

The regular meeting of the East Amwell Township Committee was called to order at 7:30 p.m. Present were Mayor David Wang-Iverson and Committee members Charles Van Horn, Tim Mathews, and Peter Miller. Deputy Mayor Sageser was absent, and Township Administrator Timothy Matheny was excused.

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Deputy Clerk Pamela Dymek announced that this is a regularly scheduled meeting, pursuant to the resolution adopted on January 7, 2015, with a meeting notice published in the Hunterdon County Democrat issue of January 15, 2015. 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 December 23, 2015.

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

AGENDA REVIEW

Under New Business, a resolution for the change of date for the 2016 Reorganization Meeting will be added.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Municipal Offices will be closed on December 31, 2015, for New Year's Eve and January 1, 2016 for New Year's Day.

East Amwell Township Committee Reorganization will be on January 5, 2016, at 7:30 p.m.

Reorganization Dates for All Township Boards and Committees are posted on the bulletin board and the website, www.eastamwelltownship.com

UPDATE FROM THE CFO - None

SPECIAL DISCUSSIONS -None

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS - None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 10, 2015, Special Meeting Minutes (Budget) were approved on a motion by Mr. Van Horn and seconded by Mr. Miller. Mr. Mathews asked about the section on his page 7 (the distributed minutes on page 5), 8th paragraph, re: a salary study memo to be distributed to staff on Friday, December 11. Mr. Mathews asked about the intention to distribute the memo to staff; Mayor Wang-Iverson said that the distribution to staff was for their general information. He further explained that Mr. Matheny had each individual employee do the research for their position, and he was providing the final report for their information. Mr. Mathews commented on their being no commitment to act on it; the Mayor said no, not at this time, and it will be part of the budget discussions. The minutes were approved with one abstention, Mr. Mathews.

December 10, 2015, Regular Meeting Minutes were approved on a motion by Mr. Van Horn, seconded by Mr. Miller, and carried with one abstention, Mr. Mathews.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS - None

PUBLIC HEARINGS/INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES - None

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS – None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION TO CHANGE THE DATE FOR REORGANIZATION

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RESOLUTION #166-15

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell that they hereby amend Resolution #01-15 to change the reorganization date from January 4, 2016, to January 5, 2016, at 7:30 p.m.

By Order of the Township Committee,

David Wang-Iverson, Mayor

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Motion by Mr. Van Horn, seconded by Mr. Mathews, and carried unanimously.

2015 PAYMENT OF TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE SALARY

Mr. Mathews asked to add a topic of new business at this time. In reading the minutes, he noticed that there was still \$10,000 in the fund for abandoned and vacant properties. He recalled that the intent last year was for the Township Committee members to forego their salaries to adequately fund that line item. Since there is still money in the line item, he asked if the Township Committee would consider having any Township Committee member who wanted to be paid now be given the balance of their salary. The history has been that Township Committee members had the option to take their salary or not, and it was a personal decision. He stated that as long as he was here, this has never been forced on anyone. A discussion was held and the line item was funded last year; since none of the funds were used, Mr. Mathews thought that it was fair to raise the question and see if there was an appetite to approve a resolution to allow anyone who wanted their salary to receive it.

Mayor Wang-Iverson said that he did not have a problem with this, but he would need some input from CFO Pasqua; he wasn't sure if the Treasurer was planning to put the money into surplus. Mr. Mathews agreed that was where the money would go, but he felt that it was optional and up to the discretion of the Committee members to decide. Both Mr. Van Horn and Mr. Miller agreed to this.

Mr. Mathews said that he drafted a resolution for consideration, and he read it into the record:

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RESOLUTION #167-15

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of East Amwell Township agreed to defer a portion of their salary to set aside sufficient funds for possible remediation of Abandoned and Unfit buildings during 2015;

WHEREAS, as of the December 10, 2015 budget update from CFO Pasqua, it was stated that "There is still \$10,000 in the line item for abandoned buildings.";

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that CFO Pasqua is directed to pay the remaining salaries of any Township Committee member who wishes to receive all or a portion of the balance of their normal and customary salary for 2015 that was deferred.

By Order of the Township Committee,

David Wang-Iverson, Mayor

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Motion by Mr. Mathews, seconded by Mr. Van Horn, and carried with one no vote by Mr. Wang-Iverson.

TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR’S POSITION

Mr. Miller mentioned that he and Mr. Mathews had been asked earlier in the year to look at the Township Administrator’s position. They looked at this amongst other communities in the area, and they found that no one had a similar situation as East Amwell. He felt that the position could be discussed as something rather than what it is, but after the contract was approved for 2016, he thought it was a moot point. He commented on going forth with the contract without having any discussion on the necessity of the role or the coincidence of the role with other communities in the area. He thought that the Township Committee would like to close the loop on the assignment that they were asked to do earlier in the year.

Mr. Van Horn thought the item was due in June 2015, and since the Committee didn’t receive a report then, this is a moot point. Mr. Mathews and Mr. Miller did not recall the June requirement date; Mayor Wang-Iverson and Mr. Van Horn referenced a memo drafted with the date. Mr. Van Horn also said that the Clerk sent a reminder notice, which Mr. Mathews said that he received before a recent meeting.

Mr. Mathews asked to see the memo; Mayor Wang-Iverson advised that it was part of the performance review for 2014, adding that the intent was that if Mr. Mathews and Mr. Miller wanted to make some suggestions about the position, they wanted some formal report by June of 2015.

Mr. Miller did not recall the date, adding that it was a moot point. He felt that more importantly, by reviewing the document that Mr. Matheny wrote as a performance, it would make more sense to set some objectives rather than having the Administrator telling us at the end of the year what he has done. Mr. Van Horn recalled at the end of the review last year, Mr. Mathews and Mr. Miller were asked if they wanted to serve on the performance review committee, and they said no.

Mr. Mathews said that what they were suggesting now is to establish forward looking objectives. Mr. Van Horn agreed that they could be done for 2016 or it could be done for 2017. Mr. Mathews agreed that by this time next year, the evaluation should not be written by the person who is being evaluated and should be measured against some objectives. Mr. Van Horn said that was an opinion that Mr. Mathews was welcomed to have, but that was not the way that the Administrator’s evaluation was conducted.

Mr. Miller said that was why the matter was being brought up, i.e., to set some objectives for the Administrator and measure the performance against the objectives. Specific dates were mentioned, and Mr. Mathews suggested that it is aligned with the budget, i.e., once the budget is known, the plan of attack for the year could be defined and measurable smart objectives could be set. Mr. Mathews suggested setting up a bi-partisan committee to draft some objectives for the first meeting in February. Committee members were agreeable with this suggestion, with the Mayor suggesting that Mr. Sageser be present before a committee is assigned.

Mr. Mathews made a motion that at the reorganization meeting, the Mayor (whoever is holding that position) create that bi-partisan subcommittee; Mr. Miller seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

CFO/TREASURER PASQUA presented a transfer resolution.

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RESOLUTION #168-15

WHEREAS, certain Capital appropriation ordinances have funding that are no longer necessary;

WHEREAS, it is necessary to formally cancel said balances:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that the following unexpended balances be cancelled:

	Amount	Cancel to:
Ordinance # 2015-13 Refunding Bond	\$ 26.54	Reserve for Debt Service

By Order of the Township Committee

David Wang-Iverson, Mayor

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Motion by Mr. Van Horn, seconded by Mr. Mathews, and carried unanimously to approve the resolution.

Bills of the evening were approved on a motion by Mr. Van Horn, seconded by Mr. Mathews, and carried unanimously.

The Tax Collector had no resolutions.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Frances Gavigan, 123 Wertsville Road, asked about the bill list, referencing questions she had about the \$20,000 fine and "IPOC" in the special minutes of December 10, page one, paragraph 4. Mayor Wang-Iverson explained that "IROC" is an automatic pension payment system. On a question about back payments for the pension, it was covered in two payments on the bill list.

Ms. Gavigan commented on a lack of detail on the bills, referencing page one and a payment to Banisch Associates for an October bill in the amount of \$3,000. She noted that billing for COAH is clear, but she asked about another bill for \$450 and whether it might be for The Ridge or for Thompson property. She also referenced a bill for \$225 for DiFrancesco for The Ridge's tax appeal.

Ms. Gavigan hoped that more attention would be given to the Township Administrator's job description requirement "to assure financial health and compliance of the Township" as part of the Township Administrator's performance metric. She also questioned how two years of contracts were approved in 2014 when there was only one contract on the agenda. As a taxpayer, she wished that there was more detail on the bills to make it easier to see "what is what."

Ms. Gavigan commented on the situation with Raritan Township and the rescue squad, adding that the squad has not received funding for the last two years because of the economy and it is an unknown about the impact on the squad. She added that the Raritan squad is a fee for service group, and Mr. Chen (a Raritan Township official) is concerned about the cost on their taxpayers.

Ms. Gavigan wished all a Merry Christmas and a hope for no snow. She was also looking for more clarity on how much the Township was spending for The Ridge's zoning law change for ancillary services to a golf course. She commented on not knowing what the language at

Planning Board and Township Committee and a limit of the upward ceiling if zoning laws say more than 2500 can be present; she added that the Planning Board is taking away the cap. She asked for more precision and thought about the golf tournaments and festivals with possibly having thousands of people on Back Brook and Wertsville Roads. She asked that the Township Committee give the residents the same consideration that they are giving the golf course.

Janelle Ditzel, 231 Wertsville Road, received a letter from The Ridge and wanted to know what are they doing, adding that she has heard a lot of comments, including a request about their water usage change. Mayor Wang-Iverson explained that The Ridge wanted to change their water testing protocol to change the frequency of testing, which is currently an annual event. The Ridge is doing this based on their claim of 10 years of clean water results, and the issue involves quality, not quantity, of water.

Mrs. Ditzel asked about the two cottages being proposed on the property. Mayor Wang-Iverson explained that they may be larger than 5,000 square feet, but the Township Committee will have to approve this, and language is "still up in the air."

Mrs. Ditzel said that her neighbor, Jamie Atkeson, was also concerned, and she questioned why more people didn't get the letter from The Ridge. Mayor Wang-Iverson will ask Don Reilly of the Planning Board about noticing requirements. Mrs. Ditzel said that there are a lot of different stories going around now, and she would like to see more people made aware of the plans.

Mayor Wang-Iverson said that he was not aware of the finances of the golf course, noting that there is a tax appeal being litigated. He added that The Ridge has asked for four changes in their zoning approval, i.e. overnight cottages; reduced frequency of water testing for financial reasons; approval for tennis courts and a pool, which are customary for courses of this caliber; and the tournament restriction lifted. Language has to be worked out with boundaries being set; The Ridge has met with the Planning Board, there are still some questions, and everything is still preliminary. Mayor Wang-Iverson directed Mrs. Ditzel to the Planning Board for more information, and he suggested that she check their agendas for future hearings.

Mr. Mathews commented on a 12/9 Planning Board meeting; Mayor Wang-Iverson said that no action was taken since The Ridge's application was incomplete.

Motion by Mr. Van Horn, seconded by Mr. Miller, and carried to close to the public.

Mr. Mathews asked about the number of people allowed at the golf course, Mayor Wang-Iverson mentioned 250, not 2500, adding that at this time "it is still in play." Mr. Miller asked about the Planning Board making a decision or would it come to the Township Committee. Mayor Wang-Iverson said that if there was an ordinance change, it would come to the governing body. Mr. Van Horn commented on the Planning Board doing all the preliminary work and only coming to the Township Committee when it is complete.

Mr. Miller asked about the current number of people that they can have at the golf course and if not in the zoning ordinance, can the Planning Board approve without any Township Committee control. Mayor Wang-Iverson was not sure about the number of people, but he said that the cottage approval is in the ordinance. Mr. Mathews objected to having the Planning Board decide on the number of people with a need for checks and balances and having the Township Committee weighing in on the decision. Mr. Van Horn commented on not being able to dictate what the Planning Board does, but it was noted that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor do sit on the Planning Board for representation.

Mr. Mathews spoke about the request for water quality testing, adding that a couple of years ago he had a sample of lime green water from Back Brook. Although it was not tested because it was not a sanitized sample, it was in a tributary close to The Ridge. His personal opinion was to require more frequent sampling, similar to what is done with salt testing in the Township. Mayor Wang-Iverson thought that it was a reasonable request to extend the testing period based on The Ridge's annual sampling for ten years with no impact to water quality in the area. Before any approvals are given, Steve Souza (Princeton Hydro) will do a review of the ten years of sampling and provide it to the Planning Board for action. Mr. Mathews also suggested that the timing of the tests would be important, i.e., testing in mid-golf time rather than winter.

Mayor Wang-Iverson spoke about sampling during the summer with difficulties in testing this past year because conditions were dry. Princeton Hydro's report will go to the Board of Health for review before any action is taken by the Planning Board. The Mayor concluded that "nothing is being rubber-stamped, but after ten years, it is nice to revisit conditions." He added that the Planning Board has not yet seen a completed application.

CORRESPONDENCE No comments were made.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion by Mr. Van Horn, seconded by Mr. Miller, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Taken from the Tape
Teresa R. Stahl, RMC/CMC
Municipal Clerk