

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN  
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING  
Wednesday, October 14, 2015, 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. Anderson, Mr. Avery, Mr. Lance, Mr. Price and Mayor Shoemaker. Also present were Clerk Pizzaia and Attorney Kevin Benbrook. 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

Rosemary Wilson, High Street, spoke about the feral cat problem on her street. Mr. Avery responded that the feral cat problem is being addressed on Main Street and that hopefully the situation will get better on High Street.

Ms. Wilson said that a homeless person has been sleeping at the library overnight. Mayor Shoemaker responded that the Police Director will look into this.

**MINUTES**

September 9, 2015 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Avery made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Price.

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

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- 1 – R.2015 – 107      Authorization to Pay Bills
- 2 – R.2015 – 108      Redemption of Certification of Sale No. 2014 – 015
- 3 – R.2015 – 109      Redemption of Certification of Sale No. 2013 – 009
- 4 – R.2015 – 110      Appointment of Richard Herzer as Probationary Police Officer
- 5 – R.2015 – 111      Appointment of James Dillon as Probationary Police Officer
- 6 – R.2015 – 112      Authorizing an Amendment to Municipal Shared Services Defense Agreement

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

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

Mr. Anderson stated that the two new police officers will be an asset to the Blirstown Police Department. These officers are replacements for the two officers who resigned over the summer.

#### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

Clerk – September Report

Finance – September Finance and Fuel Reports

Police Department – September Report

Tax Collector – September Report

Warren County Health Department – September 14, 2015

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

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

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

Mr. Price proposed a change in the planned paving of Gaisler Road. He would like to pave from Mohican Road to the township line in order to put a crown back in the road to eliminate the water problem. Mayor Shoemaker said that he looked at the area in question. He suggested paving an additional 200 ft. than was previously agreed upon. Mayor Shoemaker said that the DPW would then make a trench along the slope to carry the water to a catch basin.

Mr. Price objected to a patchwork effect that this might have. Mr. Lance objected to spending over \$100,000 on Conrad Court and Ridge Road, when this money could be spent on paving Gaisler Road, a through street, in its entirety. Mayor Shoemaker feels that the township has an obligation to the residents on Ridge and Conrad to pave the roads. Mr. Anderson expressed his agreement with Mayor Shoemaker.

Mr. Price made a motion to pave Gaisler Road from Mohican Road past 34 Gaisler Road to eliminate the low portion. There was no second to the motion. Mr. Anderson said that he does not want to vote on anything without weighing in with the Township Engineer. The Committee agreed to discuss this later with Mr. Rodman.

#### **COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE** for information and possible action

##### 1 – Best Practices Worksheet

Mr. Lance said that this is a yearly worksheet that is reviewed to maintain our State aid. Mr. Lance said that the township is in compliance and scores highly, keeping 100% of our State aid.

##### 2 – from Robert Van Wattering, Blirstown Rotary Club, regarding Annual Halloween Parade to be held on October 31, 2015

Mayor Shoemaker outlined the proposed route of the Halloween Parade and a request for police assistance. Mr. Lance made a motion to approve the request as outlined by the Rotary Club, which was seconded by Mr. Anderson.

Roll call vote: AYE - Anderson, Avery, Lance, Price, Shoemaker

3 – from Dave Bogdan, North Warren Midget Football, requesting permission to install electrical service to press box at the Walnut Valley field

Mayor Shoemaker suggested that in addition to approving this request, the township pay up to \$600.00 for the installation, to be taken from the Open Space trust fund. Mr. Avery made this motion, which was seconded by Mr. Lance.

Roll call vote: AYE - Anderson, Avery, Lance, Price, Shoemaker

### **GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no comments on the General Correspondence.

#### **FROM THE TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY**

With regard to COAH, Mr. Benbrook said that the township's planner's services will be required after the report generated by Uniconsort is completed. Mr. Benbrook suggested bringing this up to the Land Use Board at their next meeting. Mr. Benbrook hopes to have more detailed information regarding timelines at the November meeting.

Mr. Benbrook is working on property maintenance ordinances and will have a draft ready in the near future.

#### **FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK**

Due to the November meeting falling on Veterans Day, the next regular meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### **FROM THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER**

Mayor Shoemaker explained that the question has come up whether to revisit the decision concerning the roads to be paved which were previously agreed upon. Mr. Rodman said that he feels it would be best to pave as much of Gaisler Road as possible. There was a discussion about putting off the paving of Conrad Court until next year in order to finance the paving of a larger portion of Gaisler Road.

After discussion, Mayor Shoemaker made a motion to postpone the paving on Conrad Court, pave Ridge Road including the cul-de-sac, postpone the paving of Lambert Road and pave 760 ft. on Gwinnup Road, and to pave the entire portion of Gaisler Road. Mr. Lance seconded the motion.

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

With regard to the Blairstown and Blair Academy sewer project study, Mr. Rodman said that a meeting has been set up with the DEP on October 20<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Rodman said that he has been informed by Ruth Ettinger of the DEP that the State is waiting for a work project study for the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the Paulina Dam removal.

Mr. Rodman reported that the Route 94 paving work has been delayed but is scheduled to start next week.

**FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE**

**COMMITTEE MEMBER ANDERSON**

Mr. Anderson summarized the Police Department report for the month of September.

Mr. Anderson said that the new Police contract is finalized and he is recommending that the Committee approve it tonight. This three year contract is retroactive to January 2015 and terminates on December 2017. Mr. Anderson made the motion to approve the contract, which was seconded by Mr. Lance.

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

**COMMITTEE MEMBER AVERY**

The Environmental Commission will be holding a roadside cleanup on Sunday, November 15<sup>th</sup> from 9am to 1pm. They will be working from the Walnut Valley Fire House to the Knowlton border.

The Seniors Christmas party will be held on Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup>.

With regard to COAH, Mr. Avery said that the group home purchase has fallen through and an alternate property along the Route 94 corridor is being sought.

The Givens Belet property will be power washed in the near future and new curtains are being made.

The ad hoc ordinance review committee will be providing the Township Committee with their suggestions for the November meeting.

The Blairstown Economic Committee continues to meet and is coming up with ideas to improve the township.

**COMMITTEE MEMBER LANCE**

Mr. Lance would like to change the account from which the state mandated bicycle safety grates will be taken. The total cost of the grates is \$5,460.00. He made a motion to have this cost taken from the Open Space account. Mr. Price seconded the motion. Mr. Benbrook reiterated his opinion from the September meeting that this would be a proper charge to the Open Space account since the purpose of the grates is for the recreational activity of bicycling.

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

The Historic Preservation Committee has discussed making an inventory of historic structures throughout the township for inclusion in the federal historic registry. They will also be working on a three-year project plan.

On October 31<sup>st</sup>, the Historic Preservation Committee will be sponsoring a cemetery tour.

Christine Beegle, Historic Preservation Committee Chair, asked the Committee about the policy for lending items for display in a private museum. Mr. Benbrook said that a simple list of what is being lent along with the duration of time would be sufficient. She also asked if there was a policy on

making purchases through eBay or other similar places. After discussion, the Committee agreed to consider developing a policy for this type of purchase.

Ms. Beegle said that the HPC will be working more closely with the Land Use Board, as directed by the township code.

There is an historic memorial stone for John I. Blair that Ms. Beegle would like to have displayed at the Municipal Building. She will provide more information on this stone in the near future.

#### COMMITTEE MEMBER PRICE

Mr. Price said that the revised agreement for Service Electric Cable Company is being worked on by Mr. Benbrook.

Mr. Price made a motion to authorize the CFO to submit an application with the NJPA cooperative for the purpose of purchasing a Case 521F loader. The first step in the purchase process is to join this coop. Mr. Lance seconded the motion to join the coop.

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

Mr. Price made a motion to enter into an agreement for a 5 year lease/purchase for the Case loader (option 1). Mayor Shoemaker commented that the DPW fleet is in poor condition and he was told by the person who repairs the township's equipment that the present loader is in the worst shape. Mr. Lance said that he thinks that Mr. Price negotiated a good price and is in favor of the purchase with 50% of the cost being charged to the Open Space fund. The entire Committee was in agreement that this is a necessary purchase. Mr. Lance seconded the motion to purchase the Case loader.

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

#### MAYOR SHOEMAKER

Mayor Shoemaker reported that the \$100,000 grant application for the purchase of the Kostenbader property was approved by the Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Committee. The next step is approval by the Warren County Board of Freeholders.

Mayor Shoemaker said that the well testing has been performed. All results are in except for the radiation test. He and Mr. Rodman will be meeting with the testing company to discuss the results, specifically whether the water needs to be filtered.

The DEP inspected the filtration plant recently and the township will be receiving notices of violations and fines as a result of the issues found. Our water testing company has omitted one of the mandatory tests for the past two years. Both the DEP inspector and our certified water operator have recommended that the pipes be removed and replaced with PVC. The settling of the backwash tanks continues to be a serious problem. This needs to be attended to as soon as possible.

Mayor Shoemaker said that the township is in receipt of a letter from the North Warren Regional High School, requesting a shared services agreement for the purchase of salt. The Committee is in favor of exploring this with the high school.

Mayor Shoemaker thanked Mr. Price for his service on the Committee and for his valuable contributions while serving.

#### **FROM THE PUBLIC**

Robert Fiore, Route 94, spoke about a letter he sent to the Township Committee regarding violations at Fuel Rite. Mr. Anderson told Mr. Fiore that the Zoning Official has contacted Fuel Rite regarding the violations. Mayor Shoemaker said that he and Mr. Benbrook will be discussing this matter.

Susan Price, Alice Court, said that in light of the current problems at the water company, she believes that a full-time person should be assigned to oversee the operations. She hopes the Committee will consider this.

Mrs. Price asked if she could view other items on the agenda in addition to the consent agenda prior to the meeting. Mayor Shoemaker said that this will be discussed with the Township Attorney.

Carol Cook, Four Corners Road, reminded the Committee that the township may be eligible for low interest loans or grants from the Rural Communities Development Program in order to address the water company problems.

Pat DePalma, Frog Pond Road, would like *local delivery only* signs placed on her road. Mr. Rodman said that this would need to be a joint effort between Blairstown and Knowlton Townships.

Mrs. DePalma would also like to know what reasons, besides the financial ones, the North Warren Regional High School have for wanting a school zone.

Beth Arena, High Street, expressed her concern about the problems at the water company. Mayor Shoemaker said that the township needs to develop a plan to deal with the issues facing the water company. Mr. Anderson said that money expenditures need to be prioritized.

She also thanked Mr. Price for his contributions while serving on the Township Committee.

Joanne VanValkenburg, Stillwater Road, said that she remembers the John I. Blair cornerstone that was found by Brielle and returned to Blairstown.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no further comments from the public, Mayor Shoemaker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Avery. All members were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Submitted by:

Phyllis E. Pizzaia, RMC  
Municipal Clerk