

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, June 14, 2017 7:15 PM**

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm by Mayor Shoemaker. Those present were Mr. Avery, Mrs. Dalton, Mr. Lance, Mrs. Van Valkenburg and Mayor Shoemaker. Also present were: Clerk Leidner, Christine Rolef, Treasurer and Attorney Kevin Benbrook.

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 No.2017– 062 AUTHORIZING AN EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS.

Mr. Lance made a motion to enter into Executive Session, and it was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

Executive Session began at 7:18 pm.

Mr. Lance made a motion to re-open the Regular Meeting at 7:30 pm and it was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

Mayor Shoemaker explained the results of the Executive Session. There was a discussion of a contract matter which is still unresolved. He said it will continue to be an open item.

PRESENTATION – Gilbert Andwati – Youth Suicide Prevention

Mr. Andwati, 51 W. Church Rd., Washington Twp., said he is President of Hope for the Hearts campaign. He passed out flyers. The Campaign was started 3 ½ yrs. ago. It deals with kids who Suffer from depression and anxiety. Mr. Andwati explained that he has reached out to 22 town councils to obtain a proclamation declaring 7/29/17 as Youth Suicide Awareness Day, and the week after to be Youth Suicide Prevention Week. He said during the week, the community would work together to do something good for a neighbor. Mr. Andwati, originally from Kenya, was bullied in school for 2 ½ yrs. when he was 12. He saw a broken person in the offender. He pointed out suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death amongst ages 10 – 24. Mr. Andwati noted the CDC research reveals the bully is undergoing a form of mental distress.

He said he wants to reach out to the bystanders who film such episodes and post on Facebook because they think it is funny. Last year he spoke at the United Nations to present his organization. Their goal is to create an alliance with organizations dealing with youth mental health.

Mayor Shoemaker thanked Mr. Andwati and suggested the Township Committee consider the request for proclamation and get a background check on the organization. The Mayor noted that the Municipal Clerk will let him know what the Township Committee decides prior to the 7/29/17 deadline.

Moment of Silence:

Mr. Lance announced on 5/12/17, Earl Jones, former Fire Chief and Township Committeeman, passed away.

Mayor Shoemaker asked for a moment of silence out of respect.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeanette O'Brien - 16 East Ave. - asked about water status. She also said, more police coverage is needed, noting an incident occurred on Bridge St. She complained about the speeding in the village area, stating more control is needed.

Mayor Shoemaker noted a bag filter was recommended to help treat the water. Mr. Avery responded that the filter was ordered immediately.

Mayor Shoemaker saw a report recently which revealed the manganese content is higher than that allowed by the State. This is creating dark water after a system flush. Mayor Shoemaker said the Township is going to try a super chlorinator. It will take several weeks to see results and the flush would be done more often. This was recommended by someone in the business for 37 years. He is hopeful this is the solution.

Mrs. O'Brien questioned the authority of the Police. Mayor Shoemaker responded they have all the authority needed.

Rosalie Murray – Heller Hill Road - thanked the BEC for work done on the wall by Roy's Theater and for many other projects. She stated their goal is enhancement of the community. She feels they have the good of the community in mind, and should be highly commended.

Ms. Murray also commended and thanked Jeanette and Tony Iurato, who have taken vacant properties on Main St., and turned them into attractive buildings as assets to Main St. and the community. She thanked them for their past service on the BEC.

Gladys Bellott - 103 Union Brick Rd. - has a problem with water coming onto her property from her neighbor's property. This was addressed to the County Engineer about a year ago. She said a few years ago when she and her neighbor, Mr. Van Der Wal – (now deceased) had their driveways done,

a pipe was put under the driveway, with a little hill. She indicated that she believes this detoured the water to her property, flooding her basement twice.

The Engineer originally visited the site finding no problem and again returned and was of the same opinion. She brought pictures to reveal what is in her backyard that has come into her basement twice – she said “about 2 feet of water”. She commented in heavy rain, “It’s a river”. She reiterated, it was never addressed by the Engineer.

Mayor Shoemaker noted that the DPW has visited the site and they think that the pipe is blocked.

Mayor Shoemaker said he will talk with the Engineer and to the head of DPW.

MINUTES

April 12, 2017 – Regular Meeting Minutes

April 12, 2017 – Executive Session Minutes

Mr. Avery made a motion to approve the April 12, 2017 – Regular Meeting Minutes as presented, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve the April 12, 2017 – Executive Session Minutes as presented, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

ORDINANCES

BOND ORDINANCE NO. 2017-01 BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$323,000 FOR THE ACQUISITION OF VARIOUS EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR AND BY THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN IN THE COUNTY OF WARREN, NEW JERSEY AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$242,725 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE TOWNSHIP FOR FINANCING PART OF THE APPROPRIATION

Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Mayor Shoemaker explained this is the Second Reading. He opened it to the Public.

There were no questions or comments from the Public.

Mr. Avery made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2017-01 and it was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

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

**BOND ORDINANCE NO. 2017-02 BOND ORDINANCE MAKING A SUPPLEMENTAL
APPROPRIATION OF \$20,000 FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW WELL FOR THE WATER
DEPARTMENT IN AND BY THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN, IN THE COUNTY OF WARREN, NEW JERSEY
AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$20,000 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE TOWNSHIP FOR FINANCING
PART OF THE APPROPRIATION**

Second Reading, Public Hearing, Adoption

Mayor Shoemaker explained this is the Second Reading. He noted this project will require more money than originally appropriated, so \$20,000. must be added. Mr. Lance remarked hopefully this will be funded through a grant.

He opened it to the Public.

There were no questions or comments from the Public.

Mr. Lance made a motion to adopt No. 2017-02 and it was seconded by Mr. Avery.

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

All ayes: Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2017-03 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 84 OF THE CODE OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN ENTITLED “CONCERTS AND FESTIVALS, OUTDOOR”**

Introduction, First Reading

Mayor Shoemaker explained this the First Reading of this ordinance to clarify the rules for putting on, or sponsoring a concert, festival or other outdoor activity. He said this will act as a roadmap to clarify applying for permits.

He commented the old ordinance fee was \$500., it is now \$100.

It was noted, the events that are held on Main Street bring a lot of business to town. While the Street closure can present a problem for businesses, especially if they are not notified of the closure in advance. This Ordinance will help insure that all affected parties involved, Police, DPW, businesses and residents will be notified about the event in a timely manner.

Mr. Lance asked if businesses should be notified before the application is approved.

A suggested 10 day notice was discussed. Business owners can then advise clients, in advance, of alternate parking.

It was suggested this could be addressed on a case-by-case basis for Main St. as a condition of the permit. Mr. Benbrook said the permit is issued here, so all departments will be notified. He said Blairstown has the latitude here. He also noted in the past, approval was conditioned on the County's approval.

Mr. Benbrook suggested Notice could be given prior to the meeting when the permit will be heard. Mr. Lance suggests a 10-day Notice prior to the meeting when vote occurs. Mr. Benbrook added, the applicant should be told at the time of the Application, “This is the date when it's to be heard - get your Notices out”.

Mr. Benbrook will work on the language so that this Ordinance can be published in time for the Second Reading and Public Hearing to be held at the next meeting.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2017-03 on first reading, and amended it to include the aforesaid condition. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lance.

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2017-04 AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF FIRE PUMP ON CLASS A PUMPER TRUCK 46-62 WITHIN FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE FUNDING THEREOF

Introduction, First Reading

Mayor Shoemaker explained this Ordinance is to fix the pump on engine 46-62. He said the repair is in the amount of \$30,000. He thanked the Fire Dept. and Mike Sullivan from DPW for all the work done since the end of May when this was first presented.

Sharon Cooper, Blairstown's Insurance Agent, confirmed there is no effect on liability coverage if Blairstown employees work on the pumper.

Mayor Shoemaker revealed pump manufacturers informed us that after the work is done, it is brought to a Certification Center. If it fails, re-fix, and recertify again.

He said there are 2 options: A. Buy parts for \$4,500. to fix. If the \$12,000. case is corroded, upon further inspection, then "it's junk". B. Buy a new pump for \$19,000. which is warrantied for 6 years.

Mayor Shoemaker made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2017-04 to provide for replacement of pump on Pumper Truck 46-62 and it was seconded by Mr. Lance.

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

Mayor Shoemaker made a motion to approve purchase of a new pump for 46-62 and it was seconded by Mr. Lance.

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

Mr. Lance announced Scott Bedell, Fire Dept. member, volunteered on his vacation time, to help out Mike Sullivan, DPW mechanic, to do the repairs. Mayor Shoemaker explained that Scott Bedell is covered by Workmen's Compensation because he is a fireman.

Motion was made by Mr. Lance to approve Scott Bedell's volunteer effort to assist Mike Sullivan in repairing the pump and was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1 – R.2017 – 063 Authorization to Pay Bills
- 2 - R.2017 - 064 Resolution Approving Liquor License Renewals
- 3 - R.2017 - 065 Cancellation of Mortgage
- 4 - R.2017 - 066 Redemption of Certification of Sale No. 2017-66
- 5 - R.2017 - 067 Redemption of Certification of Sale No. 2016-012
- 6 – R.2017 – 068 Audit Review
- 7 - R.2017 – 069 Corrective Action Plan
- 8 - Application for Blue Light Permit - John Browning and Thomas Baran - Blairstown Ambulance Corps.

Mrs. Leidner noted that R.2017-064, has been amended she had to remove one of the applicants from the Resolution. They have not yet renewed their application nor paid the fee. She explained they have until the month to do so. There is now a revised resolution.

Mr. Avery made a motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda with the aforesaid modification to R.2017-064. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

Mr. Avery made a motion to approve the Application for Blue Light Permit – John Browning and Thomas Baran. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Clerk – May Report
DPW - March, April & May Project Tracker Reports
Finance – May Finance and Fuel Reports
Fire Department – May Report
Police Department – May Report
Tax Collector – May Report
Warren County Health Department – May 8, 2017 Report
Zoning Officer – May Report

Mr. Lance made a motion to accept the Department Reports, and it was seconded by Mr. Avery.

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

Mayor Shoemaker commented, Lori Nienstedt did a lot of work to help DPW organize and identify work that has to be done, and the work flow. He said, for-the-record, the DPW Report was not adequately completed.

Mr. Lance commented re: WC Health Dept. He said there was a court hearing re: 83 Union Brick Rd. The defendants were given 45 days to remove junk. A re-inspection is scheduled. He's been hearing that for years.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1 – Back-Up Well Update

Mayor Shoemaker noted that Ordinance was passed tonight for additional money. Mayor Shoemaker noted that Bruno & Assocs, grant writers for Blairstown, are applying for a Community Development Block Grant for the Township. The CFO confirmed that Blairstown has to “sit tight” until December when the grants recipients will be announced.

2 - Storm water Coordinator Change in Requirements

The DEP sent a letter to all municipalities regarding the requirements for Storm Water Program Coordinator. The Coordinator must be either a principal executive officer or ranking elected official.

Mr. Rodman noted that he has been doing this job even though it is not in his contract. Our stormwater management programs have to be advertised. The Township is also required to setup informational programs with the schools. Mr. Rodman noted that up to now, it hasn't been a problem. Now, the requirements for the position are a lot more rigorous. There are new regulations and it is very time consuming. He revealed the DEP has audited this every couple of years to ensure it is being done and records are maintained.

Mr. Rodman indicated that is willing to do this for 1 year, at a proposed, “not to exceed” - hourly rate, as he is doing for Hardwick Township.

Mayor Shoemaker asked Mr. Rodman to come up with a number and get back to Township Committee at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

None

COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE for information and possible action

1 - from Theresa Tamburro, letter of resignation from position of Housing Liaison as of May 31, 2017

Mayor Shoemaker noted we are one of a few communities that have this position. Mrs. Van Valkenburg made calls to several surrounding towns and Hunterdon County. One uses an engineer, another a planner.

She phoned Roger Thomas, LUB attorney, for a recommendation.

Mr. Benbrook explained Blairstown is one of the few municipalities that has not entered into a contract with the County to run the rehabilitation program. He said they will do that for nothing and it is just a formal contract. He will send it to Roger Thomas, and Deb Waldron, LUB Chair.

Mr. Benbrook noted what is important, is that Blairstown is complying with the Affordable Restrictions, which is what this Township does.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg made a motion to accept the resignation, with regret, of Theresa Tamburro, Housing Liaison, and it was seconded by Mr. Avery.

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

Mayor Shoemaker expressed appreciation for the job she had done for many years.

2 - Facilities Use Application received from Blirstown Fourth for the use of Footbridge Park Alpine Field on July 4, 2017

Mayor Shoemaker stated this application has been reviewed by DPW, Clerk, Police, and Recreation Depts.

Mr. Avery noted Alpine Field will be used for parking.

Mr. Avery made a motion to approve this facility-use application, which was seconded by Mayor Shoemaker.

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

3 - from Alina Lodge requesting permission to hold their re: 2nd Up, Up & Away 5K/5 Mile Race at the Blirstown Airport on October 7 beginning at 9:30am and finishing approximately 12pm. - same course as last year.

A representative from Alina was present to request usage of the shoulders of the same road as last year. She noted-there is a small portion of the route on a county road – which they had no problem with, last year. If she gets approval, she will notify the insurance company and they will issue a certificate.

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve this, pending Certification of Insurance, and it was seconded by Mr. Avery.

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

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

1 – from- Kerry Pflugh, NJDEP announcing Clean Communities Grants. Blirstown will receive \$21,646.00.

Mayor Shoemaker remarked how nice it is for Blirstown to receive \$21,646.00 for this grant.

2 – from – NJDEP notifying Blirstown that we will receive \$240,000.00 for overlay of Mohican Road.

Ted Rodman mentioned this amount is not enough to do the entire road which the Township is planning to do. He recommends proceeding with this.

Mr. Lance indicated the original grant application was for \$380,000. Although the price of the asphalt is down, he said the Township will still have to come up with \$80,000. He said deadline to utilize the grant money in 2018.

3 - from - PAIC regarding the return of dividend to current and former members, Blirstown will receive \$18,357.00

Sharon Cooper, Blirstown Twp. Insurance Agent, explained this represents surplus from 1997 to 2010 from the Public Alliance Insurance Coverage Fund, a former carrier. They are returning the surplus on a pro-rated basis.

Mohican Road - Mr. Lance asked if a micro-pave, (i.e. Swartswood Rd. & Rt. 519), is any cheaper. He inquired what the advantage is, as it is only 1" thick.

Mr. Rodman responded, this is state aid which they have to approve. He said he isn't sure Blirstown can get a grant for micro-pave.

The CFO noted, there must be a 2" minimum to be a capital item.

4 – from – Mrs. Messina and Mrs. Smith's 4th Grade Class at Blirstown Elementary School – handwritten letters of thanks to all of the members of the Township Committee an part of "Our THEM Movement".

Mayor Shoemaker commented how nice it was to receive the above letter of thanks.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY

Mr. Benbrook circulated a memo on the Airport Safety Zone. He checked and the regulations have not changed.

Mr. Rodman produced the maps and explained this report was done in 2000. His office has the only copy. Mr. Rodman explained there are many zones, i.e. safety, end, and runway zones, which is very confusing. The report indicates what can and can't be done in those zones.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg's concern is about a plane coming down again and the safety of children. She asked if notification should be given when people are coming for games on the fields. She mentioned signage.

Mr. Benbrook revealed there is nothing going on there that is contrary to any rules or regulations. He noted Blirstown has a very comprehensive ordinance. From a legal standpoint, the fields are not in violation. He said the Airport Safety Zone is designed for the safety of the pilot. Mr. Benbrook indicated Blirstown is allowed, as a zoning issue, to be more restrictive than the regulations.

Mr. Benbrook reiterated, from a legal and insurance standpoint, Blirstown is OK. He said it is more of a practical concern. He explained whether or not signs are present will not matter in a lawsuit. He said from a practical standpoint, putting up signs is OK, so that the parents have a "heads-up". He said he will submit suggested sign language to Pat Sagan, Recreation Director.

He pointed out the only alternative is to move the fields. Mr. Lance pointed out that move would cost \$13,000,000. to move to the Gorab property. \$50,000. had already been spent on design.

Mr. Lance suggested having the zone surveyed by Ted Rodman. Then a warning sign could be located there, where grass is cut, which indicates "This is the Zone, DO NOT ENTER".

FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK

Linda Leidner, RMC, had nothing to report.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER

Walnut Valley Firehouse -Mr. Rodman suggested formation of a sub-committee which would include the CFO, himself, Mr. Benbrook, and 1 committee person to review what is in existence now and make some recommendations. Mayor Shoemaker volunteered.

Mr. Rodman offered to have the meetings at his office, and a time can be determined.

Mr. Benbrook announced he sent a letter to the County proposing the road swap for snow plowing.

Mayor Shoemaker added that Lambert Rd. may not be a good one to swap, as DPW must travel when going in and out of the Public Works Garage on Lambert Road to snow plow.

Mr. Benbrook noted he forwarded the signed Sidewalk Maintenance Agreement back to the Church. After he receives their signature, he will draft something for the Town.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE COMMITTEE MEMBER AVERY

Cobblewood Road_ - Mr. Avery reported Mr. Rodman has gotten quotes on repairing the on collapsing drainage pipe on Cobblewood Road in the amount of \$38,625. and \$48,000.

Mr. Rodman interjected, that the paving cost of \$500. was not included. Change order cannot exceed \$1,500. The contract will be very specific.

Mr. Avery made a motion to award the contract to SPS, pending a valid NJ Registration Certificate, and it was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

Mr. Benbrook said he'd prepare a contract and circulate it to Township Committee, Mr. Rodman and Mrs. Leidner.

Water Testing - Mr. Avery noted Blairstown wants to improve water testing. Vantage Labs in Sparta has been contacted. He said Clear Tass would offer a cleansing approach process using 55 gal. drums, 1 per month for 3 months. There would be a maintenance level kept to maintain the manganese levels. The Mayor said the cost is about \$800. a barrel.

New Fire Engine - Mr. Avery said information was given to Township Committee regarding a leasing bid. Also, there is information regarding the price. Mrs. VanValkenburg and he looked at a sample engine, and remarked how impressive it was.

Senior Citizens - Mr. Avery declared the next Senior Trip is June 28th to Doolan's, Spring Lake, NJ.

Mr. Avery revealed a leak has been detected at Blair which they were unable to shut off. He said equipment will be brought in tomorrow. Mr. Avery indicated this may be involved with the buildings under construction.

Mayor Shoemaker pointed out, after a run, the hose company is filling up the tankers with water from the hydrants – which is non-metered. This is about 700 to 1,000 gals. each time. He noted the Township is missing water so that could add up, over a year.

COMMITTEE MEMBER DALTON

Blairstown's Historic Day - Mrs. Dalton noted an application was received for Historic Blairstown Day on 8/5/17, explaining the Blairstown Museum is stuck in the middle between the old Facility Use Form and the intended new, which would preclude them from meeting these time lines. She hopes the Second Reading could occur on 6/28th. Mrs. Dalton explained the event is to promote Blairstown's history and celebrate John I. Blair's birthday. Mrs. Dalton explained that the Blairstown Museum is having a fundraiser and is requesting permission from the committee to go to the County for permission to close Main Street, to have the street closed. It will complement the Foodshed Alliance's bike Tour-de-Blairstown.

Job Descriptions - Mrs. Dalton indicated everyone will have a job description. Hopefully, they will be completed in a week or two. Each employee will be given theirs and asked to sign off. She revealed this had not been reviewed for 15 or 20 years.

Office Security - Mrs. Dalton noted Ray O'Brien, Architect, will be in Town Hall on Monday to do final office- reconfiguration measurements.

Mrs. Dalton noted that North Warren Regional High School graduation will be on Friday, June 16th at 6:45pm. She noted it is also the last day of school for NWRHS students.

Blairstown Elementary School - Mrs. Dalton read a list of planned activities for the school. She was impressed with their accomplishments in just 2 ½ weeks.

Municipal Clerk Leidner, read a thank you note from the school, naming the various municipal departments for their continued care and Mrs. Dalton for her efforts as Municipal School Liaison.

Traffic light on Lambert Rd./Rt. 94 - Mrs. Dalton said this was discussed a while ago. She explained there are many accidents there. A previous solution offered, was to make the strip mall entrance nearest the traffic light an Entrance only, with an Exit from the other end of the parking lot.

Mr. Rodman explained it has been a problem from the onset. He said a Problem Statement can be submitted to DOT, specific to that reason. Mr. Rodman noted that maybe the DOT can change the arrow light. Police Director, Bob Gara, noted this had been examined in the past but it was only

initially addressed. Mr. Rodman suggested referencing the accidents that have happened since then.

Bridge St./Rt. 94 Potholes - Mr. Lance urged Ted Rodman to inquire about this area, (coming down the hill to the traffic light- on the southbound side of Rt. 94) with the DOT.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg noted motorists heading north, who turn right off Rt. 94 - onto Stillwater Rd., often by-pass the divider. She said this dangerous situation also should be reported to DOT.

Rt. 80 – Lane Closure - Mrs. Dalton read an e-mail from Frank Wheatley, Director Warren Cty. Dept. Public Safety, disclosing a meeting tonight @ 6:30pm to discuss a 2018 Rt. 80 project in the area by the S-turns. Rt. 80 will be reduced to 1 lane in each direction for a period of 2 YEARS.

Mayor Shoemaker noted that he was informed, that has been changed to 2 lanes open and shifted, using the shoulder of the road.

COMMITTEE MEMBER LANCE

L.E.A.D. Program - Mr. Lance reported Capt. Johnson had a meeting yesterday with the Superintendents of the schools and State Police. He explained an L.E.A.D. program is being setup. This is very similar to the D.A.R.E. program. It is about awareness of drug and alcohol abuse. He expects it to be operational this coming school year in both elementary and high schools. It will be administered by specially-trained teachers in the school with backup of the Police Officers.

Police Report – May - There were 25 criminal charges in May. Mr. Lance reported the following: 2 aggravated assaults, 3 possession of 1,2,3,& 4 narcotics - 2 possessions of marijuana & hashish, 2 DWI, 2 Contempt Warrants.

Mr. Lance also reported that in June, the Police Dept. was involved in 3 high-profile cases.

6/9/17 Nar Can save of 38 yr. old unresponsive male. Syringes observed on site. Nar Can administered – person survived.

6/10/17 A joint arrest by Blairstown Police and NJ State Police occurred, resultant from an individual calling, who saw the article “Fugitive of The Week” in Express Times. Arrested suspect taken to Warren County Corrections.

6/11/17 Motorist did not have a seatbelt on. Passenger in car went into cardiac arrest. CPR was performed. Blairstown Ambulance was summoned. Person recovering in hospital.

Officer Choe was involved in both life-saving episodes. Officer Herzer was involved in one. Mr. Lance suggested acknowledging this at the July meeting.

Historic Preservation - Mr. Lance said the Historic Preservation Committee will have a tent at the July 4th Celebration at Footbridge Park. He explained 7/4/17 is the 140th Anniversary of the railroad coming to Blairstown. He noted prior to the railway, the only means of transportation was horse & buggy. The stone for the railway will be on display.

Mr. Lance also reported that on 10/28/17 the Historic Preservation Committee will conduct walking tours at Cedar Ridge Cemetery that will feature visits to gravesites of some prominent Blairstown residents.

Gorab / Jones Farm - Mr. Lance explained that in 2012 the CFO got quotes for ripping down the barns, vintage 1955. Low bid was \$35,000. from Grinnell, Sparta, who would grind up the concrete and remove everything. The estimate did not include the Quonset building being used by DPW. The State was contacted to share cost. They responded negatively but said it is okay to rip it down at Blairstown's expense. Mr. Lance feels quotes should be sought again to remove this eyesore. He can provide the CFO with those past figures.

Mr. Benbrook pointed out that Recycling Credit maybe possible which will add to the Clean Communities money Blairstown is provided. He recommended noting in the quote, that Blairstown wants the Contractor aware, since there is a lot of tonnage. Finally, he said it will help reduce the cost of the project.

The Township Committee all supported this project.

COMMITTEE MEMBER VAN VALKENBURG

Mrs. Van Valkenburg summoned Joel Mc Green to address Open Space.

OPEN SPACE

Ardia Property - Joel McGreen stated not much is happening on the Ardia property. The issue is Estate Taxes before the property can be closed on.

Nonnemacher Farm - Mr. McGreen made an offer in January. He sent a follow-up e-mail one month ago and phoned the attorney. He has not yet heard anything.

Kostenbader Estate - Mr. McGreen said the Township Committee is familiar with what is going on.

He declared the Open Preserved Land in Blairstown poster is still on the floor in the Lobby of Town Hall. He noted it has been there over 1 year.

Mr. McGreen revealed a new project. The Ridge and Valley Project consists of roughly 18 acres which is adjacent to 140 acres that R & V purchased 7 years ago. It has Yards Creek on it. It is a Category #1 stream, needing all kinds of protection. Originally it was \$65,000. He said based on what the protection is for a Category #1, it was appraised as a single lot. Recently it was updated to \$67,000. with surveys, and an environmental assessment. He noted, with an appraisal of \$13,000. on top of the \$67,000. and it is an \$80,000. project.

He explained Ridge & Valley & V has a grant for 1/2 of that with Green Acres. He is asking if Blairstown would provide the additional \$40,000. to purchase it. All agreed this is a beautiful property. Mr. Lance revealed it has been called "Enchanted Forest". It is currently owned by the McConnell family. They still desire to preserve it and approached Ridge & Valley.

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve up to \$40,000., for 18 acres known as Hemlock Ravine, and it was seconded by Mrs. Dalton.

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

Century Link Improved Internet Service - Mrs. Van Valkenburg and Mr. Lance attended meetings at NWRHS with Century Link. The towns are getting together about lack of coverage. Mayor Jim Perry, from Hardwick, is heading it up. She pointed out on Mt. Hermon Rd., the beginning and end have coverage but there is no coverage in the middle. The next meeting re: this, is on 6/28th, which is a day meeting in Trenton.

Sidewalks on Main Street - Mrs. Van Valkenburg noted the situation is getting worse. Curb bricks are falling in a lot of places. She asked, "Can DPW do this as a project"? She suggested perhaps college kids in town could be hired to reset them. The Mayor pointed out proximity of water meters in some places. He noted they are on a sand base, to which Mrs. Van Valkenburg suggested lifting the bricks up and resetting them. Mr. Lance recommended that it be done sections at a time. He then said, "Have them reset. It's a mess"!

Wall on Main St. (by Health Food Store)- Mrs. Van Valkenburg requested the Zoning Officer or Construction Dept. approach the owner about installing a railing. She noted, in real estate, it is required, that anything over 18" requires a railing. She is concerned about its safety for upcoming events. Mayor Shoemaker pointed out that ownership of that property is questionable. It couldn't be determined if the Township is the property-owner, or if the County owns the property. He stated, most of the property is Blair Academy's but that area is right on the County road. Mr. Avery admitted when the wall was done-over by BEC, they wanted to put in a railing but ran into some unresolved liability issues. Mayor Shoemaker asked Mr. Benbrook to look into an agreement between all the parties so a railing can be constructed there.

Ice Skating Rink - Mrs. Van Valkenburg and Pat Sagan are meeting tomorrow with Kevin and Suzanne to convince them to do the ice skating rink again.

Tax Collection – 3rd & 4th Qtr. - Mrs. Van Valkenburg announced for the 3rd and 4th Quarters there will be no collection with the Tax Collector here on that **FRIDAY**. (the first 2 **FRIDAYS** In **August**, and the first 2 **FRIDAYS** in **November**). She said hopefully, this info will be provided with the tax notices. It will be on the website also.

MAYOR SHOEMAKER

Mayor Shoemaker noted that David Diehl, Zoning Officer, has been following up on some things. He is sending a Violation Notice to company which constructed the solar panels at NWRHS re: dead shrubs. The Mayor reminded the Superintendent that new trees need to be planted and she said that it would be taken care of.

Kostenbader Property - Mayor Shoemaker said David Diehl has sent a letter to the Estate, stating there are violations for junkyards, maintenance of regulated and non-inspected vehicles etc. and they have until June 22nd to fix this eyesore or will be referred to Municipal Court.

JCP&L Inspection of Vegetation Management Activities - Mayor Shoemaker reported that he received notification from JCP&L stating they will be doing an extension of vegetation management activities over the course of 2017. Trimming and removal of vegetation in ROW and aerial treatment are planned.

Mayor Shoemaker also reported that a citizen sent an e-mail voicing concern about having 2 superintendents, 1 NWRHS, and 1 for Elementary School. Mayor Shoemaker explained that must be discussed with the School Board. He stated it is not a Township Committee matter.

FROM THE PUBLIC

Rosalie Murray - noted there were accidents at Rt. 94 & Lambert Rd. before the green arrow was in place. She reviewed that the Acme exit was intended for trucks only, not for cars. Mayor Shoemaker noted the height barrier has been removed. She said there was opposition to trucks using Buchanan Rd. She suggested trucks going out the back way with Rt. 94 opening being used for truck entrance only.

Harold Price, Alice Ct., has 3 things to discuss:

Jones Farm - He noted there is a lot of asbestos in the ceiling. He noted the wood is stick lumber.

Main St. Wall & Railing – Mr. Price stated when he was Township Committee member in 2015, a Title Search was done which cost about \$700. Mrs. Van Valkenburg says it was not conclusive. She stated this is a danger issue and the Township could be in a lawsuit.

Catch Basins –Mr. Price questioned if seasonal help has been hired for mowing thus enabling DPW to go out and fix these basins. Mrs. Dalton responded 2 seasonal employees have been hired to mow.

Gladys Bellott, 103 Union Brick Rd. - inquired about 83 Union Brick Rd. Mr. Lance noted in the Health Dept. Report, the Court gave them 45 days. He declared June 19th is the end of the 45 day period. He explained if it is not cleaned up, charges will be pressed. Mrs. Bellott announced a carload of junk was just brought in there. She stated this has been occurring for 7 years. She said it devaluated property values.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no further comments from the public, Mr. Lance made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mrs. Dalton. All members voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:12 pm.

Submitted by:

Marion C. Spriggs,
Deputy Clerk