

WEST AMWELL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

May 3, 2017 - 7:30 p.m.

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

The regular meeting of the West Amwell Township Committee was called to order at 7:35 p.m. Present were Mayor John Dale, Deputy Mayor Stephen Bergenfeld, Committeeman Zachary T. Rich, James Cally, Gary Hoyer (arrived at 7:50), Clerk Lora Olsen and Attorney Philip J. Faherty III. Also in attendance were Harry Heller, Jeff Ent, Carolyn Murphy, David Gill, Cathy Urbanski, Martha Gulick, and Hal Shute

Mayor Dale announced that this meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting was included in the Resolution faxed to the Hunterdon County Democrat and Trenton Times on January 2, 2017, was posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building on said 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 Municipal Clerk.

FLAG SALUTE

The mayor led those in attendance in the pledge to the nation's flag.

AGENDA REVIEW BY TOWNSHIP CLERK

The following items were added: 10.C OPRA Request; 11.I. ACO Reimbursement

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Well Water Testing for Township Residents, Collection Kits Available for Purchase on May 20th 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Municipal Building, see Website for Further Details
- Last Day to Register for June Primary Election is May 16th
- County Ident-a-Shred Days @ Court House, 9 a.m. to Noon on May 6, Sept 9, Oct 7, Nov 4 (County residents only; No Businesses; 10 Box Limit)
- Please Come to the Table if You Wish to Address the Committee
- Kindly Turn Cell Phones Off During Meeting

PRESENTATION OF MINUTES

A motion by Cally, seconded by Hoyer to approve the April 19, 2017 Regular meeting minutes with no revisions noted was approved with Rich and Bergenfeld abstaining.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC/TOPIC NOT ON THE AGENDA

Martha Gulick, an owner of a preserved farm on Gulick Road, came forward. Two public safety concerns were relayed, as the road is used ever more frequently as a cut-thru. The first was for consideration of a weight limit and tractor trailer ban on the road due to its narrow width. The second was for placement of a speed control sign on Gulick Road; use of radar; and more police enforcement as tickets would be a deterrent. Ms. Gulick is happy to offer parking room for police to help in this regard. The third item on the list involved the amount of litter—fast food, beer, liquor, garbage, etc.—that is dumped along the road. She also reported that tires and grass clippings are also being dumped on her property.

In response to the foregoing, the Road Supervisor Rollero will be requested to post 'no trucks' signs; Captain Bartzak will be contacted concerning the speed control sign and enforcement; and, a suggestion made that the judge assign offenders community service hours for litter pickup.

Harry Heller relayed that the New Jersey State Emergency Medical Council will be holding their mid-year convention at South Hunterdon on Sunday at 10 a.m. An invitation was extended for the mayor and/or a member of the governing body to stop in and say hi.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION(S) **Reports by Department Heads**

OEM Director Harry Heller relayed that there is still no generator at the fire house.

Assessor David Gill presented a folder containing information for the Committee's review. Items included the State Official Sales Ratio Study for West Amwell, 2008 through 2017; an application for the Annual Reassessment Program that has been filed with the County; a chart of showing tax rate breakdowns, 2008 through 2017, together with ratable amounts; and, a

booklet of filed tax appeals. A reassessment inspection list of 300 properties, including those noted as having work done without permits, will be provided every two weeks with a final report given to both the Township Committee and Construction department. At that point a decision can be made by the Township Committee as to whether permits be obtained and/or fines levied.

Fire Chief Jeff Ent reported that there was a meeting with the solar representative to review the operation; that Monday's fire drill involved acquainting members with the solar installation; new tires were delivered for two trucks for installation next week; the tires being replaced will be used by the DPW as spares as, although of low mileages, they are only considered good for seven years; the flag pole at the 518 facility has been re-set; the siren has been removed because it is no longer in service; and, a backup generator has been installed to run the radios, charge the trucks; and, allow for people at both stations. However, there is still no generator up and running at the main fire house. A brief exchange ensued about the latter.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE AND/OR PUBLIC HEARING

None

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Open Space

- *Project Status Updates:* Hal Shute reported that Holcombe closed on May 2nd in the Holcombe dining room. County Counsel Aaron Coulton came down and a two year odyssey was concluded. This is the third parcel preserved by the Holcombe family. This information will be shared with the Community Communications group for dissemination. The market value and appraisals have been shared with the Runkle family for their consideration. Mr. Shute is scheduled to meet with them again on Friday. He noted that the State averaged the two appraisals. Although lower than expected, easement values are now approximately the same as those of 20 years ago.

Pipeline Committee

- *Update on the pipeline:* Cathy Urbanski relayed that the West Amwell Citizens Against the Pipeline met on April 20th; expressed appreciation to the governing body for the use of the room; and, noted that those in attendance included Mayor Dale, Gary Hoyer and Rob Tomenchok. She advised that that DEP has told PennEast to get their act together in that there are lots of un-surveyed properties; that permission and signatures of everyone along the route that is affected has to be received; and, if not, PennEast has to start over. The Pennsylvania Army Corps of Engineers has said basically the same thing.

- *Letter to FERC concerning the DEIS and the final EIS:* Mrs. Urbanski prepared a letter, with help from Mike Spille, in response to the EIS, noting that FERC didn't address comments that were previously provided in this latest document. All members of the Township Committee agreed to have their names added to the letter. Updated copy will be prepared and sent to the Clerk for filing with FERC.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Possible Appointments – No appointments were made. Mr. Rich inquired about the citizen leadership form. He was advised that this is State mandated form that's been in use for several years now and is for residents who wish to be considered for appointment to committees and/or boards.

Updates – 1) The **construction clearance** item was held. 2) Items from the vendor agreement as to coordination was noted concerning the **fire house generator**. The mayor will contact Mr. Burr. 3) Attorney Faherty relayed that two calls have been placed to Mr. Warford following the April 17th deadline concerning **Block 46 Lots, 5, 6, 7**. No response has been received. Direction was given for the check to be returned to Mr. Warford. 4) ACO Carolyn Murphy spoke to issues with her hiring and appointments; the need to follow existing statutes in exercising her duties; that she has paid bills out of pocket due to no designated **animal impoundment** or vet facilities; and, expressed frustration over being shuffled around and not getting answers. Attorney Faherty advised that Lambertville is the lead on this shared service and that Ms. Murphy is employed by Lambertville, not West Amwell. The holding facility that was previously offered has backed out; there's a no cost offer from Tabby's place for cats; and, a new veterinarian office is due to open in Stockton that might work for both a holding place for dogs and vet service. Ms. Murphy advised that she uses her own vehicle, paid for her uniforms and has her own equipment. She also relayed a recent incident with a raccoon whereby the head needed to be removed after being killed by a resident's dogs. The animal tested positive for rabies. Questioned as to what happens to large animals, Ms. Murphy advised that horses fall under the Department of Agriculture, with wild animals such as coyotes under Fish &

Wildlife. An appointment to Animal Control Investigator (ACI) is sought so that animal cruelty under Title 8 can be undertaken. The limitations of the role were relayed and she explained that the two municipalities shared in the cost of the coursework. Attorney Faherty will research the appointments involved and is to review proposed contracts with Tabby's Place and the Stockton vet for the next meeting. 5) As to **cost saving measures**, Mr. Dale inquired as to any response from the State and was advised in the negative. He further relayed that he and Mr. Shute have identified savings over the amount proposed for the June 1st deadline.

OPRA – Clerk Olsen advised that in response to a recent governing body decision concerning destruction of meeting tapes, an OPRA has been received for copies.

NEW BUSINESS

Possible ACI Appointment Resolution - Held

SHREC Community Energy Aggregation Program – The current aggregation program benefiting the residents of Lambertville and West Amwell expires in December. Lambertville is the lead on this program and, as it has reaped positive results as to savings, another round to benefit the residents of the two communities is projected. A new ordinance is needed in order to move forward. Introduction of same will be an agenda item for the May 17th meeting.

State Purchase Resolutions to Provide for Road Materials – Road Supervisor Rollero is most interested in pursuing this option for road materials.

- Amending Resolution #59-2017 to Add Vendor:

RESOLUTION # 72-2017

Amending RESOLUTION #59-2017

BE IT RESOLVED that RESOLUTION #59-2017 Authorizing Contracts with Certain Approved State Contract Vendors for Contracting Units Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40a:11-12A is hereby amended to provide for the purchase road materials (asphalt) for the West Amwell Township DPW as follows:

Referenced State Contract Vendors		
<u>Commodity/Service</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>State Contract #</u>
I-2 Base	Stavola	14-X-23009
I-5 Blacktop	Flemington	

The Resolution was unanimously approved on motion by Cally, seconded by Bergenfeld.

- Authorizing Purchase on State Contract:

RESOLUTION #73-2017

WHEREAS, there exists a need to purchase up to 500 tons of I-2 base and I-5 blacktop for the DPW of the Township of West Amwell, in the County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, these commodities can be purchased through State Contract #14-X-23009; and

WHEREAS the CFO has certified to the Township Clerk that funds are available in the 2017 Budget; and

WHEREAS, public bids are not required when the purchase is under a state contract in accordance with 40A:11-12 of the Local Public Contracts Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of West Amwell, in the County of Hunterdon that the CFO is hereby authorized and directed to approve and forward a Purchase Requisition to Stavola for the purchase of I-2 and I-5 asphalt materials

The Resolution was unanimously approved on motion by Cally, seconded by Bergenfeld.

Student Parking & Construction Office – Mr. Cally relayed concerns expressed at a recent recycling meeting about potential liability to the municipality and questioned how to control the number of students using the parking lot and walking to the high school. Whether there should be a permit, complete with insurance and license information on file was questioned. A fee was not supported nor was the extra work that would be involved for the staff. A recommendation from the school concerning the parking situation was suggested. As for the construction move

and having parking available for customers, signs will be made and posted.

Energy Audit – A similar audit was performed in 2011. The mayor advised that the audit is free and the Clean Energy program will pay 70% of the cost of the improvements. A resolution to participate is required. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Municipal Depot

- *Access*: Discussion centered on a gate and the best place for its installation. Although there was agreement as to keeping the mulch area available, it was relayed that commercial entities are also using it. Also mentioned was the illegal dumping taking place at the garbage area and the possibility of making a barricade for metal as an Eagle Scout project. The need for better signs and enforcement was noted.

- *Cameras*: If these are to be employed for enforcement purposes, an investment in a good one was advanced. A recommendation from Corporal Sellner will be requested.

Resolution for National Police Officer Week – Corporal Vanselow requested that the following resolution be presented to the governing body for their support.

RESOLUTION #74-2017

WHEREAS May 14th through 20th is National Police Officer Week; and

WHEREAS, May 15th is "Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Day" as so legislated by the federal government; and

WHEREAS, the people of West Amwell hold their police officers in great esteem and value their local police force as an essential part of their community; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this designation is to generate increased public support for the law enforcement profession by permanently recording and appropriately commemorating the service and sacrifice of law enforcement officers and to provide information that will help promote law enforcement safety; and

WHEREAS, this legislation requires that all American flags be lowered to half-staff on May 15th in commemoration of this service and sacrifice

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the West Amwell Township Committee that the week of May 14th through 20th is hereby declared as National Police Officer Week in West Amwell Township; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all municipal flags be lowered to half staff on Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Day on May 15th

The Resolution was unanimously approved on motion by Bergenfeld, seconded by Cally.

West Amwell Fire Company –

- *Junior Membership Application*: The application for Nick Godown was unanimously approved on motion by Cally, with Rich offering the second.

- *New Firefighter Membership Application*: Chief Ent advised that Thaddeus Kwasnik is a member of the Amwell Valley Fire Company but lives in the West Amwell service area, which prompted his decision to join here. Mr. Kwasnik is already a trained fireman. Cally motioned to approve the application and Hoyer seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

ACO Reimbursement – Reimbursement for payments made to Hopewell Veterinary Group (\$50.00-rabies tissue sample for State) and VSEC-Levittown (\$153.64-euthanasia for injured stray cat) by ACO Carolyn Murphy were unanimously approved on motion by Bergenfeld and seconded by Cally.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mr. Bergenfeld addressed the West Amwell tree house and his recommendation to Assessor Gill to assess it. He has also spoken with Chris Rose who advised that the State does not require a permit for tree houses but that the installation of electric and a sleeping area does. The Construction office is looking at both zoning and electric issues.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Court – The anticipated March 2017 monthly report was not received.

Police – The April 2017 Monthly Report showing 1217 incidents, 226 summonses and 4 special complaints was received. Forty six (46) summonses were issued in conjunction with the shared service with East Amwell.

Website Review – Mr. Cally relayed that some committee members as listed are out of date. Rosters will be checked.

The report as received was accepted without further comment.

CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence as listed on the Agenda was ordered filed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:26 p.m. on motion from Bergenfeld.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora Olsen, RMC
Township Clerk

APPROVED: May 17, 2017