

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, September 10, 2014, 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. Those present were Mr. Avery, Mr. Lance, Mrs. Price and Mayor Shoemaker. Also present were Clerk Pizzaia and Attorney Robert Benbrook. Mr. Anderson was absent.

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.

PUBLIC COMMENT – up to 5 speakers, 3 minutes each

Jeanne O'Brien, East Avenue, and Livia Angelone, Bridge Street, spoke about their property on Bridge Street. Mrs. O'Brien said that she believes her water meter is faulty because she has a \$400.00 bill which she believes is incorrect. Ms. Angelone said that the meter seems to be running correctly now, so the problem is hit or miss. Ms. O'Brien asked the Committee to reduce her water bill. Mayor Shoemaker said that the DPW Foreman has checked the meter and has reported that it is working correctly. Mayor Shoemaker said that he will ask Mr. Stoddart to check this meter again.

Todd Westdyke, Bridge Street, said that he had an incident with a neighbor and called the police. He said that the police report tells a different account of the incident than he reported. He said he has cameras on his property which corroborate his account of the incident. Mayor Shoemaker said that he will ask Mr. Anderson, Police Commissioner, to look into this for Mr. Westdyke. Mr. Benbrook suggested that Mr. Westdyke supply Mr. Gara with a copy of the tape recording of the incident.

Dr. Brian Fogelson, Superintendent of North Warren Regional High School, spoke about the interlocal agreement for full time staffing of a school resource officer and two Class II Special Officers to man the front desk and monitor the security system. Dr. Fogelson said that the two specials have been interviewed and he would like the Committee to take action tonight to hire these officers, contingent upon successful completion of all necessary testing.

Mr. Lance summarized the backgrounds of Edward White and John Glinko, the two officers being considered for the Special Officer positions. Mr. Lance made a motion to hire Mr. White and Mr. Glinko, contingent upon the successful completion of the necessary testing requirements. Mr. Avery seconded the motion.

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

Carol Cook, Four Corners Road, spoke about the two driveways on Four Corners Road that were causing problems. She reported that one of the driveways has been paved and the other one is in the process of being repaired. Mr. Benbrook reported that both homeowners were directed by correspondence to make the necessary repairs as approved by the Township Engineer. Mr. Benbrook said that Mr. Rodman will be contacting the two homeowners regarding the clogged catch basins in the near future.

Theresa Tamburro, Municipal Housing Liaison, spoke to the Committee regarding the MOU for the Warren County Association for Retarded Citizens group home she has been trying to get approved. Mrs. Tamburro said that our COAH plan, approved by the State in 2009, provided for three (3) group homes. Mrs. Tamburro said that Blirstown is on track with following the plan and spending down the COAH monies, and Blirstown has never been in danger of losing the funds to the State.

In 2013, the Warren County Arc showed interest in having a group home in Blirstown. Mr. Pruznick, Arc of Warren County's Executive Director, submitted a Memorandum of Understanding for a group home with a 50/50 match, which Blirstown could not do with the \$105,000 for group homes. Mr. Pruznick came back with an 80/20 match, which Blirstown could manage with the \$105,000 available. Since this time, Mrs. Tamburro has been unable to get this project finalized, as the Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency wants all of our remaining COAH monies, not just the \$105,000 put aside for group homes.

Mrs. Tamburro said that medical reasons will keep her from actively pursuing this and asked the Committee for assistance in finalizing this project. Mayor Shoemaker stated that he will pursue this matter with Senator Oroho.

Mr. Benbrook said that he has attempted to contact someone at HMFA. After many attempts, he spoke to a gentleman who seemed to indicate that if Blirstown was not going to match 50/50, then all of the remaining COAH funds would be required to be used towards the project. Mr. Benbrook will be corresponding with the HMFA, stating that there are administrative expenses that prohibit us from turning over all of the remaining funds.

Mr. Benbrook summarized that the bottom line is that Blirstown Township can only give \$105,000, which is our approved spending plan, towards this project, and this is not negotiable.

Sharon Cooper, Blirstown's Risk Management Consultant, spoke about the value of the fire truck originally being set at \$450,000. Since the truck was recertified at \$312,000, Mrs. Cooper requested permission to lower the value to \$312,000. The premium cost will not change. Mrs. Price made a motion to lower the value to \$312,000, which was seconded by Mr. Lance.

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

Mrs. Cooper reported that Blirstown is in its third year of a three year commitment with Statewide Insurance. She asked the Committee members if they would like her to solicit quotations for a new carrier. The Committee agreed to have Mrs. Cooper get the renewal quote from Statewide and two additional quotes.

MINUTES

August 13, 2014 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve the August 13th minutes, which was seconded by Mrs. Price.

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

PROCLAMATION – September is National Preparedness Month

Mayor Shoemaker read a portion of the Proclamation proclaiming September as National Preparedness Month.

ORDINANCE 2014 – 07 AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE PURCHASE OF AIR PACKS AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE FUNDING THEREOF Adoption, Second Reading Public Hearing, Open/Close

Mayor Shoemaker opened the Public Hearing to the public. As there were no comments or questions from the public, Mayor Shoemaker closed the public hearing to the public.

Mr. Lance made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2014 – 07 on second reading, which was seconded by Mr. Avery.

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

ORDINANCE 2014 – 08 AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR DPW EQUIPMENT ENUMERATED WITHIN FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE FUNDING THEREOF Adoption, Second Reading Public Hearing, Open/Close

Mayor Shoemaker opened the Public Hearing to the public. As there were no comments or questions from the public, Mayor Shoemaker closed the public hearing to the public.

Mrs. Price made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2014 – 08 on second reading, which was seconded by Mayor Shoemaker.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1 – R.2014 – 106 Authorization to Pay Bills
- 2 – R.2014 – 107 Redemption of Certification of Sale No. 2013-004
- 3 – R.2014 – 108 Redemption of Certification of Sale No. 2013-013
- 4 – R.2014 – 109 Refund of 2014 Water Utility Overpayment
- 5 – R.2014 – 110 Reappointment of Deputy Emergency Management Coordinators
- 6 – R.2014 – 111 Establishment of Monthly Cell Phone Allowance for DPW Foreman
- 7 – R.2014 – 112 Authorization of Expenditure of \$100,000 towards the Purchase of Ambulance Vehicle

- 8 – R.2014 – 113 Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriations, NJSA 40A:4-87 – Municipal Alliance
- 9 – R.2014 – 114 Award of Contract for Road Resurfacing (Morris County Cooperative)
- 10 – R.2014 – 115 Award of Contract for Purchase of Cab/Chassis with Dump Body (Morris County Cooperative)
- 11 – R.2014 – 116 Award of Three Year Contract to Global Waste Industries for Refuse and Single Stream Recycling
- 12 – R.2014 – 117 Authorization to Terminate Lease Agreement with Blairstown Hose Company No. 1 for the Lease of Mohican Fire Hall

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

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

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- Clerk – August Report
- Finance – August Finance and Fuel Reports
- Fire Department – August Report
- Police Department – August Report
- Tax Collector – August Report
- Animal Control Officer Report – 1st and 2nd Quarter, 2014
- Municipal Court of North Warren – July Report
- Warren County Health Department – August 11, 2014

Mr. Avery made a motion to accept the Department Reports, which was seconded by Mrs. Price.

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

Nothing to report.

COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE for information and possible action

Mayor Shoemaker reported that Gina Trish said that she would like to have the Committee approve the size of the sign to be placed at Village Green Park before she solicits quotations. The Committee agreed to approve the size as submitted by Mrs. Trish at the August meeting.

The Rotary Club is asking for permission to hold its annual Halloween Parade on October 31st. They are asking that the police close the street and escort the participants on the parade route. Mr. Avery made a motion to approve this request, which was seconded by Mayor Shoemaker.

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

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

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

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY

Mr. Benbrook reported that the court ruled for the township dismissing the township's involvement in Price v. Daggett. We may be called as witnesses but are no longer a defendant in this case.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK

The town-wide cleanup has been scheduled for October 24 and 25. Vouchers will be available at the Municipal Building beginning on October 14.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER

Mr. Rodman reported that specifications are being prepared for the road repairs to Sand Hill Road. Paving materials will be purchased from the Morris County Cooperative. The pavement will consist of a procedure using the existing pavement that will be recycled. Mr. Lance made a motion to authorize going out for bid on the Sand Hill Road project, which was seconded by Mayor Shoemaker.

Roll call: AYE – Avery, Lance, Price, Shoemaker
 ABSENT - Anderson

Mr. Rodman reported that he contacted an attorney for Aqua, NJ with regard to purchasing the Blairstown Water Company. The Committee was in agreement that this should be explored. Mr. Rodman will meet with representatives of Aqua on September 16. Mr. Lance and Mr. Benbrook will participate in this meeting.

FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBER AVERY

Mr. Avery reported that there was no Land Use Board meeting in August.

The Environmental Commission is working on setting a date for their roadside cleanup.

The water company is still in the process of setting up a date for the water tower inspection.

Mr. Avery has received three quotations for the sanding of the floor at the Givens Belet building, the lowest being \$2,500. Mr. Avery made a motion to approve this expenditure, which was seconded by Mr. Lance.

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

The ordinance review advisory committee is moving along.

At Mr. Avery's latest open door meeting, a complaint was made about duplicate JCP&L poles at various locations. Mayor Shoemaker said that in speaking with a representative of JCP&L, they have a policy of placing a secondary pole at any location where a pole has been identified as weak. The weak pole will be removed when the wires are transferred.

Speeding on Belcher Road has also been reported. Mr. Avery asked that the Police Department monitor this.

Another resident suggested that the township buy properties in the flood plain area and demolish them. Ideally, this could be accomplished with grant monies.

Mr. Avery reported that the Seniors Advisory Group will have a sign-up for the upcoming trip to Woodloch Pines, PA for an Oktoberfest.

With regard to the Recreation Department, Mrs. Price asked why the Township would compete with three local businesses by offering classes in Yoga and Zumba in light of the fact that the Mayor tasked Mr. Avery with specifically pursuing economic development for businesses here in our community. Mrs. Price feels that it is counter-productive to undercut local businesses if we are concerned with helping to foster economic growth. She also asked whether the Township might begin to cover all or part of the Recreation Director's salary rather than pay for it from tax dollars.

COMMITTEE MEMBER LANCE

Mr. Lance summarized the August police report for Mr. Anderson in his absence.

The Historic Preservation Committee participated in the Blairstown Hose Company's 125th Anniversary. There were many inquiries from residents attending the event and the Committee hopes to recruit new members.

Doreen Rutherford has applied for membership as a non-resident member of the Historic Preservation Committee. Mr. Lance made a motion to approve her appointment, which was seconded by Mrs. Price.

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

The Historic Preservation is currently deciding on the placement of future historic signs.

Christine Beegle, Historic Preservation Committee Chair, will be making a presentation on John I. Blair to the Hope Historic Society on October 8th.

COMMITTEE MEMBER PRICE

A Union Brick Road resident had signs made for the Route 521 detour in an attempt to deter speeding on the detour route. She spent \$112.74 on the signs and said that there was a dramatic reduction in the speeding. Mrs. Price asked the Committee members if they would like to reimburse the resident for her expense. Mr. Avery suggested that the township retain these signs and use them in other portions of town. Mr. Gara and Mr. Benbrook both were of the opinion that the signs were not enforceable by State Statute. After discussion, the Committee decided against this action.

Mrs. Price reported that she will attend a meeting on September 12th with Ted Rodman, Bob Canace, Carol Cook and Ravi Romano regarding sewers.

The Open Space Committee did not have a meeting in August.

Mrs. Price reminded the Committee to speak into the microphones since some people have indicated to her that they have trouble hearing. Since movement of the microphones causes interference, Mrs. Price suggested repairing or replacing the system.

MAYOR SHOEMAKER

Mayor Shoemaker summarized the August report for Blairstown Hose Company No. 1.

Mayor Shoemaker reported that the application filing deadline for the FEMA grant award of \$75,000 was extended to October 31st. Nicholas Mohr, OEM Coordinator, and Mayor Shoemaker attended a meeting with County and State representatives, who explained new rules and the review procedure for the grants. They both received good tips on how to complete the grant.

With regard to the Kostenbader property grant application, the Township did not receive this grant. Due to an unfortunate mix-up, Bob Canace was unable to attend the site review. Joel McGreen, Blairstown Open Space Chair, was present and was able to apprise the attendees of all details concerning the project. However, our application was rejected by the Warren County Department of Land Preservation.

Mayor Shoemaker received a communication from a representative of a missing persons' organization that will be conducting a road tour. The tour will make a stop at the Jane Doe site to bring awareness to missing persons. This will take place sometime during October 10 and 18.

Mayor Shoemaker reported that the township has a problem with missing street signs. From January 2013 to the present time, we have spent \$4,332.00 to replace stolen street signs. He suggested using the same system of street signs as used in Hardwick. Mr. Rodman said that the Hardwick sign conversion was a volunteer project. Mayor Shoemaker will look into this.

The bridge replacement on Route 94 has been postponed and the Township is awaiting a new start date.

There is a state aid grant application period open again for road repairs. There was a discussion about which road was in the most need of repair that would meet the requirements set by the State. Frog Pond Road, Ridge Road, Maple Lane and Conrad Court were discussed. It was decided that Mr. Rodman would apply for State grant funds for the repair of Maple Lane. Mr. Lance made a motion to authorize Mr. Rodman to submit a grant application for funds to repair Maple Lane, which was seconded by Mayor Shoemaker.

Roll call: AYE – Avery, Lance, Price, Shoemaker
 ABSENT – Anderson

Mayor Shoemaker suggested that the Committee consider the adoption of an ordinance that requires a continuing certificate of occupancy for rental units. This would alleviate the poor conditions that exist in some rental units and would require the owners to bring the unit up to standards before renting to a new tenant. Mr. Benbrook believes that continuing certificates of occupancy were banned by the New Jersey Courts. He will research this and report to the Committee.

FROM THE PUBLIC

Anita Ardia, Dry Road, spoke to the Mayor about moving the mayors' plaque from the outer lobby to a more conspicuous area. Mayor Shoemaker told Mrs. Ardia that the plaque will be moved to the inner lobby.

Sylvia Zika, Four Corners Road, spoke about the detour on Route 521 and the speeding that took place on Heller Hill Road and Union Brick Road. Mrs. Zika feels that better planning and communication between the County and Blairstown should be a priority. She would like an investigation of the steps taken when a detour is planned on a County Road. Mrs. Zika would like to be a part of this investigation.

Mrs. Zika read a letter she sent to the Committee on August 11th, in which she states that she felt that Mr. Benbrook was rude and attempted to intimidate her. She said that she would like an apology and would like Mr. Benbrook dismissed as Township Attorney.

Mayor Shoemaker responded that Mrs. Zika attacked our Township Engineer at the July meeting and made accusations against Mr. Rodman, that, in Mayor Shoemaker's opinion, were an affront. Mayor Shoemaker said that the Committee has the utmost confidence in Mr. Benbrook as Township Attorney. He asked the rest of the Committee if anyone was in favor of dismissing Mr. Benbrook. There were no responses in favor of this action.

Rosalie Murray, Heller Hill Road, suggested that the side of Sand Hill Road be lined after being paved and made into a bike path. Mrs. Murray was informed that striping was required. She also spoke against privatization of the water company.

Carol Cook, Four Corners Road, spoke about the detour on Route 521 and said that pedestrians should be respectful of drivers as well as the other way around. Blairstown has many country roads and care must be taken by everyone.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no further comments from the public, Mr. Avery made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mrs. Price. All members voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:37.

Submitted by:

Phyllis E. Pizzaia, RMC
Municipal Clerk