

WEST AMWELL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
February 1, 2023
Regular Meeting – 7:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER AND STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

The regularly scheduled meeting of the West Amwell Township Committee was called to order at 7:30 PM. Present were Mayor Gary Hoyer, Deputy Mayor Stephen Bergenfeld Committee Members James Cally, John Dale and Meghan Hudson along with Township Clerk Maria Andrews.

Mayor Hoyer announced that this meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting was faxed to the Hunterdon County Democrat and Trenton Times on January 11, 2023, was posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building on that date and has remained continuously posted as required under the Statute. A copy of this notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the office of the Township Clerk.

FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Hoyer led those in attendance in the pledge to the nation's flag.

AGENDA REVIEW BY TOWNSHIP CLERK

Clerk Andrews noted the 1/31/23 bill list will be added under Administrative Reports for the Treasurer.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were made:

- 2023 Dog License Renewals were due in by January 31st – Late Fees Now Apply
- Kindly Turn Cell Phones Off During the Meeting

PRESENTATION OF MINUTES

A motion by Bergenfeld, seconded by Dale to approve the 1/18/23 regular and closed session meeting minutes with no revisions noted was unanimously approved by voice vote.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC/TOPICS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Mayor Hoyer opened the floor to public comment.

Emily Deadwyler of 107 Snyderstown Road in East Amwell came forward and inquired as to when Closed Session minutes will be available. She also polled each Committee Member asking if they were aware of any pending cannabis cultivation facility applications and if they had any interest in the Route 31 Redevelopment area. It was noted for the record that all Township Committee Members said no to both questions. Ms. Deadwyler then asked Deputy Mayor Bergenfeld what his interest is in the Pine Creek, LLC. He stated that it is a private LLC which he created and never did anything with.

Seeing no other members of the public come forward, Mayor Hoyer closed the floor to public comment.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution #31-2023: Allowing the Fire Chief to Sign Off on Mutual Aid Fire Fighting Agreements

There was some brief discussion on possibly limiting the agreements to surrounding municipalities with Deputy Mayor Bergenfeld suggesting a list of potential townships with whom agreements might be made, be included in the Resolution. OEM Director Harry Heller spoke up from the public commenting that he didn't believe this was a good idea because it would essentially tie the Fire Chief's hands.

Deputy Mayor Bergenfeld suggested the Resolution be tabled so he could speak with Fire Chief Ent.

It was noted for the record that Resolution #31-2023 will be listed on the Committee's 2/15/23 agenda.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Reports by Department Heads

DPW Director Ryan Rollero and Recycling Depot Manager Tommy Carom were present. They provided an update on the solid waste and recycling totals for 2022 highlighting the following details:

- 222.88 tons of solid waste was collected
- 117.04 tons of dual-stream recycling was collected
- 58.71 tons on co-mingled recycling was collected
- 339 trash permits were sold last year – generating \$67,000 in revenue
- Each household averages about 25 pounds of garbage per week
- The solid waste costs were \$38,656.13 in 2022
- The recycling costs were \$30,385.96 in 2022

They also spoke about the new trash permitting system they intend to use for this year and showed a sample permit generated through the Edmunds software. There was some discussion on whether or not the \$200 permit fee will stay the same or increase slightly to compensate for the expected increase in tipping fees when the current roll off container contract comes up for BID. No determination was made on what the final cost for the 2023 permits will be.

Recycling Depot Manager Carom asked about holding a clean-up day on Saturday, April 22, 2023 which is also Earth Day! It was noted for the record that the Committee was in support of the event to be held on Earth Day.

Lastly, Director Rollero indicated he would like to amend the road opening forms to allow for the existing \$500 escrow to become a non-refundable \$500 fee so that the Township doesn't have to produce invoices and process refunds. He commented the process would be more efficient and noted that it is usually utility companies (*not residents*) requesting road openings, so the fee shouldn't be an issue. It was noted for the record that the Committee agreed with the suggested \$500 non-refundable fee.

Committeeman Cally asked about the brush pile that had been chipped. Director Rollero stated L&S Contracting and Recycling did a terrific job and noted the work was paid through grant funding. He explained they were here on 1/2/23 and chipped 2500 cubic yards with their tub grinder. Committeeman Cally suggested the Township do a Proclamation expressing gratitude for their efficient work at a great rate. Director Rollero commented now that NJDEP has reassigned West Amwell to a "Tier A" municipality, the brush pile is required to be chipped every 6 months.

Committeeman Cally also asked about the County tree cutting service. Director Rollero explained that the County has contracted with Rich's Tree Cutting Service out of South Plainfield for tree work scheduled by the day which apparently costs \$275 per hour for a 3 person crew. Mayor Hoyer commented that he would like to look into how this program might be used to assist residents. Deputy Mayor Bergenfeld clarified that the service is for Township properties, not residential ones.

OEM Director Harry Heller came forward and noted that since the last meeting the Township has received \$85,116 in FEMA funding for the work on the Rocktown-Lambertville Road project. He also updated the Committee on the Stymiest Road repairs noting the Township Engineer is working with the FEMA Engineer, however, everyone is waiting on the VEOLA water company Engineer to design an access for Stymiest Road.

INTRODUCTION/PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCES

Introduction: Ordinance 01, 2023 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WEST AMWELL, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, RENAMING ROCK ROAD WEST EXTENSION AS ROCK ROAD WEST AND RENAMING ROCK ROAD WEST FROM THE POINT OF THE CURRENT INTERSECTION OF ROCK ROAD WEST WITH ROCK ROAD WEST EXTENSION TO THE WESTERLY TERMINUS OF ROCK ROAD WEST AS OLD ROCK ROAD, PUSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40:67-1(K)

Mayor Hoyer read Ordinance 01, 2023 by title.

ORDINANCE 01, 2023

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WEST AMWELL, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, RENAMING ROCK ROAD WEST EXTENSION AS ROCK ROAD WEST, AND RENAMING ROCK ROAD WEST FROM THE POINT OF THE CURRENT INTERSECTION OF ROCK ROAD WEST WITH ROCK ROAD WEST EXTENSION TO THE WESTERLY TERMINUS OF ROCK ROAD WEST AS OLD ROCK ROAD, PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40:67-1(k)

Minutes: 2/1/23

WHEREAS, Rock Road West Extension is a roadway that is intended to be a direct continuation of Rock Road West; and

WHEREAS, as a matter of public safety, the Township Committee of the Township of West Amwell believes it is in the best interest of the residents of the Township to rename Rock Road West Extension, so that drivers and emergency responders may more easily identify Rock Road West Extension as a point of access to and the intended continuation of Rock Road West; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:23-50, "One correct name shall be used for each street in a municipality and where two separate and noncontiguous streets within a municipality have the exact same name, a distinctive prefix or suffix shall be assigned to distinguish the streets, or a new name shall be assigned to one street."; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:23-50, Rock Road West from the point of the current intersection of Rock Road West with Rock Road West Extension to the westerly terminus of Rock Road West must also be renamed to distinguish the street from the renamed Rock Road West Extension; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:67-1(k) the governing body has the power and authority to provide for the naming and the changing of the names of streets and highways as well as the erection of signs thereon.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Committee of the Township of West Amwell, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that Rock Road West Extension and Rock Road West be renamed as follows: Rock Road West Extension is hereby renamed as Rock Road West; and Rock Road West from the point of the current intersection of Rock Road West with Rock Road West Extension to the westerly terminus of Rock Road West is hereby renamed as Old Rock Road.

ATTEST:

Maria Andrews, Township Clerk, RMC

Gary Hoyer, Mayor

A motion by Hudson, seconded by Dale to introduce Ordinance 01, 2023 upon first reading was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Bergenfeld: Yes, Cally: Yes, Dale: Yes, Hudson: Yes, Hoyer: Yes

It was noted for the record that the public hearing on Ordinance 01, 2023 will be listed on the Township Committee's 3/1/23 agenda.

Mayor Hoyer commented that he is still reviewing the safety concerns brought up by Mr. Beaumont at previous meetings.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Establishing Office Hours for Township Committee Members

Deputy Mayor Bergenfeld commented that he is not available to hold office hours on Saturdays. Committeewoman Hudson stated she would cover if needed. Mayor Hoyer asked everyone to review the proposed schedule and let Clerk Andrews know if they had any issues. It was noted for the record that the final schedule will be listed on the next agenda for approval.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion: Hell of Hunterdon Bicycle Ride – Sunday March 26, 2023

It was noted for the record that the Committee took no issue with the annually scheduled bicycle event.

Discussion: Email from C. Lemming, re: Posting of Weight Limit Signage on Hewitt Road

There was some discussion on the request from Ms. Lemming with the Committee considering a "No Thru Truck Traffic" sign on Route 518 and Hewitt Road. DPW Director Rollero expressed concern over enforcement and suggested the Township Engineer and Police Department provide input. He commented on the unintended consequences of posting some roads and not all, noting it should be done through ordinance. It was noted for the record that the Committee requested Director Rollero to install "No Thru Truck Traffic" signage at the intersection of Hewitt Road and County Route 518.

Minutes: 2/1/23

Jean Yarrow of 237 Goat Hill Road spoke up from the public and remarked on all of the large trucks throughout the township that seem to be working on the powerlines.

Acknowledgement: SHRSB Band Parents Association – 50/50 Raffle & Tricky Tray: 3/11/23

It was noted for the record that the Committee took no issue with the raffles.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Open Space: No report was given.
- B. Environmental: No report was given.
- C. Ag Advisory: The Committee approved the 9/27/22 minutes for posting.
- D. Finance Committee: No report given.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mayor Hoyer opened the floor to public comment.

Dave Beaumont of 205 Rock Road West came forward and thanked DPW Director Rollero and Recycling Depot Manager Carom for doing a great job. He then thanked the Committee for the Rock Road West Ordinance. Mr. Beaumont suggested other items to be considered such as stop signs and 5 mph arrow signage as well as sequential arrows along the road.

Mr. Beaumont also asked for updates on the equalized valuation appeal and the possible school de-regionalization lawsuit. He remarked that the 2023 property assessments are unchanged because the annual re-assessment was never done. He explained this changes the number of home sales that will be reviewed for the 2024 valuation and could potentially raise the school tax ratio for 2024-2025.

OEM Director Heller suggested the solid waste and recycling totals be posted on the website. DPW Director Rollero stated they will be posted at the County SWAC meeting next week. Mr. Beaumont suggested a news item be posted on the website in an effort to inspire more residents to use the recycling depot.

Seeing no other members of the public come forward, a motion was made by Cally and seconded by Bergenfeld to close the floor to public comment. The motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.

ADMINISTRATIVE

A motion by Cally, seconded by Dale to approve the 1/24/23 and 1/31/23 bill lists was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Bergenfeld: Yes, Cally: Yes, Dale: Yes, Hudson: Yes, Hoyer: Yes

CORRESPONDENCE

It was noted for the record that the Committee ordered the correspondence listed on the agenda to be filed.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion by Bergenfeld, seconded by Hudson to adjourn the meeting was unanimously approved by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Maria Andrews, Township Clerk, RMC

Approved: 2/15/23