

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN  
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
Wednesday, October 10, 2012, 7:15 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 Anderson. Those present were Mr. Lance, Mr. Seal, Mr. Shoemaker, and Mayor Anderson. Also present were Township Attorney Robert Benbrook and Clerk Pizzaia. Mr. Mach was absent.

**FLAG SALUTE**

The flag salute was conducted.

**SUNSHINE STATEMENT**

Mayor Anderson 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.

**CLOSED SESSION –Contracts/Public Safety**

Mr. Lance made a motion to go into Closed Session, which was seconded by Mr. Shoemaker.

Roll call vote:            AYE – Lance, Seal, Shoemaker, Anderson  
                                     ABSENT – Mach

WHEREAS, the Blairstown Township Committee needs to discuss matters relating to the issue as listed above; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee believes it to be in the best interest of the public to discuss this matter in Closed Session;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Blairstown, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that it shall meet in Closed Session to discuss only the subject mentioned above, the results of which may be made public immediately thereafter or at a later date.

Dated: October 10, 2012

Attest:

Phyllis E. Pizzaia, RMC  
Municipal Clerk

## **RESULTS OF CLOSED SESSION**

Mr. Shoemaker made a motion to come out of Closed Session, which was seconded by Mr. Seal, with all members in favor.

Mayor Anderson explained that a shared services agreement between Blirstown Township and Hardwick Township for fire protection services was discussed in Closed Session. Mayor Anderson introduced Mayor James Perry, who was instrumental in coming to an agreement on this issue.

Mayor Anderson said the agreement is for a five (5) year period, with Hardwick paying approximately \$15,000.00 per year for fire service from Blirstown Hose Company No. 1. He thanked Committeeman Mach and Committeeman Shoemaker for their assistance in bringing this about.

Mr. Shoemaker made a motion to authorize the mayor to execute a shared services agreement between Blirstown Township, Hardwick Township, and Blirstown Hose Company No. 1, as drafted by the Hardwick Township attorney, with modifications as made by Mr. Benbrook. The primary modification is a change in the area of Hardwick Township to be covered by Blirstown Hose Company No. 1. Mr. Seal seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:            AYE – Lance, Seal, Shoemaker, Anderson  
                                  ABSENT – Mach

Mayor Perry thanked the Committee and the Fire Department for working with Hardwick to approve this agreement. He said that one benefit for Hardwick is that they will now be eligible to apply for grants.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT – up to 5 speakers/3 minutes each**

Breanna Johnson, Vail Road, and MOMs Club Representative, invited the Committee to the Design Day Party at the Blirstown Elementary School at 6:30 pm on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. The formal design of the Sycamore Park Playground will be unveiled at this time.

Chris and Brenda Kehoe, Four Corners Road, asked the Committee about a resolution from years ago that dealt with the homeowner maintaining the portion of a township right-of-way that the Kehoe's use for their driveway. Mr. Benbrook said that Four Corners Road beyond the cul-de-sac is a township road, but is not maintained by the township. Mr. Benbrook said that this is perfectly lawful and that the township is not obligated to maintain it.

Mr. Benbrook explained that many years ago, an application was made to the Board of Adjustment to construct a driveway on the township right-of-way. The applicant had to prove that use of this right-of-way would be a means for the property owner to gain access to the proposed house, and that it would be adequate for emergency vehicles to gain access to the house. Permission to construct the driveway on the township right-of-way was granted. Mr. Benbrook emphasized that the variance only states that a building permit can be issued. The driveway in question is a private driveway and the Board of Adjustment would have no jurisdiction to direct the township to maintain it.

Mr. Benbrook further stated that since this is a public right-of-way, anyone can use it. He also said that the Zoning Board could not have restricted access to the public in a resolution.

Mr. Kehoe asked to see a copy of the resolution from the Board of Adjustment. Mr. Benbrook suggested that the Kehoe's file an OPRA request with the Municipal Clerk for a copy of the resolution.

At 7:50 pm, Mr. Benbrook excused himself from the meeting.

Kevin Doell, Heller Hill Road resident and Environmental Commission Chair, said that the Environmental Commission will be holding a residential energy forum on November 7<sup>th</sup> at the Catherine Dickson Hofman Library. Experts will be giving information on how to modernize and save energy in the home. Zoning information and rebate information will be available. The meeting is open to the public.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VOLUNTEER GROUPS**

Mayor Anderson said that tonight the Township Committee will be honoring the many volunteers in Blirstown Township who make our community a special place to live.

Since there are so many volunteers in Blirstown who do so much, Mayor Anderson said that he is sure that some group or individual was forgotten. For this volunteer, he awarded a certificate to the Silent/Unknown Volunteer.

Mayor Anderson presented certificates to the following representatives of volunteer groups:

Scott Durllester, Blirstown Ambulance Corps  
Mike Sullivan and Darren Occhuzzo, Blirstown Hose Company No. 1  
Debra Waldron, Land Use Board  
Joel McGreen, Open Space Committee  
Doug Pitchell, Historic Preservation Committee  
Kevin Doell, Environmental Commission  
Pat Kolb, Recreation Committee  
Cheryl Mangine, North Warren Garden Club  
Anita Ardia, Senior Citizens Advisory Committee  
Joe Van Valkenburg, Blirstown Youth Softball

The following group representatives were not present to receive their certificates:

Dave Bodgan, North Warren Midget Football  
Steve Hervatic, North Warren Little League  
Denise Lague, Blirstown Soccer

Mayor Anderson said that among the many volunteers, one individual stands out as having served on many boards throughout the years. Currently, she serves on the Land Use Board, the Environmental Commission, the Open Space Committee and the Historic Preservation Committee. She also serves residents through volunteer work associated with her certification in social work.

Mayor Anderson asked Barbara Green to come forward to accept her certificate, honoring her for her exceptional volunteerism. Barbara Green thanked the Committee for this honor. Mayor Anderson called for a 20 minute break for the volunteers and audience to have refreshments in honor of the volunteers, after which the meeting resumed.

## **MINUTES**

September 12, 2012 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Seal made a motion to approve the September 12<sup>th</sup> minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Shoemaker.

Roll call vote:            AYE – Lance, Seal, Shoemaker, Anderson  
                                 ABSENT - Mach

### **ORDINANCE 2012 – 05    AN ORDINANCE REPEALING CHAPTER 177 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN ENTITLED “TOWING” AND ENACTING A NEW CHAPTER 177 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN ENTITLED “TOWING”    Adoption, Second Reading**

#### **Committee Discussion**

Mr. Lance said that this ordinance basically amends the fees to be charged by the towing companies.

#### **Public Hearing    Open/Close**

Mayor Anderson opened the public hearing. As there were no comments or questions from the public, Mayor Anderson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Lance made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2012 – 05 on second reading, which was seconded by Mr. Shoemaker.

Roll call vote:            AYE – Lance, Seal, Shoemaker, Anderson  
                                 ABSENT - Mach

### **ORDINANCE 2012 – 06 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 29 ENTITLED “HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE”    Introduction, First Reading**

#### **Committee Discussion**

Mr. Lance explained that this amended ordinance adds three (3) alternate members to the membership of the Historic Preservation Committee. There has been a problem with attendance during the summer months, and this will help alleviate the situation.

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve Ordinance 2012 – 06 on introduction, which was seconded by Mr. Seal.

Roll call vote:            AYE – Lance, Seal, Shoemaker, Anderson  
                                 ABSENT - Mach

### **ORDINANCE 2012 – 07 AN ORDINANCE REPEALING CHAPTER 156 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN ENTITLED “SEX OFFENDERS”    Introduction, First Reading**

## Committee Discussion

Mr. Lance said that this ordinance has been declared unconstitutional. He was the proponent of this ordinance and is disappointed by the ruling, but the ordinance needs to be repealed.

Mr. Shoemaker made a motion to approve Ordinance 2012 – 07 on introduction, which was seconded by Mr. Lance.

Roll call vote:            AYE – Lance, Seal, Shoemaker, Anderson  
                                 ABSENT - Mach

## CONSENT AGENDA INCLUDING RESOLUTIONS

- 1 – R.2012-106        Authorization to Pay Bills
- 2 – R.2012-107        Redemption of Certification of Sale No. 2010-05
- 3 – R.2012-108        Authorization to Release Escrow Fees
- 4 – R.2012-109        Appointment of Emergency Management Coordinator
- 5 – R.2012-110        Appointment of Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator
- 6 – R.2012-111        Authorization to Transfer Funds
- 7 – **Application for membership in Blairstown Hose Company No. 1** – Dominic Daleo
- 8 – **Application for Blue Light Permit** – Emily R. Gleason, Blairstown Ambulance Corps

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, which was seconded by Mr. Seal.

Roll call vote:            AYE – Lance, Seal, Shoemaker, Anderson  
                                 ABSENT - Mach

## DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Clerk September Report  
Finance – September Finance and Fuel Reports  
Police Department – September Report  
Tax Collector – September Report  
Municipal Court of North Warren – August Report  
Warren County Health Department – September 7, 2012

Mr. Seal made a motion to accept the Department Reports, which was seconded by Mr. Shoemaker.

Roll call vote:            AYE – Lance, Seal, Shoemaker, Anderson  
                                 ABSENT - Mach

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- 1 –     Service Electric Cable TV –SECTV is preparing draft ordinance for franchise renewal

Mayor Anderson said that the Cable Company made a presentation at the September meeting. It appears that the agreement will be renewed for a 10 year period.

- 2 – Hazardous Obstructions at Blirstown Airport – Mr. Benbrook to contact State regarding map  
No action.
- 3 – Review of Recreation Ordinance – Fair Share Reimbursement  
No action.

**COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE** for information and possible action

- 1 – from Breanna Johnson, MOM’s Club of Blirstown Area, requesting permission to place sign at Sycamore Park

Mayor Anderson made a motion to allow the MOM’s Club to place a sign announcing the children’s playground at Sycamore Park. Mr. Shoemaker seconded the motion. Ms. Johnson said that they are requesting a sign announcing the future existence of the park, and also a second one in the form of a thermometer showing the donations received to date. Mayor Anderson and Mr. Shoemaker amended their motions to reflect approval of two (2) signs.

Roll call vote:            AYE – Lance, Seal, Shoemaker, Anderson  
                                  ABSENT - Mach

- 2 – from Joe Van Valkenburg, Blirstown Youth Softball, requesting permission to place a box trailer at Sycamore Park

After discussion of this request, the Committee felt that the size of the trailer was very large and questioned how it would look on the property. Also, the exact location of the box trailer was unclear. Mr. Shoemaker will research this and it will be discussed at the November Committee meeting.

- 3 – from Teresa Kaminski, Department of Land Preservation to Joel McGreen, Blirstown Agricultural Advisory Committee, re: County Annual PIG Submission

This is for informational purposes only and no action is required.

**GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE (See attached sheet)**

There were no questions or comments on the General Correspondence list from the public.

**FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK**

The Clerk advised that the Free Rabies Clinic will be held on December 8<sup>th</sup> from 8am to 12 noon at the Department of Public Works garage. Also, the November meeting has been changed from November 14<sup>th</sup> to November 7<sup>th</sup> due to a conflict with the NJ League of Municipalities Convention.

**FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE**

**COMMITTEEMAN LANCE**

Mr. Lance said that the Rotary Club has requested permission to hold their annual Halloween Parade. Mr. Lance outlined the parade route as described by the Rotary Club. Mr. Lance made a motion to approve the request, which was seconded by Mr. Shoemaker.

Roll call vote:            AYE – Lance, Seal, Shoemaker, Anderson  
                                 ABSENT – Mach

Mr. Lance said that there is a potentially dangerous situation using Raub Road to leave the North Warren Regional High School parking lot. Mr. Lance, in consultation with Dr. Fogelson, is suggesting making two lanes leaving the parking lot, with arrows painted on the lanes to make a left hand turn and a right hand turn. Mr. Lance and Dr. Fogelson believe that this would help alleviate the congestion and the dangerous situation. There was a discussion on whether there was enough room to legally make two lanes exiting the school. It was decided to have Ted Rodman, Township Engineer, look at the road and to report to the Committee on whether three lanes can be made at this location.

Mr. Lance said that at this time, there is approximately \$116,000 left in the reserve account for Open Space debt. Mr. Lance made a motion to move \$300,000 over to this reserve account dedicated to paying down the township's open space debt, which is approximately \$1.25 million, according to the CFO. Mayor Anderson seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:            AYE – Lance, Seal, Shoemaker, Anderson  
                                 ABSENT – Mach

With regard to State Health Benefits, the rates are up about 8.25% this year. Mr. Lance said that there are two different plans, one with a high deductible and one with a low deductible. The difference between the costs of the two plans to the township is \$833.00 per month. The coverage is the same to the employee. The only difference is a \$4,000 deductible vs. a \$1,500 deductible. Mr. Lance suggested making a reserve account for the \$4,000 and paying all medical expenses, minus the co-payment, up to \$4,000 per employee. Using the family plan, for example, the township could fill the reserve in five (5) months. The savings would be \$86,000 per year. At \$4,000 per employee, with 14 employees, the start-up cost for the reserve account would total \$56,000. Mr. Lance is bringing this up for the Committee for consideration only at this time.

Mr. Lance and Mr. Shoemaker met with Senator Oroho at the legislators' meeting on September 26<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Shoemaker added that the legislation to give refunds of energy tax monies was never going to be a reality because of the lack of appropriation of State funds to do so. However, the legislators said that they would be willing to work towards this energy monies refund next year.

#### COMMITTEEMAN SEAL

Mr. Seal is working on getting the new water meters installed. The DPW employees have been busy mowing during the summer months, but he hopes to get some of the meters installed shortly.

Mr. Seal questioned the voucher presented by the water operator to pay for a recent educational course. Mr. Lance said that the bill was not paid and that he spoke with the water operator about it.

#### COMMITTEEMAN SHOEMAKER

Mr. Shoemaker said that the lines will be painted on Mohican Road in the near future.

The water at Sycamore Park was found to have coliform in it. The system has been treated and the water will be retested on October 14<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Shoemaker said that the DPW Foreman has asked for permission to look for a temporary part-time employee to snow plow when needed. The Committee agreed to allow Mr. Stoddart to arrange for this employee.

#### MAYOR ANDERSON

Mayor Anderson announced that Nick Mohr was appointed as Emergency Management Coordinator and Calvin Inscho was appointed as Deputy Coordinator. Both gentlemen are hard workers and will be an asset to the township.

Mr. Rodman said that he has been in touch with French and Parrello Assoc. regarding the letter from the State Department of Environmental Protection stating that our wetlands permit application is deficient. French and Parrello is waiting for the completion of the archeological study on the dam in order to complete the requirements for the wetlands permit. McCabe is responsible for the archeological study and it is in progress. French and Parrello will be contacting the State to get an extension for completion of this work.

Mr. Rodman said that the grading at the old Community Center site was completed by Whitman Company. There is no additional charge for this work.

Mr. Rodman spoke about the Warren County Charitable Trust Fund grant. The township has received word that Blairstown will not get full funding for the Paulina Dam project. The grant funds will be divided among those projects that were not fully funded. Blairstown Township can ask for 35% of what was originally applied for. Mr. Mach calculates that Blairstown would be eligible to receive approximately \$80,000 in grant monies for the dam project. Mr. Mach suggested that we rewrite the grant request to apply the \$80,000 towards the historic value of the training walls of the dam. Mr. Lance made a motion to revise the grant application as described. Mr. Shoemaker seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:                    AYE – Lance, Seal, Shoemaker, Anderson  
    ABSENT – Mach

#### FROM THE PUBLIC

Anita Ardia, Dry Road, thanked Mayor Anderson for honoring the volunteers at tonight's meeting. She also wished to acknowledge the many years of volunteerism and service of Committeeman Seal.

Paul Avery, Mohican Road, also wished to thank the Committee for acknowledging the volunteers. Mr. Avery said that he was pleased that Nick Mohr was appointed as OEM Coordinator and that Mr. Mohr is an asset to the community.

Kevin Doell, Heller Hill Road, asked about the buildings on the Jones Farm and about the open space debt service. Mr. Lance said that he estimates that the total debt to be under the CFO's figure of \$1.25 million. He said to check with the CFO for an accurate figure.

With regard to the Jones Farm, Mr. Rodman said that the township received a reasonable quote to have the barns and resulting debris removed. However, there was concern about a communication from a since retired Department of Environmental Protection official who stated that work might not be approved at this site due to the presence of wood turtles. Mr. Rodman is researching potential restrictions on this site and will report back to the Committee.

Gina Trish, East Avenue, asked Mr. Seal about the new water meters and how many needed to be changed. Mr. Seal said that there are 212 metered water customers. Mrs. Trish asked about the motivation to change the meters. Mr. Seal said that it is recommended that the meters be changed every five (5) years because they tend to work slowly and not register the accurate water consumption. Mr. Seal said that the water department operates at a loss and cannot afford to lose money this way. Mrs. Trish asked when the meters were last changed, and Mr. Seal said that he believes that they were never changed. In response to Mrs. Trish's question about the cost, Mr. Seal said that each meter costs about \$100.00. Mrs. Trish asked if the meters were also being replaced at Blair Academy. Mr. Seal said that they would be replaced also.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no further comments from the public, Mr. Lance made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Shoemaker, with all members present in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Submitted by:

Phyllis E. Pizzaia, RMC  
Municipal Clerk