

TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY

Regular Meeting
November 19, 2012

The regular meeting of the Township Committee was held on this date at the Washington Township Municipal Building, 211 Route 31 North, Washington, N.J. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Michael Kovacs.

SUNSHINE LAW COMPLIANCE – The Mayor noted that this meeting was being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Law of 1975 in as much as a notice had been published in the Star-Gazette and transmitted to the Express-Times, posted at the Municipal Building and a copy is on file in the Clerk's office. This agenda is subject to change by order of the Washington Township Committee before and/or during the scheduled meeting.

ROLL CALL

Elbassiouny, present; Finke, present; Klingel, present; Kovacs, present; Marks, present

STAFF PRESENT

Anna C. Godfrey, Township Clerk; Peter deBoer, Township Administrator/Certified Public Works Manager; Attorney Michael Lavery; Chief McDonald; Kevin McCarthy, CFO; Jeff Cooper, Assistant Municipal Supervisor of Public Works; and Joseph Rossi, Construction Official

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

PROCLAMATION

Mayor Kovacs read a proclamation honoring Walter "Bill" Cooper for his years of service to the Fire Department and to the Township of Washington.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Finke, seconded by Klingel, to approve the minutes from the regular meeting held October 16, 2012.

ROLL CALL: Finke, yes; Klingel, yes; Elbassiouny, yes; Marks, yes; Kovacs, yes

A motion was made by Finke, seconded by Klingel, to approve the Executive Session minutes from the regular meeting held October 16, 2012.

ROLL CALL: Finke, yes; Klingel, yes; Elbassiouny, yes; Marks, yes; Kovacs, yes

RESOLUTIONS

A motion was made by Marks, seconded by Elbassiouny, to approve Resolution 12-131, Authorizing the Transfer of Funds.

ROLL CALL: Marks, yes; Elbassiouny, yes; Finke, yes; Klingel, yes; Kovacs, yes

A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Marks, to approve Resolutions 12-132 through 12-135. Mr. Finke asked for clarification on the premiums listed on the tax sale resolutions. K. McCarthy referred him to the Tax Collector.

12-132 Tax Sale Certificate Redemption – Block 79, Lot 2

12-133 Tax Sale Certificate Redemption – Block 40, Lot 31.02

12-134 Tax Sale Certificate Redemption – Block 78, Lot 10.01

12-135 Resolution to Cancel 2012 Taxes – Block 65.05, Lot 3

ROLL CALL: Klingel, yes; Marks, yes; Elbassiouny, yes; Finke, yes; Kovacs, yes

STAFF ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Chief McDonald previously submitted a report. He commended Lieutenant Cicerelle, the Township's Office of Emergency Management Coordinator, for his work during Hurricane Sandy. Meetings were held before and after the storm which proved to be beneficial. Chief McDonald thanked the office staff and DPW for their help as well and stated the CERT team from Hawk Pointe was very helpful.

J. Cooper previously submitted a report. He stated storm related brush pick-up began November 13th and they are approximately 60% complete. He stated emergency road signage has been replenished and requested Committee approval to purchase a 10' x 20' shed to be used to store the road signs. The cost will be approximately \$3,500. Mr. Elbassiouny discussed other storage and funding options with J. Cooper. The CFO confirmed the availability of funds. A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Elbassiouny, to purchase a 10' x 20' shed not to exceed \$3,500.

ROLL CALL: Klingel, yes; Elbassiouny, yes; Finke, yes; Marks, yes; Kovacs, yes

K. McCarthy previously submitted a report and stated the Code & Construction Department will be paying approximately \$7,500 toward municipal building expenses. Mr. Elbassiouny suggested J. Rossi serve as liaison on the Land Use Board for planning purposes. K. McCarthy would like to hold budget workshops on February 9 and 23, 2013.

J. Rossi had nothing to report. Mr. Elbassiouny asked about structural damage due to the storm. J. Rossi replied there was no major devastation in the Township, twenty major damages and seventy-five minor damages. Mr. Elbassiouny asked about waiving permit fees for those homeowners. Attorney Lavery stated fees can be waived through a

resolution for storm-related damages, ending at the end of the year. Mrs. Marks would like the homeowners to provide supporting evidence of the storm-related damage. A motion was made by Elbassiouny, seconded by Klingel, to approve Resolution 12-136, Resolution Waiving Construction Permit Fees for Damage Caused by Hurricane Sandy.

ROLL CALL: Elbassiouny, yes; Klingel, yes; Finke, yes; Marks, yes; Kovacs, yes

Mr. deBoer previously submitted a report and stated he is thankful there were no fatalities or injuries in the Township related to this difficult storm. He thanked Chief McDonald and the Police Department, Lieutenants Cicerelle and Teter, J. Cooper and the DPW Department, the Fire Department, J. Rossi and the municipal staff who worked over the weekend, Mayor Kovacs and Mr. Klingel. Mr. deBoer stated he is thankful for the residents and their patience and understanding. Mayor Kovacs stated Mr. deBoer was very helpful to the residents by contacting JCP&L to obtain approximate times service would be restored.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Mayor Kovacs opened the meeting to the public. Hearing no one, Mayor Kovacs closed the public portion of the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business at this meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Kovacs stated a generator was rented to power the municipal building during the storm. Chief McDonald noted this is the fourth time since moving into the current building that power was lost. Mr. Elbassiouny recommends not delaying the decision any longer and purchase a generator pending the availability of funds. A motion was made by Elbassiouny, seconded by Finke, to authorize going out to bid for a generator.

ROLL CALL: Elbassiouny, yes; Finke, yes; Klingel, yes; Marks, yes; Kovacs, yes

A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Elbassiouny, to hold the Township's Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony on December 8, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Klingel, yes; Elbassiouny, yes; Finke, yes; Marks, yes; Kovacs, yes

Nick Kaufman was present representing 390 Route 57 which currently consists of Habitat for Humanity, Town Market and Junk Rx Outlet. The sign for the shopping center can no longer be seen from the road. They applied for a sign variance but were denied. They have been working with the Zoning Officer and would like permission to leave the temporary signs near the road to alert motorists of their businesses. Attorney Lavery stated the existing ordinance would need to be amended to allow temporary signs. Mayor Kovacs would like a sub-committee to discuss amending the ordinance in January to allow temporary signs.

Mr. deBoer stated the employees are requesting to hold a holiday luncheon on December 18th. Employees will be contributing to the luncheon; there will be no cost to the taxpayer. A motion was made by Elbassiouny, seconded by Klingel, to approve the holiday luncheon to be held on Tuesday, December 18, 2012. All were in favor.

REPORT FROM OFFICIALS

Mayor Kovacs had nothing to report.

Mr. Klingel thanked the employees and the CERT Team for their help during the storm.

Mr. Finke questioned the solar ordinance. Mr. Elbassiouny stated it was granted by the State and suggested Mr. Finke speak to the Land Use Board Planner.

Mr. Elbassiouny complimented the Township employees for their work during the storm. He recommends that the municipal building be open longer into the night if this should happen again. Chief McDonald suggested purchasing message boards that can be placed on the highway to alert residents who do not have access to the internet during emergencies. The cost could be split with the Township, Borough and Oxford. Mr. Elbassiouny also suggested collecting phone numbers at National Night Out to send alerts to residents. Chief McDonald stated he will be putting a list together of those residents with special medical needs.

Mrs. Marks had nothing to report.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Marks, to approve the payment of the bills.

ROLL CALL: Klingel, yes; Marks, yes; Elbassiouny, abstained; Finke, yes; Kovacs, yes

The Committee took a five minute recess before entering into Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Finke, to approve Resolution 12-137, Resolution Authorizing Executive Session for a Meeting Not Open to the Public in Accordance With the Provisions of the NJ Open Public Meeting Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 at 8:30 p.m. All were in favor. Attorney Lavery explained the Committee will be discussing a personnel/pending litigation matter dealing with the health benefits grievance and an attorney/client privilege matter dealing with a letter received from the Land Use Board attorney.

A motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Finke, to come out of Executive Session at 9:20 p.m. All were in favor. Attorney Lavery stated the Committee discussed a personnel/pending litigation matter dealing with the health benefits grievance and an attorney/client privilege matter dealing with a letter received from the Land Use Board attorney. No official action was taken. Copies of these minutes will be available at such time the Committee determines there is no harm to the public interest.

A motion was made by Finke, seconded by Elbassiouny to approve the AmeriHealth National Access Plan at a yearly cost of \$324,338.76 to be effective January 1, 2013 pending approval by the Teamsters and PBA.

ROLL CALL: Finke, yes; Elbassiouny, yes; Klingel, yes; Marks, abstained; Kovacs, yes

A motion was made by Kovacs, seconded by Klingel, to allow Marilyn Sendell and Joel Schnetzer of the Land Use Board to meet with Mayor Kovacs and incoming Committeeman John Horensky with regards to the letter received from the Land Use Board attorney. Mr. deBoer stated M. Sendell and J. Schnetzer have already met with the Highlands professionals and will be invited to future Highlands meetings.

ROLL CALL: Kovacs, yes; Klingel, yes; Elbassiouny, yes; Finke, yes; Marks, abstained.

ADJORNMENT

Hearing no further business to come before the Committee, a motion was made by Klingel, seconded by Elbassiouny, to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna C. Godfrey
Township Clerk