

A special meeting of the East Amwell Township Committee came to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Dart Sageser, Deputy Mayor David Wang-Iverson, and Committee members Tim Mathews, Charles Van Horn, and Peter Miller.

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting was sent to the Hunterdon County Democrat, Times of Trenton, and Star Ledger, and posted on the bulletin board on December 19, 2014. The purpose of this meeting is to interview candidates for Township committees/boards. The public is invited to attend. Action may or may not be taken.

Michele Doherty, Rainbow Hill Road, was interested in serving on the Board of Adjustment. Gael Gardner was instrumental in recruiting her to assist. Ms. Doherty grew up in Watchung and moved to East Amwell from Staten Island five years ago. In Staten Island, she was president of the Friends of Bloomingdale Park, working on the preservation of the area. Her family owns a horse farm in East Amwell, they are members of the Amwell Valley Trail Association, and her children are grown, so she has time to give back to the community. She commented on driving through East Amwell as a child, admiring the farmland – she believes the area is similar today. On a question from the Mayor, Ms. Doherty spoke of owning horses while in Staten Island, not in Watchung, where she grew up. Ms. Doherty also noted that she will have to take a course to serve on the Board, and she looked forward to learning “the lay of the land and to see how best to serve.”

Mr. Mathews asked if Ms. Doherty had any issues in front of the Board; she explained that she obtained permits to build sheds and was familiar with regulations. She mentioned that her close relationship with her neighbor, Barbara Hay, and she had no objections to the horse arena on her property.

Deputy Mayor Wang-Iverson spoke about the judicial function of the Board of Adjustment, and Ms. Doherty provided her insight into the board as an arbitration board with experts being called. Comments were exchanged between the Mayor and Ms. Doherty on zoning regulations and the requirement to adhere to regulations.

Mayor Sageser commented on Ms. Doherty’s background in social services; Ms. Doherty was a Red Cross worker and was a first responder in New York during 911. She had a private practice in psychotherapy. The Mayor asked if she would also be willing to serve on the Local Public Assistance Board, which only meets quarterly. Ms. Doherty thought that this might be something that she would be interested in, and the Clerk will provide contact information for the Local Public Assistance Director, Bambi Kuhl.

Deputy Mayor Wang-Iverson commented on the schedule for the Board of Adjustment, which although is scheduled for once a month meetings, occasionally cancels because of lack of business.

Dante DiPirro, Snydertown Road, showed interest in three areas, Planning Board, Board of Adjustment, or Environmental Commission, with his primary interest in the Planning Board. He previously worked at the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and helped work on their Master Plan. He was also an attorney for the Highlands, and he has experience in appearances before planning and zoning boards. He also has a private legal practice. Mr. DiPirro also helped work on some of the East Amwell trails, with Toni Robbi suggesting that he apply for the Environmental Commission. Mr. DiPirro bought property in East Amwell in 2001; he appreciates the quality of life in the municipality, including the mountains, open space, commitment of people to preserve the quality of life, and he wanted to continue to do positive things in the Township.

Mayor Sageser commented on Mr. DiPirro’s work with the Highlands, and Mr. DiPirro explained that he helped prepare legislation and worked on the first regional map of that area. He commented on the importance of regional planning in Master Plans to achieve goals, which helps governing bodies and others to carry them out.

Mr. Mathews asked about Mr. DiPirro’s opinion of the village study. Mr. DiPirro commented on open space and farms in the municipality, but he was “excited” that there was a town also, which could become a place for people to meet and share resources and have social contact. He

believed that this would be positive for communities, and there is already an historic village in existence. He liked that there was input obtained and he looked forward to the development of something meaningful in the village. He felt that “ours is the best township around, but ... [developing the village] would help more.”

Deputy Mayor Wang-Iverson asked about time commitments for service; Mr. DiPirro said that his responsibilities include a general law practice and a lot of work on renewable energy (solar and construction). He does significant work with renewable buildings, including using the house he built as a demonstration model. He consults for businesses, but he sets his own schedule, and apart from trial dates, he can arrange his commitments. He would be willing to prioritize his service on a board. Deputy Mayor Wang-Iverson commented on upcoming meetings with county planners regarding the village, and Mr. DiPirro would make himself available for these meetings.

Mayor Sageser asked about more information on Mr. DiPirro’s service with the DEP. Mr. DiPirro said that he was involved with planning matters for the Highlands Council and he served as Commissioner Bradley Campbell’s attorney. He provided anecdotal information on how he became interested in renewable energy during this period.

Motion by Mr. Mathews, seconded by Mr. Miller, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

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Teresa R. Stahl, RMC/CMC  
Municipal Clerk