

The Regular Meeting of the East Amwell Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell was called to order by Mayor Jenna Casper-Bloom at 6:30 PM on February 9, 2023.

Ms. Giliberti read the “Statement of Compliance” indicating the meeting was being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mr. Michael Dendis, Mr. John Mills, Ms. Tara Ramsey, Mr. Dante DiPirro, Mayor Casper-Bloom

Absent: None

Also present were Township Attorney Frank Whittlesey and Municipal Clerk Linda Giliberti.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion of Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Ms. Ramsey and carried unanimously, it was moved to adopt Resolution 2023-44, as filed in the office of the Township Clerk, to enter executive session.

On motion of Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Mr. Mills and carried unanimously, it was moved to adjourn from executive session at 6:57 PM.

REGULAR MEETING RECONVENED

The Regular Meeting reconvened at 7:00 PM with Mayor Casper-Bloom, Mr. DiPirro, Mr. Mills, Ms. Ramsey, Mr. Dendis, Ms. Giliberti and Mr. Whittlesey present.

There were approximately 16 members of the public present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Township Committee will hold a budget meeting on Monday, February 13, 2023, at 7:00 PM. The public is invited to attend.
- The Municipal Offices will be closed on February 20, 2023 for President’s Day.
- Annual Dog Licenses are now due. \$17 for Neutered/Spayed and \$20 for Non-Neutered/Non-Spayed. Late fees will be assessed for any dogs registered beginning on March 1. The late fee is \$25.00 per dog in addition to the license fee. Contact the Clerk’s Office at 908-782-8536, X 10 for more information.
- Hunterdon County Utilities Authority will hold a Hazardous Waste Collection on March 4, 2023 and Electronic Waste Collection on March 11, 2023 from 9am – 1pm at the Hunterdon County Complex at 314 Route 12, Flemington. Contact 908-788-1351 for details.
- The Amwell Valley Fire Company Comedy Night is Saturday, March 4, 2023 at 7:00 PM. Doors open at 6:00 PM. Tickets are \$30.00. For more information, please call (609)917-4106.
- Please save the date: Saturday, May 6, 2023 – East Amwell Color Run. More details to follow.

East Amwell events and more can be found on the Community Event page on the Township website.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC- AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

A motion made by Tara Ramsey, seconded by John Mills to open the meeting to the public was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Linda Ranft – Ms. Ranft asked if we had already adopted a temporary budget and inquired about amendments to the temporary budget.

A motion made by Dante DiPirro, seconded by Tara Ramsey to close the meeting to the public was unanimously approved by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- December 29, 2022 Executive & Regular Meeting Minutes**
- January 3, 2023 Reorganization Meeting Minutes**
- January 12, 2023 Executive & Regular Minutes**

A motion was made by Mayor Casper-Bloom and seconded by Mayor Casper-Bloom to approve the December 29, 2022 Executive and Regular Meeting Minutes as she is the only current committee member who was in attendance on December 29, 2022. Mr. Di Pirro and Mr. Dendis abstained.

A motion made by Michael Dendis, seconded by John Mills to approve the January 3, 2023 and January 12, 2023 Minutes and were unanimously approved by voice vote.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

EAST AMWELL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION/GREEN TEAM 2022 REPORT

Marnie Stetson, Chair of the Environmental Commission & Green Team highlighted what their committee accomplished in 2022.

SPECIAL DISCUSSIONS/PRESENTATIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AMWELL VALLEY RESCUE SQUAD/FLEMINGTON-RARITAN RESCUE SQUAD

Mr. Dendis stated that the Township Committee received a letter from Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad with concerns regarding coverage for East Amwell. With input from Patrick Eckerd from the Amwell Valley Rescue Squad, it was decided to have more conversations between the squads to figure out the best plan for the future.

NJ STATE POLICE

Sergeant First Class Officer Michael Piro and Trooper Barn from the Kingwood State Police were in attendance. Officer Piro told the residents that if they have any traffic concerns, they should reach out to Mr. Mills and he will convey their concerns to the Kingwood State Police.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-01 – REINTRODUCTION/FIRST READING

Ordinance No. 23-01 was read by title “AN ORDINANCE TO APPROVE THE 2023 SALARY AND WAGE SCHEDULE”

EXPLANATION

Mayor Casper-Bloom explained that this ordinance is an annual administrative ordinance required by the State that provides for salary increases for employees of the township. This ordinance was reintroduced as there was an amendment made to the Summer Playground Director salaries since the ordinance was originally introduced on January 12, 2023.

A motion made by Ms. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Dendis and carried unanimously, it was moved to reintroduce Ordinance No. 23-01 with a Public Hearing date of March 9, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-02 – SECOND READING/PUBLIC HEARING

Ordinance No. 23-02 as follows “AN ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14)” was read by title.

WHEREAS, the Local Government Cap Law, N.J.S. 40A: 4-45.1 et seq., provides that in the preparation of its annual budget, a municipality shall limit any increase in said budget up to 2.5% unless authorized by ordinance to increase it to 3.5% over the previous year’s final appropriations, subject to certain exceptions; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.15a provides that a municipality may, when authorized by ordinance, appropriate the difference between the amount of its actual final appropriation and the 3.5% percentage rate as an exception to its final appropriations in either of the next two succeeding years; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell in the County of Hunterdon finds it advisable and necessary to increase its CY 2022 budget by up to 3.5% over the previous year’s final appropriations, in the interest of promoting the health, safety and welfare of the citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee hereby determines that a 3.5 % increase in the budget for said year, amounting to \$57,914.94 in excess of the increase in final appropriations otherwise permitted by the Local Government Cap Law, is advisable and necessary; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee hereby determines that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell, in the County of Hunterdon, a majority of the full authorized membership of this governing body affirmatively concurring, that, in the CY 2022 budget year, the final appropriations of the Township of East Amwell shall, in accordance with this ordinance and N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14, be increased by 3.5 %, amounting to \$57,914.94, and that the CY 2022 municipal budget for the Township of East Amwell be approved and adopted in accordance with this ordinance; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that any that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance as introduced be filed with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services within 5 days of introduction; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance upon adoption, with the recorded vote included thereon, be filed with said Director within 5 days after such adoption.

EXPLANATION

Mayor Casper-Bloom explained that this ordinance is an annual budgetary item that allows the municipality to exceed the appropriation limits if the need would arise.

PUBLIC HEARING

A motion made by Ms. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. DiPirro to open the meeting to the public was unanimously approved by voice vote.

On motion made by Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Ms. Ramsey and carried unanimously, it was moved to close the Public Hearing.

A motion made by Ms. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Mills and carried unanimously, it was moved to adopt Ordinance No. 23-02.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-03 – INTRODUCTION/FIRST READING

Ordinance No. 23-03 was read by title “AN ORDINANCE BY THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE AMENDING THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REPEAL CHAPTER 81, FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION; TO ADOPT A NEW CHAPTER 81, FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION; TO ADOPT FLOOD HAZARD MAPS; TO DESIGNATE A FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATOR; AND PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE”

EXPLANATION

Mayor Casper-Bloom explained that FEMA has reviewed the New Jersey model flood damage prevention ordinance and recommended that the DEP revise it to ensure that all 553 New Jersey participating community ordinances are compliant with the national flood insurance program. our county has now been selected for a mandatory county-wide adoption.

A motion made by Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Ms. Ramsey and carried unanimously, it was moved to introduce Ordinance No. 23-03 with a Public Hearing date of March 9, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-04 – INTRODUCTION/FIRST READING

Ordinance No. 23-04 was read by title “AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL, CHAPTER 75, FEES, SPECIFICALLY SECTION 75.1 TO INCREASE FEES FOR SUMMER PLAYGROUND”

EXPLANATION

Ms. Ramsey explained that the fees for the Summer Playground Program is going to increase by \$15.00 per child for a total of \$100.00 per child. The fee for Lunch Bunch has been omitted.

A motion made by Ms. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Dendis and carried unanimously, it was moved to introduce Ordinance No. 23-04 with a Public Hearing date of March 9, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Casper-Bloom took a moment to acknowledge everyone who volunteered at the Recycling Depot on Saturday, February 4th. She also thanked everyone who volunteered at the rabies clinic on January 21st.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 2023-45 AMENDMENT TO 2023 TEMPORARY BUDGET
- 2023-46 APPROVAL OF THE FARMLAND RIDE EVENT
- 2023-47 APPROVAL OF HELL OF HUNTERDON BICYCLE RIDE
- 2023-48 APPROVAL OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS PERMIT – AMWELL VALLEY FIRE COMPANY
- 2023-49 REFUND – DRIVEWAY PERMIT BOND
- 2023-50 SUPPORT FOR AN APPLICATION TO THE STATE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL FOR FARMLAND PRESERVATION GRANT FUNDS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024
- 2023-54 RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE BILLS AND CLAIMS
- 2023-55 APPOINTMENT OF STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SERVICES – FERRIERO ENGINEERING, INC.

On motion of Mr. Dendis, seconded by Ms. Ramsey and carried unanimously, it was moved to approve Resolution Nos. 2023-45 through 2023-50 and 2023-54 and 2023-55, as filed in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Recorded Vote

Aye: Dendis, Mills, Ramsey, DiPirro, Casper-Bloom
Nay: XXX
Abstain: XXX

RESOLUTIONS

- 2023-51 AMEND RESOLUTIONS AND CONTRACTS FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AWARDS
- 2023-52 APPOINTMENT OF DANIEL’S LAW REDACTOR – LINDA GILIBERTI/BACK-UP REDACTOR – PAM DYMEK
- 2023-53 RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE USE OF THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING PUBLIC MEETING ROOMS
- 2022-56 RESOLUTION TO APPOINT PART-TIME CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER – YOLAIKA (GONZALEZ) VINAMARTE

Resolution No. 2023-51 – Ms. Giliberti explained that upon review of the budget it came to our attention that the not to exceed amounts for these resolutions and contracts were originally set too high and therefore, are being amended.

On motion of Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Mr. Dendis and carried unanimously, it was moved to approve Resolution No. 2023-51, as filed in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Dendis, Mills, Ramsey, DiPirro, Casper-Bloom
Nay: XXX
Abstain: XXX

Resolution No. 2023-52 – Ms. Giliberti explained that the state is requiring each municipality to appoint redactors for covered persons under Daniel’s Law.

On motion of Mr. Mills, seconded by Ms. Ramsey and carried unanimously, it was moved to approve Resolution No. 2023-52, as filed in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Dendis, Mills, Ramsey, DiPirro, Casper-Bloom
Nay: XXX
Abstain: XXX

Resolution No. 2023-53 – Mayor Casper-Bloom explained that we would like to allow the use of the municipal building for public organizations to meet. Mr. Dendis stated that we have been working with our risk manager regarding the use of the facilities and whether or not a certificate of insurance would be required.

Andrea Bonette inquired as to whether political groups would be allowed to use the building also. Mr. Dendis confirmed that political groups would be permitted, but if they were going to have monthly meetings, they would need to provide a certificate of insurance.

Joan McGee commented that allowing groups and organizations to use the municipal building is a great idea. She suggested charging a refundable fee for clean-up just in case clean-up is needed.

On motion of Mr. Dendis, seconded by Mr. DiPirro and carried unanimously, it was moved to approve Resolution No. 2023-53, as filed in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Dendis, Mills, Ramsey, DiPirro, Casper-Bloom
Nay: XXX
Abstain: XXX

Resolution No. 2023-56 – Mayor Casper-Bloom stated that this resolution is being added to tonight’s agenda to hire a part-time CFO.

On motion of Ms. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Dendis and carried unanimously, it was moved to approve Resolution No. 2023-56, as filed in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Dendis, Mills, Ramsey, DiPirro, Casper-Bloom
Nay: XXX
Abstain: XXX

NEW BUSINESS - NONE

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Bills of the Evening – February 9, 2023

A motion made by Tara Ramsey, seconded by Michael Dendis to approve the bills of the evening was conducted by roll call vote:

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Dendis, Mills, Ramsey, DiPirro, Casper-Bloom
Nay: XXX
Abstain: XXX

APPROVAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A motion made by John Mills, seconded by Michael Dendis to approve the administrative reports was unanimously approved by voice vote.

CORRESPONDENCE

- 1. *NEW JERSEY LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES*
- 2. *UNITED STATES*
- 3. *STATE OF NEW JERSEY*
- 4. *HUNTERDON COUNTY*
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS – ZACHARY T. RICH – REACHING OUT TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE
- 5. *EAST AMWELL TOWNSHIP*
EAST AMWELL TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS – JOHN CAPUANO, PRINCIPAL – INVITING TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO “READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY” – MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH
- 6. *SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES*
FLEMINGTON-RARITAN FIRST AID & RESCUE SQUAD – EMS COVERAGE
- 7. *MISCELLANEOUS*
KERMESSE SPORTS – HELL OF HUNTERDON BICYCLE RIDE
FARMLAND RIDE – SPONSORED BY FJCC

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC- (LIMITED TO 10 MINUTES PER PERSON)

A motion made by Dante DiPirro, seconded by Tara Ramsey to open the meeting to the public was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Joan McGee – Ms. McGee addressed the procedure, appointment and conduct of Township officials. She asked that they be required to state whether they support specific civil rights.

Andrea Bonette – Ms. Bonette expressed her frustration regarding East Amwell not having their own Construction Official. She would like the Township Committee to give this serious consideration.

Linda Ranft – Ms. Ranft apologized to the Township Committee for being critical regarding changes that have been made to the agenda.

Rick Wolfe – Mr. Wolfe commented on his reappointment to the Board of Health at the last Township Committee meeting and the people who spoke out against his reappointment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion made by Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Mr. Mills to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Giliberti, RMC
Township Clerk

Approved: 3/9/2023