

The regular meeting of the East Amwell Township Committee was called to order at 7:32 p.m. Present were Mayor Peter Kneski, Deputy Mayor Dart Sageser, and Committee members Patricia Cregar and Tim Mathews. Committee Member David Wang-Iverson was absent. Township Administrator Timothy Matheny and Attorney Judy Kopen were also in attendance.

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Municipal Clerk Teresa R. Stahl announced that this is a regularly scheduled meeting, pursuant to the resolution adopted on January 1, 2013, and a meeting notice published in the Hunterdon County Democrat issue of January 10, 2013. A copy of the agenda for this meeting was forwarded to the Hunterdon County Democrat, Times of Trenton, Star Ledger, Courier News, posted on the bulletin board, and filed in the Clerk's Office on August 6, 2013.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

### **AGENDA REVIEW**

Under State Police Report, there is no representation from the Kingwood Barracks tonight.

Under Standing Committee Reports, table the discussion on the E.A. Historical Society regarding the 5K Run.

Under New Business, Table request from Unionville Vineyards for the Bike Ride Through the Sourlands on 9/29/13.

Committeeman Mathews will provide an update on the public hearing on the golf course in West Amwell under Special Discussions. He will also add the Hunterdon 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary update at that time.

Mayor Kneski asked the items on property maintenance code ordinances and the solicitor's ordinance be moved up under special discussions while Attorney Kopen was present.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Special Primary Election Day for Vacated Senatorial Seat is on Tuesday, August 13, 2013, from 6 a.m. – 8 p.m. All polls are located at the municipal building.

Municipal Offices will be closed on Monday, September 2, 2013 (Labor Day).

The Tax Assessor, Marianne Busher, will present an overview of the 2013 Reassessment during the regular meeting of the Township Committee on Thursday, September 12, 2013, at 7:30 p.m.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

July 11, 2013, Special Minutes (resolution to enter executive session) were approved on a motion by Deputy Mayor Sageser, seconded by Mr. Mathews, and carried with one abstention, Mrs. Cregar.

July 11, 2013, Executive Minutes (Personnel, Land Acquisition, Atty. Advice) were approved on a motion by Deputy Mayor Sageser, seconded by Mr. Mathews, and carried with one abstention, Mrs. Cregar, with one correction on page 1, second paragraph from the end, line 3, change "property" to "properly."

July 11, 2013, Regular Minutes were approved on a motion by Deputy Mayor Sageser, seconded by Mr. Mathews, and carried with one abstention, Mrs. Cregar, with three corrections: on page 12, paragraph 5, line 1, change "Mr. Mathews" to "Mr. Wang-Iverson", and on page 13, paragraph 6, line 2, change "Meridian" to "Veridian"; on page 15, top of page at vote on resolution, after "carried unanimously," add "by those members present to approve the resolution."

The Clerk noted an August 3<sup>rd</sup> email from Committee member David Wang-Iverson, who asked that the following paragraph be read into the record during minute review: “At the July Township Committee meeting, I provided figures for the impact of the 2013 municipal budget for the average residential property. These figures were based on an estimated tax rate of 0.185%. The actual tax rate as set by the County is slightly lower: 0.184%. This means that the municipal use tax for the average residential property will increase by \$22 for the year or a little less than 0.6 cents per \$100 of value. The average residential property in the township is currently valued at \$382,472.”

Mr. Mathews asked how the average was calculated, and the Assessor will be asked to answer.

### STATE POLICE UPDATE

It was noted that the State Police normally try to have someone at the meeting, but Sgt. Nini is on vacation. It was hoped that someone would attend the next meeting.

### OPEN TO THE PUBLIC (for Comments from the Public for Items Not on the Agenda)

Glorianne Robbi, 144 Lambertville-Hopewell Turnpike, spoke about a previous request she made to the governing body to support a referendum on the November ballot for continued preservation funding. The effort failed to pass the legislature on July 29; she provided information from a recent Farm Bureau newsletter on the efforts of Senator Sweeney and on the session being open for vote from morning until 7 p.m. in the event for individual senators to “come forth,” with the vote being 2 less than the super-majority vote needed to have the question on the ballot. Mrs. Robbi commented on several Republicans switching their vote at the urging of the Governor, and she commended Senators Kip Bateman, Diane Allen, Bob Smith, and Stephen Sweeney for their support. Mrs. Robbi said that while the opportunity was lost this year, there is an opportunity to try to get it on the ballot for 2014.

David Kanach wanted to comment on the property mowing on Manners Road; Mayor Kneski said that the item would be on the agenda under property maintenance codes.

Charles Van Horn, 62 Snyderstown Road, spoke about higher volume of traffic on his road because of the bridge being out on Route 518. Traffic is coming up Stony Brook to Snyderstown to Linvale to Route 31 North. He noted two traffic accidents on Snyderstown Road listed on the State Police report for July. He said that drivers are speeding to make up for lost time and are driving in the middle of a narrow road that has three one way bridges. Mr. Van Horn mentioned tractor trailers on the road and his concern that the bridges may not be able to handle this type of load; he believed that “there was a serious problem,” and he asked that the State Police be requested to pay more attention in the area. Mr. Matheny will call the State Police and also contact Hopewell Township, who takes care of Stony Brook Road; he also mentioned that the bridges are under County jurisdiction and have specific limitations. The possibility of putting the speed trailer in the area was also mentioned.

Frances Gavigan, 124 Wertsville Road, said that the project on Route 518 is a joint Mercer and Hunterdon County job, and she suggested getting signs from Hunterdon County for assistance. She believed that GPS systems are routing drivers onto the roads in question, and placement of county signs would be helpful.

Ms. Gavigan has spoken with people in the community about tax increases, and she believed the taxes were causing an extra burden on many, including seniors. She commented on the need to provide outreach to seniors and veterans about tax options, including contacting [Tax Collector] Mary Hyland to “see who are at risk.” Ms. Gavigan has information she has been providing, including links for filing forms.

Ms. Gavigan mentioned the figures for the average price of a house and the percentage increase (22.67 percent for municipal increase and 19.29 percent for the local school tax). She believed that it was important to find ways to save taxes, especially for people who have hardships. She felt that it was difficult to figure out the difference in bills between 2012 and 2013; she also asked that the Township Committee be sensitive to the community, especially people who have

lived here a long time and see their taxes going up “hundreds and thousands.” She did not think that the valuations “were fair and were not matched by long term resident income...most likely seniors.”

Glorianne Robbi said that the real problem with the traffic on Snyderstown Road is the location of the detour on Route 518, explaining the location of the sign. Mercer County is the lead agency, and Mr. Matheny will contact them about changing the detour sign.

Motion by Deputy Mayor Sageser, seconded by Mrs. Cregar, and carried unanimously to close to the public.

## SPECIAL DISCUSSIONS

### UPDATE BY COMMITTEE MEMBER MATHEWS ON WEST AMWELL TOWNSHIP HEARING ON GOLF COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Mathews attended the recent public hearing in West Amwell regarding the potential of a liquor store near the golf course. He attended the meeting as a resident of East Amwell, and he made a statement that he thought that a thorough traffic impact study should be done, considering numerous accidents in the narrowing of the road near Quick Chek.

### HUNTERDON COUNTY TRICENTENNIAL

Mr. Mathews recently spoke with Marcia Karrow, who informed him that only two municipalities did not commit to purchasing the art work commissioned for the event, Lebanon Township and East Amwell. He asked the Township Committee to consider the purchase. The Clerk noted that the item was on some previous agendas, but the Mayor advised that there was no money budgeted for the purchase and not included on future agendas. Mrs. Cregar offered to purchase the piece, and Mr. Mathews agreed to assist on the purchase, then asking other Committee members and the Administrator if they would contribute. Since the Committee members are making a personal purchase, there was no motion necessary to move forth. Mr. Mathews will handle the paperwork for the purchase.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE ORDINANCES (See 7/11/13 Minutes for Background)

Samples of property maintenance codes were obtained from other municipalities in the County for the Committee's review.

Mr. Mathews referenced the Board of Health's nuisance ordinance, suggesting an “efficient” amendment to that ordinance in Section 163-2, Nuisances declared and prohibited: “A(1) Pollution, or existence of a condition or conditions which cause or threaten to cause pollution of any waters **or farmland** in this municipality ...” (bold text as added language). Some discussion took place regarding the need to consider other property issues, such as real structural problems, abandoned properties, etc. Ms. Kopen commented on previous concerns in the court system with broad or ambiguous nuisance ordinances. Mayor Kneski asked about case specific ordinances, such as an ordinance for abandoned properties taken over by banks to address not mowing the site. Ms. Kopen said that this would raise a concern, i.e., there may be other properties with the similar situation and enforcement of only the bank owned properties might be a problem.

Deputy Mayor Sageser spoke about property maintenance and the need to define what the expectations of the community might be. He spoke about the neighboring municipalities' ordinances, and he felt that there needed to be a way to preserve a community and property values, public safety, and address real safety concerns. He asked if the Planning Board or Board of Health would need to look at the issue.

Mayor Kneski felt that the immediate concern was foreclosed homes with weeds, noxious growth, and other health hazards. Ms. Kopen spoke about crafting an ordinance to cover these

items, but she was unsure whether such an ordinance could be limited to foreclosed homes or properties owned by financial institutions under the foreclosure process.

Mr. Mathews was in favor of directing the Board of Health to look into an amendment to the existing nuisance ordinance, if the Attorney could find “quick” wording to address the problem. Ms. Kopen will work on this issue.

Deputy Mayor Sageser mentioned the longer term issue of property maintenance, including the best process to follow to address health and safety issues, enforcement agency, etc. He spoke about building an effective community ordinance to address such issues as farmland, out-buildings, etc., making it appropriate for our township. Dependence on Raritan Township for building inspections was also noted, and it was important to see what their responsibilities would be for code maintenance. Mr. Mathews added that health and safety issues must also be considered. Deputy Mayor Sageser agreed to spear-head this project and keep the governing body up to date.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**SOLICITOR’S ORDINANCE – Request from Committee Member Mathews for Discussion**

Mr. Mathews asked that this item be added to the agenda, commenting on “unknown characters coming onto properties.” He spoke about a recent incident on Linvale Road, where a car with a Missouri license plate was selling children’s books; there were two cases when police were called. The same vendor was on Zion Road and alleged that the Board of Education was approving the sale, which was untrue. Mr. Mathews also spoke about a vendor who came to his property who was selling meat of the back of a truck.

Some discussion took place on the possibility of a solicitation ordinance. Mayor Kneski questioned how background checks would be performed since the Township did not have its own police force. Mr. Matheny said that he has spoken with the State Police about the issue, noting that there are a couple of towns that they cover who have solicitors’ ordinances; he asked that they recommend a good one “without reinventing the wheel” and see if the rules fit East Amwell. Mr. Matheny cautioned against offering the public false hope even by having an ordinance in place.

Ms. Kopen mentioned that there are some first amendment issues, including allowing churches going door-to-door. Mr. Matheny said that he is waiting for a response from the State Police, and there may be a question about whether they would do the background checks or not.

Ms. Kopen left the meeting at this time.

**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

**ABC LICENSE FOR AMWELL VALLEY FIRE COMPANY – SOCIAL AFFAIRS PERMIT FOR HARVEST FEST, SEPTEMBER 7, 2013 (Rain Date: September 8)**

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**RESOLUTION # 90 - 13**

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that they have no objection to granting Special Permits for Social Affairs from the New Jersey Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control for their annual Harvest Fest to be held at the Amwell Valley Fire Company, Post Office Box 76, Ringoes, NJ 08551 on Saturday, September 7, 2013 (Raindate, Sunday, September 8, 2013).

By Order of the Township Committee,

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Peter Kneski, Mayor

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FIREWORKS PERMIT – AMWELL VALLEY FIRE COMPANY FOR HARVEST FEST ON SEPTEMBER 7, 2013 (Rain Date: September 8)

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RESOLUTION # 91 -13

WHEREAS, there is a Harvest Fest in East Amwell Township held each fall at the Amwell Valley Fire Company in Ringoes; and

WHEREAS, there has been a request for a resolution of approval from the governing body of the Township of East Amwell to have a fireworks display at the event; and

WHEREAS, an application for a permit to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of Fire Safety, has been made by the Amwell Valley Fire Company for a fireworks display on Saturday, September 7, 2013, with a rain date of Sunday, September 8, 2013;

WHEREAS, Garden State Fireworks, a New Jersey operator approved by the Amwell Valley Fire Company, will be displaying the fireworks and complying with the requirements of the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety’s permit; and

WHEREAS, a certificate of additional insured has been obtained from the Amwell Valley Fire Company’s insurance carrier, naming East Amwell Township to their coverage;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell that they grant permission for the public fireworks display in the municipality at the 2013 Harvest Fest.

By Order of the Township Committee,

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Peter Kneski, Mayor

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THE RIDGE AT BACK BROOK SOCIAL AFFAIRS PERMITS FOR THREE EVENTS

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RESOLUTION # 92-13

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that they have no objection to a Social Affairs Permit being granted to St. Peter’s Hospital Foundation for an event to be held on September 9, 2013, at The Ridge at Back Brook, 211 Wertsville Road, Ringoes, NJ 08551.

By Order of the Township Committee,

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Peter Kneski, Mayor

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RESOLUTION #93 -13

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that they have no objection to a Social Affairs Permit being granted to NUJ Coalition of Auto Retailers (NJ CAR) for an event to be held on September 16, 2013, at The Ridge at Back Brook, 211 Wertsville Road, Ringoes, NJ 08551.

By Order of the Township Committee,

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Peter Kneski, Mayor

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**RESOLUTION #94 -13**

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that they have no objection to a Social Affairs Permit being granted to The Midland Foundation for an event to be held on September 30, 2013, at The Ridge at Back Brook, 211 Wertsville Road, Ringoes, NJ 08551.

By Order of the Township Committee,

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Peter Kneski, Mayor

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Motion by Mrs. Cregar, seconded by Deputy Mayor Sageser, and carried unanimously to approve all items on the consent agenda.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS/INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES**

**Public Hearings:**

**ORDINANCE 13-06 2013 SALARY AND WAGE ORDINANCE**

As proof of publication, the Clerk provided the legal notice from the July 18, 2013, issue of the Hunterdon County Democrat. The ordinance has been posted and available to the public since introduction on July 11, 2013.

The meeting was open to the public for comment.

Chris Vogel, 5 Manners Road, felt that the previous year’s compensation information for employees would be appropriate for the public to know, and he suggested that it could be considered for next year’s document. He also asked about the ordinance being retroactive to January 1; he commented on it being unusual and unfair to wait for 9 months for remuneration and also hard to budget for such.

Deputy Mayor Sageser said that “these were good points,” further explaining that the budget was adopted late this year, and employees understood that they would be paid last year’s pay until the new salary ordinance was adopted. He stated that most employees received a 2% increase, and the process is “fairly typical.”

Frances Gavigan, 123 Wertsville Road, commented on some employees having a set figure and the range changes for others, including a range change for the CFO and for Administrator Matheny, whose contract was discussed last month and will receive a salary of over \$60,000. She asked for clarity in the ranges, specifically the CFO line from \$14,790 to \$45,000. Mayor Kneski explained that the structure of the ordinance is to include a minimum and maximum figure with employees being paid within the range; the resolution provides the actual salary, e.g., \$60,080 for the Administrator. Ms. Gavigan continued that she had difficulty figuring out the ranges and was looking for clarification. The Clerk noted that the CFO/Treasurer range was adjusted for the previous CFOs in the position. Mr. Matheny explained that the ordinance is only a range and does not reflect the approved salary, providing the range for the Zoning Officer as an example. It was noted that the range is usually adjusted, top and bottom, the percentage of the increase given to employees, i.e., in this case, 2%.

Ms. Gavigan spoke about the salary resolution pertaining to one employee, Maria Andrews. Ms. Gavigan referenced a precedent previously set that was not extrapolated for Ms. Andrews, an

employee who has been here for ten years. She explained that the Board of Health and Assistant Treasurer receives an equal salary of \$19.50 per hour. Ms. Andrews receives \$21.14 per hour for Planning Board and Board of Adjustment positions, but only receives \$18.59 per hour for Zoning Secretary. Mr. Matheny said that the ranges are set for positions, with the Administrative Officer having the same range for both jobs; the zoning secretary is a position with a lesser value in the range. Ms. Gavigan spoke about the March Township Committee meeting when an adjustment was made for the salary of the Financial and the Board of Health positions, setting precedent at that time; she felt that in this instance, the same person is serving in three positions, and the same precedent is not being followed. Mr. Matheny said that the ranges for the Board of Health and Assistant Treasurer are equal; in Ms. Andrews' instance, the zoning secretary is a totally different job at a different range. Mr. Matheny reiterated that the intent is to try to normalize rates in a range.

Motion by Mrs. Cregar, seconded by Deputy Mayor Sageser, and carried unanimously to close to the public.

Motion by Mrs. Cregar, seconded by Deputy Mayor Sageser, and carried by roll call vote to approve Ordinance 13-06: Mrs. Cregar, yes; Mr. Sageser, yes; Mr. Mathews, no; Mr. Kneski, yes.

#### **Introduction of Ordinances** – None

### **SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### COAH (Affordable Housing)

1) Presentation of Checks to NORWESCAP and Easter Seals: MHL/Administrative Agent Jim Robbins and John Korp, NORWESCAP Associate Director, were present at this time. Easter Seals could not be present tonight.

There was a photo op for the Mayor and COAH representatives, with the \$59,000 check being given to NORWESCAP (Northwest New Jersey Community Action Program). The funding will cover 5 rehabilitation units with \$9,000 going to administrative costs. Mr. Korp thanked the Township, noting that they are doing a "soft sell" of the program, including direct mailings to income eligible residents in the Township. Mr. Korp said that there are roughly 1,000 income eligible people in the community, with some listed in dual agencies, i.e., elderly, non-elderly, children, those in need of health care, nutrition, etc. NORWESCAP has also reached out to the County to make them aware of the availability of funds. There are minimum standards to utilize the funds, e.g., energy, septic repairs, roofs, etc. There are guidelines in place, including a forgivable lien over time. Mr. Korp agreed to "take plenty of pictures... and will continue to work with Jim Robbins to get things done."

Mayor Kneski thanked Mr. Korp for his efforts, and some discussion took place on inspection of work. There is a line item in the salary and wage ordinance for COAH inspections at \$35.00. Mr. Korp commented on using licensed, fully insured contractors for all the work.

2) Update from Jim Robbins on COAH Items: Mr. Robbins spoke about a foreclosure on a COAH home, which is in the process of being sold. He is working on the income qualification and state approval process with attorney review involved.

Mayor Kneski asked that Easter Seals be invited to the next Township Committee meeting to receive their check.

#### **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS** – None

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR’S UPDATE

1) Appointment of New Department of Public Works Employee: Mr. Matheny said that there were 39 applications for the laborer position, 11 candidates were interviewed by he and DPW Employee Jason Silverthorn, and the applicant selected was Brian Grochowicz. His family owns a farm on Route 31 in Glen Gardner, and his education includes schooling at Lincoln Tech as a diesel mechanic. Mr. Grochowicz rebuilds farm equipment and does work on the farm, which he will continue to do. He has experience with large vehicles and operates under a farmer’s license. He will need to obtain his CDL as part of his job expectations. He had “great references, including one from the Clerk of Glen Gardner. “ Mr. Matheny referenced his inter-office memo recommending the hiring at a salary of \$18.50 per hour with benefits for a one-year probationary period; both Mr. Silverthorn and Mr. Kadezabek concurred with the recommendation.

Deputy Mayor Sageser mentioned that Mr. Grochowicz would be expected to obtain his CDL license at his own expense within the probationary period.

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**RESOLUTION #95-13**

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell that they hereby accept the recommendations of the Township Administrator in his July 29, 2013, memo to appoint Brian Grochowicz to a one year probationary period position as a Department of Public Works Employee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Mr. Grochowicz will be required to obtain his CDL license at his own expense during the probationary period; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the 2013 Salary and Wage Resolution be amended to include the following:

ADD:

DPW Employee Grochowicz \$18.50 per hour

By Order of the Township Committee,

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Peter Kneski, Mayor

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Motion by Deputy Mayor Sageser, seconded by Mrs. Cregar, and carried with one no vote from Mr. Mathews.

Mr. Matheny will contact Mr. Grochowicz to determine the start day of his employment.

2) Appointment of Inspector for Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Detectors: Mr. Matheny noted that Inspectors Buchanan and Izzo from Raritan Township are indisposed, and he recommended the appointment of a third candidate, Andrew Kintzel, who is working in Raritan Township and fully certified to do the inspections.

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**RESOLUTION #96-13**

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell that they hereby appoint Andrew Kintzel as an additional Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Detector Inspector and amend the 2013 Salary and Wage Resolution as follows:

ADD

Inspector Kintzel – Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Detector Inspections \$25.00

By Order of the Township Committee,

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Peter Kneski, Mayor

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Motion by Deputy Mayor Sageser, seconded by Mr. Mathews, and carried unanimously.

3) Update on Recent HART Breakfast: Mr. Matheny commented on the July 25th breakfast, sponsored by HART (Hunterdon Area Rural Transit). East Amwell Township received the Pedestrian Facility Award for the Ringoes sidewalks project, which will provide safety for pedestrians and increase foot/bicycle traffic in the area. This is seen “as a very positive thing for East Amwell,” noting that the work was completed with grant funding and did not cost the Township any money directly. Mrs. Cregar agreed that “it was a nice job.” A press release was given to the Hunterdon County Democrat, which may be published next week.

4) Discussion on Bonding for Purchase of Backhoe and Upgrades for Municipal Barn at the Grit Yard: Mr. Matheny wanted to bring this forward to the governing body for discussion. These capital items were discussed during the budget sessions. The upgrades to the barn include insulation and heat to the existing building – the building is humid, which produces rust-causing condensation, and the coldness makes it difficult for trucks to start (e.g., diesels must be plugged in to start up, etc.). The estimated cost of the project is \$44,000, which includes \$26,400 for insulation and \$18,000 for heat.

The backhoe is a critical piece of equipment, and the current machine is over 15 years old – there is about \$18,000 – 20,000 in repairs necessary for the existing unit. A new backhoe would cost about \$115,000 for a complete, improved machine with thumb grips (which is a design component on newer equipment).

Mr. Matheny was recommending a bond ordinance in the amount of \$200,000 to cover both items. He noted that there is 5% in the capital budget as a down payment and the rest of the amount would be bonded. He mentioned that he has not seen the backhoe on any state contract list, so it would have to go for bid; the repairs to the building would also have to go out for bid. Preparing bids, advertising, public hearings, etc. will take some time, and he would like to have the bond and bid process run simultaneously.

Mayor Kneski asked who would be preparing the barn bids, i.e., an architect or engineer. Mr. Matheny spoke about obtaining a quote from a contractor, but he would have to have the engineer involved to answer load issues. Mr. Matheny noted that the \$44,000 estimate did not include soft costs. He again recommended bonding for \$200,000 and borrow against it as needed.

Deputy Mayor Sageser asked if radiant heat was considered for the barn; Mr. Matheny was not sure if it could be used because of the height of the existing building. He agreed that getting engineering input for efficiency was a goal.

Mayor Kneski asked about checking with the Direct Install program to see if there is grant money for the garage. He recalled that the program had funding at one time for building design. Mr. Matheny reminded the governing body that Direct Install only funded replacement items, not new installations; he did agree to contact them to see if there was a similar program for new work.

Mr. Matheny asked for the sense of the Township Committee on moving forward. Mr. Matheny noted that the current backhoe is operating, but needs \$18,000 – 20,000 in repairs. He also noted that the new vehicles are lodged in the unheated barn.

Deputy Mayor Sageser raised his concerns with the bond process, specifically about potential penalties to be incurred and whether to go with bonds or anticipation notes. He would like some input on the process. Mayor Kneski felt that the direction was to move forward, subject to getting information from the CFO. Mr. Mathews also wanted information on how this bond would impact the current bond. This item will continue on the September agenda.

5) Summer Playground: Mr. Matheny mentioned the great pictures being passed along to the governing body, showing some of the activities at Summer Playground. He mentioned tye-dyed shirts made and provided to the Deputy Clerk, Clerk and Administrator. Mrs. Veith will be providing an update at a future meeting.

ADOPTION OF FOREST FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN – See 7/11/13 Minutes for Background

Mr. Mathews reported on a meeting of the LEPC meeting this morning when this item was discussed. He mentioned the availability of grant money for equipment and mentioned remediating risks, including removal of fuel wood for fire protection.

The LEPC also discussed the generator transfer switch. Mr. Matheny explained that even with a system brought on site in an emergency, the unit would still have to be plugged in. Jason Silverthorn looked into a “quick connect box,” which requires a manual transfer switch. Based on the power needed, the cost would be \$15,375. There is \$13,600 in a capital ordinance for emergency management from 2005. Mr. Matheny suggested that this could be done within the current budget, if the Township Committee wished to move forward.

Mr. Mathews mentioned that there were one or two vendors who would have generators to plug in, and they can be obtained within a 24 hour period. Mr. Matheny said that he would contact one of the vendors next week. Mr. Mathews further explained that where he works, they have a subscription with a company who rolls the generators in within 24 hours.

Some comments were exchanged between Mr. Matheny and the governing body regarding the selection of a transfer switch as opposed to an on-site generator, the preference for an automatic switch but being able to use a manual switch (with DPW members available to maneuver it), and the hope that the switch may be reused if an on-site generator is ever available. All were in agreement that FEMA would probably not be providing generators in the near future, and generators were expensive and needed maintenance; they agreed that it was more cost effective to bring one in as needed.

The ordinance will be prepared for the next meeting.

Mr. Mathews again spoke about the Forest Fire Management Plan, which was reviewed by the LEPC. Electronic copies were sent to all members for review, and LEPC believed that there were some items still to be addressed in the plan. There is a question of ownership of the plan, i.e., the municipality or the fire department, although it will be an annex to the Township’s Disaster Plan. Gary Myers is the OEM Coordinator, and this ownership item still needs to be finalized with his input.

Additionally, some stakeholder “buy in” is necessary. As an example, on page 9 of the document, reference is made to a reduction of fuel at the Cider Mill Grassland property, which is a bird habitat. There will have to be a meeting of the stakeholders to work on fire management remediation consistent with preservation. Also, on page 13, there are four items to be addressed, including communication in the mountain district on how to clean up around homes and keep the area clear to prevent fire. Tips about fire prevention may also be prepared for the website. There will have to be a report on brush improvements (working with the stakeholders on this) and a follow up drill/training to satisfy the grant. The LEPC agreed that Gary Myers will have a secondary meeting with stakeholders between now and October to see what is possible with clean up, what kind of wording changes are necessary, and continued work with the fire company on the project and funding. Eventually, the governing body will adopt the plan to be implemented. There will be an update at the October meeting.

2012 AUDIT FROM WITHUMSMITH & BROWN

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**RESOLUTION # 97-13**

**GOVERNING BODY CERTIFICATION OF THE ANNUAL AUDIT**

WHEREAS, NJSA 40A:5-4 requires the governing body of every local unit to have made

an annual audit of its books, accounts and financial transactions; and

WHEREAS, the annual Report of the Audit for the year 2012 has been filed by a Registered Municipal Accountant with the Municipal Clerk of the Township of East Amwell as per the requirements of NJSA 40A:5-6, and a copy has been received by each member of the governing body; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 52:27BB-34 authorizes the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey to prescribe reports pertaining to the local fiscal affairs; and

WHEREAS, the Local Finance Board has promulgated a regulation requiring that the governing body of each municipality shall by resolution certify to the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey that all members of the governing body have reviewed, as a minimum, the sections of the annual audit entitled Comments and Recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the members of the governing body have personally reviewed as a minimum the Annual Report of the Audit, and specifically the sections of the annual audit entitled Recommendations, as evidenced by the group affidavit form of the governing body; and

WHEREAS, such resolution of certification shall be adopted by the governing body no later than forty-five days after the receipt of the annual audit, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:30-6.5; and

WHEREAS, all members of the governing body have received and have familiarized themselves with, at least, the minimum requirements of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey, as stated aforesaid and have subscribed to the affidavit, as provided by the Local Finance Board; and

WHEREAS, failure to comply with the regulations of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey may subject the members of the local governing body to the penalty provisions of R.S. 52:27BB-52 – to wit:

R.S. 52:27BB-52 – “A local officer or member of a local governing body, who after a date fixed for compliance, fails or refuses to obey an order of the director (Director of Local Government Services), under the provisions of this Article, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, may be fined not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) or imprisoned for not more than one year, of both, in addition shall forfeit his office.”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, hereby states that it has complied with N.J.A.C 5:30-6.5 and does hereby submit a certified copy of this resolution and required affidavit to said Board to show evidence of said compliance.

By Order of the Township Committee,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Peter Kneski, Mayor

++++  
Mrs. Cregar made a motion to approve the resolution and seconded by Deputy Mayor Sageser.

Mr. Mathews asked if Mr. Case could clarify, on page 28 of the current funds balance sheet with a difference of \$100,000, i.e., summarize the difference between \$15,624,044.91 in increased receipts with \$16,620,305.27 in decreased disbursements and how to rebuild the two.

The resolution was carried unanimously by roll call vote: Mrs. Cregar, yes; Mr. Sageser, yes; Mr. Mathews, yes; Mr. Kneski yes.

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Sue Posselt, 155 Cider Mill Road, asked when Comcast representatives would be present again; she was told on September 12. She also asked what HART stood for, i.e., Hunterdon Area Rural Transit.

Frances Gavigan, 123 Wertsville Road, commented on speaking with Mr. Anderson from JCP&L at a Freeholder's meeting and a field meeting in Tewksbury. JCP&L was going to be addressing trees near Route 31 and Rocktown Roads, and they were to continue further along the road. Ms. Gavigan voiced her concern about hanging tree branches, especially in the mountain zone, near the road. She mentioned a recent death in New York because of branches falling on bystanders. She suggested some kind of tree trimming project for the Township with either the power and cable companies assisting. She commented on a liability issue on township roads.

Mayor Kneski explained that shade tree commissions issue controls in some municipalities. He mentioned that doing tree trimming requires certain expensive equipment that the Township does not own. He suggested cooperating with the electric, cable, and telephone companies to point out problem areas to them.

Ms. Gavigan suggested that the Department of Public Works tell utilities about the problem areas, using cell phone pictures for documentation - she believed that this would produce results.

Motion by Mrs. Cregar to close to the public.

Ms. Gavigan asked about a public page on the website where the public could upload pictures of problem areas; Mr. Matheny advised against it.

The motion to close was seconded by Deputy Mayor Sageser, and carried unanimously.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

TREASURER'S OFFICE provided the bills of the evening. Motion by Mrs. Cregar, seconded by Deputy Mayor Sageser, and carried unanimously to approve the bills of the evening.

There were no resolutions offered by the Treasurer.

TAX COLLECTOR HYLAND provided her July report but no resolutions.

Mrs. Cregar left the meeting at this time.

COURT ADMINISTRATOR HOOVEN presented her July report.

DPW REPORT: Mr. Mathews asked about the amount of work involved by the DPW on the trails on Rocktown Road. Mr. Matheny advised that the work was part of "in kind" contribution as part of the grant application to do the work. He estimated a full day of work for the full crew, although he did not believe it took that long, and the DPW had some of the material.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Clerk pointed out correspondence from Readington Township regarding a resolution to veto a forestry stewardship bill; she noted that resident Andrea Bonette had also sent an email to ask the Township Committee to consider this. Mr. Mathews said that he would like to get more information and details about the bill, noting that as part of a forest management plan, property owners have to cut a certain amount of timber. It was noted that the legislation pertains to state owned land, and a copy of the bill will be obtained for consideration at the next meeting.

The Committee also noted the 7/29 League of Municipalities alert on Verizon Business Personal Property Tax Matter.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, motion by Deputy Mayor Sageser, seconded by Mr. Mathews, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

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Teresa R. Stahl, RMC/CMC  
Municipal Clerk