

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, October 9, 2013, 7:30 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 Deputy Mayor Anderson. Those present were Mr. Avery, Mr. Lance, Mr. Shoemaker and Deputy Mayor Anderson. Also present were Attorney Benbrook and Clerk Pizzaia. Mayor Mach was absent.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was conducted.

SUNSHINE STATEMENT

Deputy 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.

PUBLIC COMMENT – up to 5 speakers, 3 minutes each

Mark Slater, Birch Road, spoke to the Committee representing Blairstown Hose Company No. 1. The Hose Company has formed a Master Plan Committee, which is responsible for making long term plans regarding equipment, training, membership and mutual aid companies. Mr. Slater said that various fire organizations have made donations to the Blairstown Hose Company of hose and hose appliances. They have also received the donation of intelligence for grant writing. Mr. Slater said that the entire company is very appreciative of Mr. Shoemaker's efforts as liaison for the company.

Mr. Slater indicated that their fleet is aging and there will be a need for a new rescue pumper. The company is applying for all available FEMA and Forest Fire Service grants. The grants would require matching funds from the township.

The Township Committee requested that Mr. Slater give an estimated dollar amount for the matching funds of these grants by January so it can be discussed at budget time.

Frank Golick, Mud Pond Road, spoke about his proposed Boy Scout Project for Life Scout Rank. His project, *Fill the Trailer*, involves the collection of food and clothing to be distributed among the needy. He is requesting permission to use the township owned parking lot across from Blairstown Elementary School on November 10th for this event. There will be a collection trailer as well as tables set up for volunteers. The event will run from 8am to 6pm. Mr. Lance made a motion to approve Mr. Golick's request, which was seconded by Mr. Shoemaker. All members voted in favor.

Sal Lascari, Belcher Road, spoke on behalf of Blairstown Hose Company No. 1. Mr. Lascari informed the Committee that the Hose Company is planning to celebrate their 125th anniversary on August

23, 2014. They plan on making this a community event, having food, activities and possibly fireworks.

MINUTES

September 11, 2013 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Avery made a motion to approve the September 11, 2013 minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Shoemaker.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1 – R.2013 – 105** Authorization to Pay Bills
- 2 – R.2013 – 106** Authorization to Submit a Grant Application and Execute a Contract with the NJDOT for the Reconstruction of Sand Hill Road Project, Section 2
- 3 – R.2013 – 107** Authorizing Mayor to Sign Agreement with Nisivoccia Consulting LLC for Website Maintenance
- 4 – R.2013 – 108** Correction of Roll Back Assessment for AA/AO Billing
- 5 – Approval of Business Directional Sign** – Historic Blairstown Theatre, Inc., at corner of Route 94 and Main Street

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

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

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Clerk – September Report
Finance – September Finance and Fuel Reports
Fire Department – September Report
Police Department – September Report
Tax Collector – September Report
Municipal Court of North Warren – August Report
Warren County Health Department – September 6, 2013

Mr. Lance made a motion to accept the Department Reports, which was seconded by Mr. Avery. All members voted in favor.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- 1 – Service Electric Cable TV –SECTV is preparing draft ordinance for franchise renewal; letter sent to SECTV requesting extension of service

Mr. Benbrook reported that Service Electric Cable TV has prepared the ordinance and both parties are in the process of arranging a meeting.

COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE for information and possible action

- 1 – from Robert Van Wattering, Blairstown Rotary Club, regarding Annual Halloween Parade to be held on October 31, 2013

Mr. Shoemaker made a motion to approve the Rotary Club's request, contingent upon the Police Department's review of the parade route. Mr. Avery seconded the motion, with all members voting in favor.

- 2 – from Don Dorflinger, re: Resignation from the Blairstown Historic Preservation Committee

Mr. Lance made a motion to accept Mr. Dorflinger's resignation with regrets, which was seconded by Mr. Shoemaker.

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

- 3 – from Mayor Mach to Carol Collier, Delaware River Basin Commission, regarding flood mitigation in Blairstown's Historic Village Area

Deputy Mayor Anderson summarized Mayor Mach's letter in request for assistance in Blairstown's flooding. The Committee was in agreement that Mayor Mach's letter was well written expressing the township's concerns.

- 4 – from Gina Trish, re: Revised Estimates for Village Green Park

Gina Trish, Patty Doell and Mary Stone presented the revised estimates for their proposed park at the former Community Center location. Mrs. Trish emphasized that all of the materials being used in the park have been carefully selected to withstand the flooding problem at the location. They presented three estimates, with JD's Landscaping being the lowest estimate at \$24,299. The major change between the first design and this proposed design is the omission of the rain garden.

Deputy Mayor Anderson made a motion to approve the construction of the Village Green Park and to award the construction to JB's Landscaping LLC for a price of \$24,299.00, contingent upon quotation review by the CFO and contract review by Mr. Benbrook. Mr. Lance seconded the motion.

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

Deputy Mayor Anderson thanked the group for their many hours of volunteer work making this park become a reality.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE (See attached sheet)

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

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY

Mr. Benbrook reported that the complaint about the outdoor PA system used by Tractor Supply has been settled with the owner of the property. Tractor Supply has agreed to cease use of the system.

Mr. Benbrook had issues with the contract presented by the contractor for the Givens Belet building renovation. The contractor will be incorporating Mr. Benbrook's changes and presenting a new contract for the Mayor's signature. Mr. Benbrook emphasized that it is imperative to have a specific materials list when obtaining quotations.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK

The Clerk had nothing to report.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

COMMITTEEMAN ANDERSON

Deputy Mayor Anderson read a letter from the residents on Bear Cave Road, thanking the Committee and Mr. Benbrook for a quick resolution to their problem regarding the PA system with Tractor Supply.

The North Warren Midget Football Association invited the Committee members to attend a game on October 12th. They would like to thank the Committee for the upcoming renovations to the Walnut Valley Field. Mr. Avery will be attending on behalf of the Committee.

On September 18th, Mayor Mach and Deputy Mayor Anderson met with Dave Bean of the Department of Environmental Protection regarding the Paulina Dam. This meeting was a part of an ongoing investigation on the possibility of removing the dam. Mr. Avery reported that he recently participated in a canoe trip at the dam. The purpose of the trip was to get a sense of what it would look like without the dam and to ascertain which properties might be affected by its removal.

Deputy Mayor Anderson summarized the Police Report for the month of September, which included a bomb threat at the North Warren Regional High School. Deputy Mayor Anderson is continuing his attempt to get a partial waiver for our special police officer to become a probationary officer in the Blirstown Police Department. Senator Oroho is assisting with this.

Deputy Mayor Anderson would like to hold a pre-budget meeting on November 8th at 1pm. The Committee was in agreement to hold this meeting.

Deputy Mayor Anderson reported that JCP&L sent a check for \$3,600.00 for the street lights that were turned off.

COMMITTEEMAN AVERY

Mr. Avery reported that he recently completed a seminar on grant writing.

The Environmental Commission is working on its agenda for next year. Two representatives from the Commission participated in the canoe trip on the Paulina Lake.

The Senior Citizens group are planning a trip to the Hunterdon Hills Playhouse on November 23rd. The annual Christmas Party will be held on December 7th at the Mohican Fire Hall.

The Recreation Director and Mr. Avery met with the contractor hired to renovate the Walnut Valley Field. Work will start sometime between November 10th and November 20th.

The Legion members have reported that Blue Ridge Lumber is willing to donate the various supplies needed by the volunteers helping to renovate the Givens Belet building.

Mr. Avery announced that he is starting his open door policy of meeting with residents on a weekly basis. He will be available in the Municipal Building every Saturday from 11:30 to 1pm.

COMMITTEEMAN LANCE

Mr. Lance reported that the township has received another check in the amount of \$398.00 from Ray Davis, former Committeeman, as part of his court ordered restitution to Blairstown.

John Kerkendall has requested to farm the tillable acres of the Gorab property in 2014. Mr. Kerkendall will pay the township \$2,500, as in previous years. Mr. Lance made a motion to approve this request, which was seconded by Mr. Shoemaker.

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

Mr. Lance reported that there is a problem with the submersible pump at well no. 1. There is a problem with the solenoid and Stothoffs in Flemington will be looking at it. It will probably cost around \$2,000 to repair.

The ticket booth is now completed by the Historic Preservation Committee. The sign is in place and there was a dedication ceremony. The first series of signs will be placed at the Presbyterian Church, John I. Blair General Store, the Mill, the Flat Iron Building and the area of Blair Falls.

The Historic Preservation Committee is working on plans for Blairstown's anniversary.

A former employee on permanent disability has contacted the CFO requesting reimbursement for his contributions towards Medicaid/Medicare Part B going back to the year 2000. The reimbursement would total approximately \$9,000. After Committee discussion, it was decided that Mr. Benbrook will research this and make a recommendation on a course of action.

COMMITTEEMAN SHOEMAKER

Mr. Shoemaker reported that Victor Freeman of the Department of Public Works will be retiring at the end of the year. Mr. Shoemaker is working with Carl Stoddart on hiring a replacement.

Mr. Shoemaker and Mayor Mach attended a Warren County League of Municipalities meeting in Phillipsburg. Senator Doherty was in attendance and spoke about school funding. He and the Mayor also attended a meeting in Trenton with the BPU regarding their pilot vegetation plan which involves pruning in rights-of-way.

Mr. Shoemaker said that the quotations for the Mohican Fire Hall should be forthcoming at the November meeting.

Brianna Johnson of the MOM's Club reported to Mr. Shoemaker that the group has collected \$103,000 in donations. Their goal is \$125,000.

The Walnut Valley Field septic system has gone bad. Deputy Mayor Anderson said that it should be inspected before any work is planned.

FROM THE PUBLIC

Susan Price, Alice Court, asked Mr. Benbrook about possible ramifications on any findings of contamination in the silt testing at the Paulina Dam. She is concerned about township exposure in this possible scenario. Mr. Benbrook responded that the DEP has indicated that no problems have been found upstream and if, in fact, problems exist, the township would be viewed as the injured party and those responsible for the pollution would be held responsible.

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. All members voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Submitted by:

Phyllis E. Pizzaia, RMC
Municipal Clerk