

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN
SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, January 25, 2010 – 7PM
TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

M I N U T E S

OPENING; ROLL CALL

Mayor Mach called the meeting to order. Those present were Mr. Anderson, Mr. Lance, Mr. Lascari, Mr. Seal and Mayor Mach.

FLAG SALUTE was conducted.

SUNSHINE STATEMENT

Mayor Mach read the following statement: Notice of this meeting has been sent to two newspapers of general circulation noting the date, time and agenda thereof in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

DISCUSSION: Possibility of shared services for Construction Department with Frelinghuysen Township and Hardwick Township

Mayor Dale Durling and Committeeman Alan DeCarolis were present from Frelinghuysen. Mayor Kevin Duffy was present from Hardwick Township.

Mayor Mach turned the meeting over to Mr. Lascari, who handled out statistical information on the Construction Department for the past two years. Mr. Lascari summarized the options available to Blairstown. Blairstown can keep our Construction Department, or consolidate with other towns, those being Hardwick, Frelinghuysen or Hope. There can be a shared services arrangement with Frelinghuysen, where Frelinghuysen is the host or where Blairstown is the host. The other option is for Blairstown to disband its Construction Department and go with the DCA.

Mr. Anderson said that he had spoken to someone from the State, who said that the same offer is on the table from the DCA that was presented a year ago. The State would provide TACO coverage two days a week with five days of inspections. Mr. Anderson said that he thinks the State is more receptive to using our staff than they were the last time.

Mayor Durling proposed that Blairstown, Hardwick and Frelinghuysen enter into a shared services agreement, whereby Frelinghuysen would be the lead. They originally wanted to be located in Frelinghuysen, but they are willing to be located in Blairstown. This would be for three days, with TACO support from 8:30 to 2pm. Frelinghuysen staff would be Blairstown's construction department at no cost to Blairstown. Frelinghuysen would keep all fees collected.

Carl Dieffenbach said that it seems simple on paper, but residents will be inconvenienced if they have to travel to another municipality for services. He has seen this tried many times during his tenure as plumbing inspector, and residents are not happy with this arrangement. He wanted the Committee to be aware that the DCA would have to approve any shared services arrangement. Ralph Price also wanted to point out that he proposed this same arrangement a year ago with Frelinghuysen, but with Blairstown as host. Mayor Durling stated that he was not here tonight to take anything away from the Blairstown Construction staff. He said that Frelinghuysen and Hardwick are very close to striking an agreement for shared services and that Mr. Lascari contacted him on the same subject. Mayor Durling is here to offer Frelinghuysen as lead to include Blairstown because he feels that Frelinghuysen can do a better job than the State. For this reason, Frelinghuysen wanted to extend this offer to the residents of Blairstown.

Mayor Duffy summarized that there are three options on the table for Blairstown. The first is to go with the State DCA, the second is a shared services with Hardwick and Frelinghuysen with Frelinghuysen as the lead, and the third is a shared services arrangement between the three municipalities with Blairstown as the lead. Mr. Lascari added that it could be a cooperative type agreement, where all municipalities have equal say.

Mayor Durling said that at this point, he felt that his offer was on the table and that the Blairstown Committee needs to discuss the options on their own and get back to him. At this point, Mayor Durling left the meeting.

Mr. Lascari asked Mayor Duffy about his interest in joining with Blairstown with Blairstown as the lead. Mayor Duffy said that it would appear that Hardwick is closer to making an agreement with Hardwick than with Blairstown. Mayor Duffy left the meeting.

The Blairstown Committee discussed the options presented tonight. Mr. Dieffenbach told the Committee that in forming a shared services agreement, the State will frown upon multi-licensed inspectors, which would be the case if Frelinghuysen becomes the lead. Mr. Dieffenbach also stated that if Blairstown were to go with the DCA, the State will want all the revenue collected so far. Mr. Anderson said that he was told that this is not the case.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Mach asked if there were any questions or comments from the public. There were no comments.

DISCUSSION: Quotations for development of township website

Mr. Lascari summarized the four quotations he received for the redesign of the township website. The four proposals are from Sysice, Brad Decker, Christie Jacobsen and Envision. Most of the quotes fall within the \$2,000.00 range, except

for Envision, which quoted a price of \$5,495. All four proposals offer the same services, such as design, web and email hosting and maintenance.

Mr. Lascari went over the proposals, stating that he has visited the websites designed by the various designers. Mr. Lascari said that he is in favor of the website design of Brad Decker, and encouraged the Committee members to visit the website of Lopatcong, which was designed by Mr. Decker. All four plans would have new information and changes made to the website by emailing PDF files to the webmaster.

Mayor Mach asked why the website needs to be redesigned. Both Mr. Lascari and Mr. Lance feel that a newer, updated look will attract more traffic to the site. Mr. Lance wants the website to have links to local events and attractions.

It was agreed that the Committee would read through the four proposals and visit the websites designed by the prospective webmasters. The Committee will address the website proposals further at a future meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Lascari made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Anderson, with all members in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Submitted by:

Phyllis E. Pizzaia, RMC
Municipal Clerk