that unless the State changes the Law regarding what happens when there is a Narcan save, these pledges do not really have the ability to hold any weight.

Mrs. Waldron noted that she sat in on a meeting with Captain Johnsen, a State Trooper, Mayor Perry and Sandy Giacobbi regarding this issue. The Mayors are trying to get together to develop legislation to change the way the law is handled. Bail reform needs to change.

Mr. Lance made a motion to authorize the Mayor to sign this Pledge, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Voice Vote: All Ayes, motion carried.

4. Social Affair Application notification from New Jersey Alcoholic Beverage Control for a Fund Raising Concert run by Blairstown Live Arts Inc at Roy's Hall on December 16, 2017 from 6pm – 12am.

Mayor Shoemaker made a motion to approve the Social Affair Permit for a Fundraising Event being held by Blairstown Live Arts Inc. at Roy's Hall on December 16, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Voice Vote: All Ayes, motion carried.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg expressed concern regarding the fact that there is no rail or fence where the drop off is in front of Roy's Hall. Mr. Benbrook recommended that the Township put a railing up if they are concerned about someone getting hurt, since there is no real determination as to who owns that area.

Mayor Shoemaker also brought forth a Sign Application that was received and approved by the Zoning Officer from the owner of the Runway Café. This application requires an approval from the Township Committee. The sign would be placed on the post on Route 94 and Lambert Road.

Mr. Avery made a motion to approve the sign application from Runway Café, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

Voice Vote: All ayes, motion carried.

#### **GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE**

1. email from the Bureau of Justice Assistance notifying Blairstown will receive an award of \$1,194.33 from the Bulletproof Vest Partnership.
2. Notice from NJDEP of No Further Action Notice Block 1602, Lot 6.11 51 Polkville Road
3. Invitation from Mark Saalfield, Superintendent, Blairstown Elementary School to Participate in their Strategic Planning Process, first meeting to be held on Thursday, January 18 at 7:00pm in the school Library. The second meeting is February 15. Everyone is invited to attend these meetings.
4. email from US Department of Justice advising that Blairstown was not a recipient of the 2017 COPS Hiring Program funding.
5. Letter from Blairstown Elementary School containing a copy of a Board resolution in opposition to a Warren County Consolidated School System.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg made a motion to support the opposition of a Warren County Consolidated School System, which was seconded by Mr. Avery.

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

6. letter from Service Electric in response to a letter from Congressman Josh Gottheimer on behalf of the Mayors of Blairstown, Hardwick, Knowlton and Hope.
7. letter from the NJDEP to Christine Rolef, CFO noting that Blairstown has been approved to participate in the Radon Awareness Program.

Before this can be done a Resolution needs to be done to authorize the \$2000.00 as item of Revenue in the Budget. This will be **Resolution No. 2017-134 Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation NJSA 40A:4-87.**

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2017-134, which was seconded by Mayor Shoemaker.

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

#### **FROM THE TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY**

Mr. Benbrook reported that he attended the Fair Share Housing Fairness Hearing on November 15. Mr. Benbrook drafted an Ordinance that will be presented for first reading in January. Basically the township has 10 years to implement the COAH requirements. Mrs. Van Valkenburg feels that the Township should continue working on fulfilling the COAH obligation and not wait 10 years to do so. Mr. Benbrook explained from a litigation standpoint the Township is basically done.

#### **FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK**

Mrs. Leidner explained that at the December 1 Special Workshop Meeting the Township Committee asked her to poll the surrounding municipalities as to when their Reorganization Meeting will be held as to avoid conflicts. None of them are having their Reorganization Meetings on January 1, therefore the Blairstown Reorganization Meeting will be held on January 1, 2018 at noon.

**FROM THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER**

Mr. Rodman reported that Stormwater presentations were done at the school on November 30 and December 1. This gave us 5 more points to fulfill our obligation and we need 3 more points.

Maple Lane – Mr. Rodman reported that he is completing the DOT paperwork, he is waiting for change orders to come back from the contractors.

Backup well – The total depth of the well is 190 feet and there is 12 inch and 8 inch casing to 134 feet. Today the contractor installed the pump and the development is beginning. The pump is at 126 feet and we are getting about 100 gallons per minute and are looking for 130 gallons per minute. The pump may need to be lowered down a little more. Then the tests will be done.

Mr. Lance inquired if there was an update regarding the request for the possible scope of work change on the Mohican Road project, Mr. Rodman said he will be working on that this week.

**FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE  
COMMITTEE MEMBER AVERY**

Mr. Avery reported that the Senior Citizens are having their Holiday Party tomorrow. It is being held at noon at Panther Valley.

**COMMITTEE MEMBER DALTON**

Mrs. Dalton reported that the contractor for the office security project is in the process of framing and staining the partitions in his workshop so that there will be minimal upset in the office. This will be installed on Tuesday.

Mrs. Dalton also reported that she has spoken to Trey Baldwin, the Boy Scout working on his Eagle Project. Mrs. Dalton distributed sign sample and asked the Committee to choose a sign. He would like to start the project on March 1. A timeline is also needed for the DPW to take down the "Ticket Booth". The consensus of the Committee was sign #4.

Mrs. Dalton reported that all of the quotes to retrofit the municipal building lights to LED. Mrs. Dalton will place copies of these quotes. Mr. Benbrook indicated that there is a Grant available for this project.

Blairstown Elementary School students are raising money to help dig a well in South Sudan. You can go to their website to donate. They are also helping Homeless Veterans with a program called Operation Chill Out. They have sent a check to the county in the amount of \$1,100.00. The county is building a small home for a veteran.

Mrs. Dalton read a note from Bruce Leal thanking the Township Committee and wishing everyone a happy holiday season.

Mrs. Dalton asked her husband who is an electrical contractor to review the bid specs due to the fact that the Engineers estimate was \$160,000.00, well over the amount the Township received from the



Generator Grant. Mrs. Leidner explained that Nick Mohr has sent the questions to the Engineer that designed the specs for review.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBER LANCE**

Mr. Lance noted that he and Mayor Shoemaker have served for six years together on the township Committee and have known each other for 45 years. It has been a pleasure, and although there may have disagreed over the years we always worked for the common good of the town.

Mr. Lance reported that the CFO issued a memo that only essential spending is permitted until the end of the year.

Mr. Lance also reported that he attended an Electric Aggregation Meeting, this was brought before the Township Committee last year. The consensus of the Committee at the time was to wait to see how other municipalities fared, it has been a positive experience and he recommended that the Committee look into participating for next year.

Mr. Lance attended a meeting on Police and Community Relations. This meeting was very informative as far as what smaller towns do to encourage interactivity between the Police Department and the community.

Mr. Lance gave the Police Department report, they issued 34 summons, 4 narcotics arrests, 142 motor vehicle stops, 6 incidents of malicious mischief, 1 DWI and 1 burglary.

Historic Preservation Committee put together a booklet with pictures and stories from years ago. These are being distributed to various Township Groups and were distributed at Jingle on Main.

Mr. Lance attended the Board of Education Meeting on Monday where the North Warren Marching Band was honored for being State Champions. A Proclamation was presented to them by Senator Space and Senator Oroho. Mr. Lance thanked Mayor Shoemaker for signing the Proclamation and proclaiming this week North Warren Marching Band Week. The band students were so excited.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBER VAN VALKENBURG**

Mrs. Van Valkenburg asked Open Space Chairman Joel McGreen to give his report. The **Nonnemaker** Contract will get signed and then the surveyor will begin his portion. The waiver for **Ardia Farms** was received. The Executor would like to close by the end of the year if possible. The preliminary assessment is just about completed on the **Kostenbader** property. Extensive soil sampling may need to be done. **Hemlock Ravine** the environmental assessment has been completed, there are no areas of concern, the survey is on the way and title commitment has been obtained.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg noted that Mrs. Sagan, Recreation Director is doing a great job.

#### **MAYOR SHOEMAKER**

Mayor Shoemaker reported that there still has been no communication from DOT or the owners of ACME concerning making the ACME driveway an entrance only. Mr. Benbrook will send a letter to the ACME owners letting them know that one way entrance only signs will be put up at that entrance.

Mayor Shoemaker noted that he will advise Mike Lata that someone will be in contact with him about scheduling a meeting regarding the Water Company.

**FROM THE PUBLIC**

Nothing from the public.

**ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no further comments from the public, Mayor Shoemaker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton. All members voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:25pm.

Submitted by:

Linda Leidner, RMC  
Municipal Clerk