

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN  
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
Wednesday, September 8, 2010, 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 Mach. Those present were Mayor Mach, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Lance, and Mr. Lascari (arrived at 7:20). Also present were Clerk Pizzaia and Township Attorney Robert Benbrook. Mr. Seal was absent.

**FLAG SALUTE**

The 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 in which notice was given of the date, time, place and general agenda in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

**CLOSED SESSION – Possible Land Acquisition; Possible Litigation**

Mr. Lance made a motion to enter into Closed Session, which was seconded by Mr. Anderson, with all members voting in favor.

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

WHEREAS, the Township Committee believes it to be in the best interest of the public to discuss such matters 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 matters mentioned above, the results of which may be made public immediately thereafter or at a later date.

Dated: September 8, 2010

Attest:

Phyllis E. Pizzaia, RMC  
Municipal Clerk

## **RESULTS OF CLOSED SESSION**

Mr. Lance made a motion to exit into Closed Session, which was seconded by Mr. Anderson, with all members voting in favor.

Mayor Mach announced that there is a property at the end of Stony Brook Road known as the Tunis property that Joel McGreen of the Open Space Committee would like the township to purchase with the Ridge and Valley Conservancy. Mr. Lance made a motion to participate in the purchase of this piece of property with an expenditure of \$50,000 from the Open Space funds, contingent upon a satisfactory contract. This motion was seconded by Mayor Mach.

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

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

Richard Cook of Blairstown Hose Company No. 1 updated the Committee on the status of the new fire tanker. It is at Pierce Manufacturing being assembled and should be delivered during the first week of October.

Mary Flynn, Conrad Court, spoke about the new township website. She detailed the items that she would like to see in the site, including township events and business information. Mr. Lascari said that the purpose of the website is for government information and that the items she is looking for are outside the scope of the website. He has spoken with our webmaster and will get back to Mrs. Flynn on whether these types of items can be an adjunct portion of our municipal website.

Beth Arena, High Street, spoke about the need for a noise ordinance. She has spoken to other municipalities and gotten copies of their ordinances. Mr. Lascari will be meeting with Mrs. Arena on Saturday morning. They will walk the area and Mrs. Arena will explain neighborhood concerns. Mayor Mach will join them on Saturday.

Gladys Bellott, Union Brick Road, spoke about the poor condition of a property on Union Brick Road. She has spoken to David Diehl, Zoning Official, about this but the condition still exists. Mayor Mach said that this is has been an ongoing situation for several years. Mr. Lascari said that the County is the lead agency and that the township should attempt to have the County move on this matter. Mayor Mach read from the County Health report that has documented the situation. The Committee will have Mr. Diehl contact the County Prosecutor's Officer to ascertain the status of this case and Mr. Diehl will then contact Ms. Bellott with his findings.

Russell Walters, Route 94, spoke about a product he is representing that uses capacitors to save money on energy. He put together proposals on township buildings and a projection of monthly savings. He distributed copies of the proposals to the Committee. Mr. Lascari said that the Committee should look into this. Mayor Mach said that the Committee can read the material and decide if they want to pursue this.

Kevin Doell, Heller Hill Road, spoke about the accomplishments of Sustainable Blirstown. There is a September 15<sup>th</sup> deadline to submit the application which documents the projects that have been completed during the past year. The Sustainable Blirstown Committee believes that they have 150 points, which is a requirement for Sustainable New Jersey. He outlined the projects, which include the Elementary School garden, the Blirstown Elementary School energy audit, a sustainable land use pledge, and the weekly Farmers Market. In total, Sustainable Blirstown completed 14 projects.

Linda Barton, Hickory Hollow Lane, spoke about a recent incident whereby she called 9-1-1 to report a bear problem. She said that because of this call, she was arrested by the Blirstown Police Department. She said that she feels that she is being targeted by the Blirstown Police Department and labeled as a troublemaker.

Mark Clifford and Nicholas Mohr appeared on behalf of the Skylands Music Festival. They thanked the Committee and the community for the success of the festival. Mr. Clifford read a letter he wrote to Mike Sullivan and the Blirstown Hose Company No. 1, thanking the fire company for their assistance at the festival. A donation to the Company was given by the Skylands Music Alliance. The Committee was in agreement that the festival was a success.

## **MINUTES**

August 11, 2010 – Regular Meeting and Closed Session (Mr. Lance absent)

Mr. Anderson made a motion to approve the August 11<sup>th</sup> minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Anderson.

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

### **Public Comment on the Consent Agenda Items Only**

Carol Cook, Four Corners Road, asked about Resolution 2010-125. Mayor Mach said that this is for a complete overlay with millings for half of Sand Hill Road. Hopefully, grant monies will be available again next year to complete the remaining half of the road.

### **CONSENT AGENDA INCLUDING RESOLUTIONS**

- 1 – R.2010-120** Authorization to Pay Bills
- 2 – R.2010-121** Redemption of Certification of Sale No. 2010-01
- 3 – R.2010-122** Redemption of Certification of Sale No. 2010-02
- 4 – R.2010-123** Redemption of Certification of Sale No. 2010-03
- 5 – R.2010-124** Authorization to Release Certain Escrows
- 6 – R.2010-125** Authorization to Submit Grant Application and Execute Grant Contract with the NJDOT for the Reconstruction of Sand Hill Road Project

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

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

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

Clerk – August Report  
Finance – August Report  
Fire Department – Blirstown Hose Company No. 1 – August Report  
Police Department – August Report  
Public Works Department – August Fuel Report  
Tax Collector – August Report  
Warren County Board of Health – August 6, 2010 Report

Mr. Lascari made a motion to accept the Department Reports, which was seconded by Mr. Anderson, with all members voting in favor.

Mayor Mach would like to have a report from the Animal Control Officer for the October meeting.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- 1 – Route 94 traffic concerns – State approval received for left hand turn signal at Lambert Rd Mr. Lascari has been in contact with the project manager at the DOT, who informed him that the project has progressed to the Electrical Department. The project manager does not have a timeline on when the project might be finished.
- 2 – JCP&L billing – Mr. Lascari has completed input of data; to go to Environmental Commission for input
- 3 – Main Street concerns – road striping; feral cats; sidewalks
- 4 – Review of Noise Control Ordinance – model ordinance received from county
- 5 – Cedar Lake Horse Farm – RFP results under review

There was an Open House on August 21<sup>st</sup>. The State is looking for interested parties. There will be another open house on September 24<sup>th</sup>.

- 6 – Service Electric Cable TV – extension of cable service
- 7 – Letter from DOT, Division of Aeronautics, regarding Hazardous Obstructions at Blirstown Airport

Mr. Benbrook reported that he and Mr. Seal met with a representative from the Bureau of Aviation on this matter. The State used to cut down trees at their own expense but they can no longer do this. The State Attorney General has ruled that this should be done at the homeowner's expense. Mr. Seal and Mr. Benbrook pointed out that some

of the trees are on DEP property, but the representative was not optimistic that the State would take care of this in a timely manner.

Mr. Benbrook will write a letter to the State saying that the township will cooperate by identifying those homeowners with the trees that need to be removed. The Township would be willing to send letters to the homeowners stating that the trees violate State law and the zoning ordinance and asking the property owners to inform the township regarding the action they will be taking to remediate the situation.

**COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE** for information and possible action

- 1 – from Kimberley Harrington, Blairstown Elementary School, re: Proposal for Blairstown Elementary School Garden, Revised Submission (Tabled from August meeting)

Mr. Lance made a motion to approve the invoice in the amount of \$963.00 for trees and plants for the Elementary School Garden. The motion was seconded by Mayor Mach.

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

- 2 – from Bob Resker, Dept. of Land Preservation, regarding Open Space and Farmland Preservation funding

This letter is to advise that there is \$750,000 available in matching funds for our community for open space projects. This communication is for informational purposes.

- 3 – from Colleen Miller, Susan G. Komen for the Cure, requesting permission to tie ribbons throughout Blairstown during the month of October for the 2010 Tie a Ribbon Campaign

The Committee approved this request.

- 4 – from Michael Obremski, JCP&L, regarding Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant

This letter is to advise that \$20,000 is available in grant monies for improvements to various buildings. Mayor Mach is trying to ascertain what this money can be used for.

- 5 – from Lori Grifa, Commissioner, Department of Community Affairs, regarding Best Practices Checklist

Mayor Mach explained that this is a checklist of things the township should be doing. There are 88 items to check off. The form is due back October 1<sup>st</sup>. Depending on the answers, there could be a decrease in State Aid. Mr. Lance stated that he believes that this test is written in a way that no municipality can achieve a perfect score. Mayor Mach said that he instructed the CFO to gather this information and to complete the

form for submission to the State. The CFO is responsible for certifying the answers. Mayor Mach added that he considers this Best Practices list as an example of the unfunded mandates that have been coming down to the municipalities.

**GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE (See attached sheet)**

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

**FROM THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER**

Ted Rodman said that the DEP is requiring a visual inspection of the Paulina Dam. Mr. Rodman got a proposal from French and Parrello to perform this inspection for a quoted price of \$1,950.00. Mr. Benbrook said that he would like a breakdown of the fees on this proposal. Mr. Benbrook also indicated the sections of their proposal that he would like removed and asked Mr. Rodman to have a representative of French and Parrello contact him. This item will be held over to the October meeting.

Mr. Benbrook asked Mr. Rodman if he knew what year the Paulina Dam was built. Mr. Rodman said the dam was repaired in 1903 and was built in 1895. Mr. Benbrook said that the age would make it an historic structure and that the historic audit could be paid for out of Open Space funds. Pending further investigation, Mr. Benbrook also believes that the remediation work can also be paid for by Open Space funds.

Mayor Mach said that the Community Center is scheduled to be demolished on September 27<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Rodman said that the building will be constantly wet down to keep the dust to a minimum. The materials will not be stockpiled, but will be immediately removed from the site. The entire demolition should take 10 working days. The grading will be brought back to the original grade so there will be no run-off problems.

Mr. Rodman said that there is a piano at Community Center. It was the consensus of opinion that the piano is in poor condition. Nick Mohr was asked to check the piano and see if it is worth keeping. Mr. Mohr will look at it during the week and will get back to the Committee on its condition.

**FROM THE TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY**

Mr. Benbrook had nothing further to report.

**FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK**

The Clerk reported that the North Warren Regional High School Marching Band Parents' Association was asking for permission to apply to JCP&L to put a banner across Route 94. All necessary paperwork is in order. Mr. Lascari made a motion to approve this request, which was seconded by Mayor Mach.

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

**FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE**

**COMMITTEEMAN ANDERSON**

Mr. Anderson read a letter from Anita Ardia, outlining the past activities of the Senior Citizens' Club.

Mr. Anderson read the highlights of the Police Department activity report for the month of August. He reported that the Blairstown Police Department worked with the State Police in apprehending burglars who were victimizing local businesses.

Collective bargaining agreement negotiations with the Police Department will begin in the near future. Mr. Anderson will be working with Mr. Benbrook to coordinate this.

**COMMITTEEMAN LANCE**

Mr. Lance said that two bids were received for the repair work to the Municipal Building roof. One bid was for \$1,875.00 and the other was for \$1,813.00. The low bidder is requiring money in advance of the completion of the work. Mr. Benbrook said that the low bid can be disqualified because of the terms and conditions. If the Committee feels that the best proposal is the higher one, then they are within their rights to accept the higher bid. Mr. Lance made a motion to award the project to Angelou Enterprises of Mt. Vernon Road to make the repairs to the roof at the quoted price of \$1,875.00. Mayor Mach seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: AYE – Anderson, Lance, Mach

ABSTAIN - Lascari

ABSENT – Seal

Mr. Lance said that during the budget process, the DPW workers agreed to a reduced work week with a 10% reduction in salary. One of the workers has recently gone out on disability and Mr. Lance is proposing to bring the DPW workers back to a 40 hour work week until the injured worker returns to full duty. Mr. Lance made this motion to be effective on Monday, September 13<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: AYE – Anderson, Lance, Lascari, Mach

ABSENT – Seal

The Public Works Department picked up two truckloads of debris left behind by the skateboarders at Footbridge Park.

Stothoff finished examining the #2 water well and changed the motor. The well is up to 42 gpm, but about 100 gpm is required. A hydrofract of the well is needed. Mr. Lance will have a price for this at a future meeting.

**COMMITTEEMAN LASCARI**

The Historical Preservation Commission has moved to the back office behind the DCA. This has freed up storage space for office personnel.

Mr. Lascari summarized the report submitted by Blirstown Hose Company No. 1. The fire company responded to a working house fire on Kerr's Corner Road.

The TractorCade will take place on October 12<sup>th</sup>, which will benefit the Blirstown Hose Company.

Unit 81 of Blirstown Hose Company has a leak that is becoming worse. This will need to be repaired. This expenditure has not been budgeted for.

#### **MAYOR MACH**

Mayor Mach asked Herman Shoemaker to give an update on the Master Plan. Mr. Shoemaker said that the Master Plan is being reviewed by Roger Thomas, Planning Board Attorney. Mr. Thomas has informed the Planning Board that there are two approaches for updating the Master Plan, which is required by the State. The first approach is a page by page review and rewriting, which could cost approximately \$25,000 to \$40,000. The second approach is to review the plan to make sure it is technically correct and conforms to any new regulations. This will cost between \$1,500 to \$2,000. The Planning Board feels that this approach is an acceptable plan. The Planning Board authorized Mr. Thomas to perform this review, after which the Board will meet with the Planner to discuss any items that need to be addressed.

Mayor Mach announced that the town-wide garage sale will be held on September 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. The town-wide cleanup is scheduled for September 23, 24 and 25.

There is interest in revitalizing the Warren County League of Municipalities. The initial meeting will take place on September 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm in the Washington Township Municipal Building.

Mayor Mach discussed the meetings he recently attended regarding the power lines and the alternate routes that have been proposed which involve lines running through the Delaware Water Gap National Park. Of the seven proposed routes, numbers 3, 4 and 5 have these lines running through portions of Blirstown. The township is on record as being opposed to these plans, and the Environmental Commission will be sending their objections as well.

#### **FROM THE PUBLIC**

Mayor Mach opened the meeting to the public.

Carol Cook, Four Corners Road, thanked the office staff and the Animal Control Officer for assisting her with an injured cat last week.

Mrs. Cook asked if we were still eligible for the USDA grant loan for the Water Department. Mr. Lance said that we were. Mrs. Cook hopes that the township will pursue this avenue in order to save money.

Mrs. Cook asked about the status of the grants for dry hydrants. Mr. Lascari said that the grants that were available are on hold at this time, according to a report by Jim Chenard at the last Blirstown Hose Company meeting.

Paul Avery, Mohican Road, said that the recent Fourth of July celebrations have been a disappointment. He volunteered his services, along with Herman Shoemaker, in organizing future events with an emphasis on making the day a Blirstown Township community event. Mayor Mach said that plans need to be made early in order to hold a successful event. The Committee was in agreement that Mr. Avery would have their support.

Beth Arena, High Street, said that a nuisance ordinance is important because of the ongoing problems on her street. She said that this problem is not going to go away without the ordinance.

Joy Rehbein, Gaisler Road, asked Mr. Anderson if there was a report on how the money given to the seniors is spent. She is concerned about the quality of the Blirstown seniors' trips and the amount of money the seniors have to pay to attend these trips. Mr. Anderson said that these records are available and can be obtained by completing an OPRA form.

Debra Waldron, Maple Lane, spoke in favor of adopting a nuisance ordinance. She said that the constant barking of dogs is a problem for many people in the township.

Herman Shoemaker, Bingham Lane, asked if, in fact, the Paulina Dam were to be classified as an historical structure, would this interfere with the possibility of using the dam for hydroelectric power. Mayor Mach stated that it could possibly be a problem.

Mr. Shoemaker announced that the Main Street businesses will be sponsoring another street fair on September 24<sup>th</sup> from 5pm to 8pm. The theme will be *Mystic Magic Wizards*.

Anita Ardia, Four Corners Road, asked about the status of COAH. Mayor Mach reported that nothing is going on because Governor Christie has indicated that he is going to abolish COAH.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no further comments or questions from the public, Mayor Mach closed the meeting to the public. Mr. Lascari made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Anderson, with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:46 pm.

Submitted by:

Phyllis E. Pizzaia, RMC  
Municipal Clerk