

The regular meeting of the East Amwell Township Committee, was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Deputy Mayor Tara Ramsey, Committee members John Mills, Richard Wolfe and Jenna Casper-Bloom. Also present was Township Attorney Frank Whittlesey and Deputy Clerk Pamela Dymek.

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, this is a regularly scheduled meeting, pursuant to the resolution adopted on January 3, 2022, with a meeting notice published in the Hunterdon County Democrat issue of January 13, 2022. A copy of the agenda for this meeting was forwarded to the Hunterdon County Democrat, Times of Trenton, Courier News, and Star Ledger, posted on the bulletin board, Township website and filed in the Clerk's Office on May 9, 2022.

AGENDA REVIEW

There were no items for agenda review.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Voter registration deadline for the Primary Election is May 17, 2022.
- b. The Plant Swap on Saturday, May 21, 2022 from 9:00 – 11:00 am at Clawson Park, rain or shine. Bring a plant, swap a plant.
- c. There will be a rain barrel demonstration on Saturday, May 21, 2022 from 9:00 – 11:00 am at Clawson Park.
- d. The Municipal Offices will be closed on May 30, 2022 in observance of Memorial Day.
- e. The East Amwell Township Parks and Recreation Committee will sponsor a Youth Music Festival on June 4, 2022 from 4-8pm at Clawson Park. There will be a food truck & Kona Ice so bring your lawn chairs and enjoy the music of these talented young musicians.
- f. The Ident-a-Shred at the Hunterdon County Complex at 314 Route 12, Flemington will be held on June 4, 2022 from 8am – noon OR until the truck(s) are full.
- g. Early Voting Begins Friday, June 3rd through Sunday, June 5th. Hours are Friday-Saturday 10am-8pm and Sunday 10am-6pm A Registered Hunterdon County Voter may vote at any Early Voting Center.
- h. Primary Election Day will be held on Tuesday, June 7, 2022 from 6am - 8pm. All polls are located at the East Amwell Municipal Building.
- i. Hunterdon County Utilities Authority will hold an Electronic Waste Collection on June 11, 2022 from 9am – 1pm at the Hunterdon County Complex at 314 Route 12, Flemington. Contact 908-788-1351 for details.
- j. Save the Date for a "Bingo in the Park" event on June 17th! More details to come soon.
- k. Summer Playground will be running at East Amwell School from July 5 through July 29 from 9 - 11:45am for East Amwell children who've completed kindergarten through 8th grade. In addition to Summer Playground, a Multi Sports Camp is available in the afternoon to enable children to enjoy a full day of activities. For full information and to register go to the Parks & Recreation Committee page of the Township website.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes to approve at this meeting. Minutes from the April 28, 2022 meeting will be completed by the next meeting.

SPECIAL DISCUSSIONS/PRESENTATIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**Presentation from Region Nine Housing Corporation**

Present was Mark Conroe from Region Nine Housing Corporation to discuss the construction of a new, 24-unit, affordable senior housing community on 6.95 acres, with 36 parking spaces. All units will contain 1-bedroom and are on average 625 square feet, and will be housed in one, 3-story building with 8 units per floor. Also included in the 23,000 square foot building is a central laundry room, a community room, on-site management office, on-site maintenance office and workshop, in addition to outside activities. Applications will be accepted on a first come, first served basis, and are not limited to East Amwell residents. Mr. Conroe also provided financials and tax information regarding the PILOT program (Payment in Lieu of Taxes). Mr. Conroe is hoping to go before the Planning Board in July to obtain approvals and anticipates an 18-month build out once all approvals are granted.

A motion made by John Mills, seconded by Richard Wolfe to open the meeting to the public for comments on the presentation from Region Nine Housing Corporation was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Robin Maestriperi, 187 Lindbergh Road & 52 Ridge Road, Ringoes, NJ – Ms. Maestriperi stated she was just hearing about this project for the first time and asked Mr. Conroe a few questions regarding the location, size of the lot and how many people can occupy each unit.

Dave Stehlin, 8 Rainbow Hill Road, Ringoes, NJ – Mr. Stehlin asked Mr. Conroe if there would be one building or multiple buildings on the site. Mr. Stehlin also asked whether the land is already perked and if there would be a septic system. In addition, Mr. Stehlin asked whether the plan will go forward if the perk doesn't pass.

Linda Ranft - 148 Cider Mill Road, Flemington, NJ - Ms. Ranft commented that everything sounded good but she didn't hear any locations on Mr. Conroe's list of Region Nine properties that are located in a farming community other than Hampton. Ms. Ranft also stated that she did not hear Mr. Conroe mention a dining area included in the list of on-site amenities, so she assumed everyone is responsible for their own cooking. Ms. Ranft asked if something will be set up with the LINK to get people to the grocery stores since there aren't any close by. The post office, library and Clawson Park are nearby but no grocery stores. Ms. Ranft also asked if there were any issues with the Fire Department being able to handle a building of this size and how many parking spaces are required for the building. Ms. Ranft commented that it seems like everything would be handled for the residents but wondered if there is anything that they need to take care of on their own. Lastly, Ms. Ranft asked if the building allows pets and if Mr. Conroe knows what it is like to live in a farming area.

Jenelle Ditzell, 231 Wertsville Road, Ringoes, NJ – Ms. Ditzell asked if there is any kind of donation that Region Nine Housing Corp would make to the local rescue squad.

Mike Grankowski, 336 Route 31, Ringoes, NJ – Mr. Grankowski stated he is also a member of the rescue squad and fire company and asked Mr. Conroe if there is a common area fee charged along with the rent.

Paul Hutchins, 1069 Old York Road, Ringoes, NJ – Mr. Hutchins asked in regard to the Fire Department located next to the building, would residents be made aware that there is a siren that goes off for every call.

Frances Gavigan, 123 Wertsville Road, Ringoes, NJ – Ms. Gavigan asked Mr. Conroe what will happen to the house with the purple shutters and will it be repurposed. Ms. Gavigan commented that there may be some historical components to the house and Mr. Conroe should touch base with the Historical Society. Ms. Gavigan inquired what the footprint of the building will be assuming they will need to build up with construction of this size. Ms. Gavigan also asked if it is correct to assume that septic and health requirements defer to the state rather than the local board of health. Ms. Gavigan added that with the amount of traffic, people and changes that

Region Nine is bringing into the building and since this lot is bordered by county and state roads, issues with the intersection and other challenges could come up. Ms. Gavigan asked if placing the building towards the back of the lot, would there be an impact on residences that are located along the short stretch of Wertsville Road.

A motion made by Richard Wolfe, seconded by John Mills to close the meeting to the public for comments on the presentation from Region Nine Housing Corporation was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Monthly Update from Amwell Valley Rescue Squad

Chief Eckard provided the Township Committee with an update and announced that there are many exciting things happening this month. This month begins their 65th year of service. Chief Eckard thanked everyone for supporting the Mother's Day flower sale at the fire house. There were 33 calls last month; 22 answered by East Amwell and the remaining calls were answered by mutual aid during the day. They are also working with Troop 65 on a First Aid Merit Badge. Also, it is National EMS week May 15th-21st to honor EMS providers. Last month, there were 584 hours logged by members in the building either waiting for calls or going on calls. Two members of the squad, Paul and Troy, presented a new device they wanted to show to everyone, called a LUCAS device, a mechanical chest compression device. The squad just acquired it after saving up for a while to purchase it as it is very expensive. The device allows for a safer transport for EMS workers while working on patients. East Amwell squad now has items that all of the surrounding squads have. Also, the new cart and trailer will be at the Color Run on May 14th.

Discussion with Animal Control Officer, Carolyn Murphy regarding Ordinance #22-03

Animal Control Officer Carolyn Murphy discussed proposed changes to the animal control ordinance and why she felt the changes were necessary. She saw the need or potential need for an updated ordinance beginning in July 2020 based on issues she had encountered while responding to calls. She felt the current ordinance did not benefit all animals (dogs, cats, farm animals, etc.) since the original ordinance is from 1979. Ms. Murphy clarified that she did not write the changes in the proposed ordinance, she was asked to provide Ms. Parsons, the former Acting Clerk, with examples of ordinances from surrounding towns that might also work for East Amwell. Ms. Murphy presumed the draft of the revised version of the ordinance up for discussion tonight was written by Ms. Parsons and Richard Wolfe. Ms. Murphy also stated that many of the items listed in the proposed ordinance are already State law, she was only trying to incorporate the State laws into the local ordinance, such as notice of seizure and allowing an animal control officer to enter a property. She wants to help all of the animals in East Amwell, not just dogs, which is what the current ordinance is geared to mostly. She is not looking to create ordinances that give her power to enforce laws but to make changes that will allow her to deal with issues that happen in excess. Ms. Murphy stated that her primary concerns are, and always have been, public safety and animal welfare.

A motion made by Richard Wolfe, seconded by John Mills to open the meeting to the public for comments on the discussion with Animal Control Officer, Carolyn Murphy regarding Ordinance #22-03 was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Emily Deadwyler, 107 Snyderstown Road, Hopewell, NJ - Ms. Deadwyler asked that if the proposed animal ordinance was so out of line, couldn't someone from the committee have pulled it off the agenda prior to the meeting so there wasn't such a show. Ms. Deadwyler was opposed to much of what she read in the ordinance; however, she felt that the treatment of ACO Carolyn Murphy tonight was offensive and she didn't deserve it.

Linda Ranft, 148 Cider Mill Road, Flemington, NJ – Ms. Ranft stated she had many concerns about the ordinance and that it tried to be concise but feels it doesn't address some of what Ms. Murphy was talking about. Ms. Ranft stated that as a farm owner herself, if she ever needed help with any of her animals getting out, she would ask her fellow farming neighbors for help and would not call the ACO. Ms. Ranft felt that Ms. Murphy didn't know as much about farm animals as she would have liked her to know. Ms. Ranft stated that she looked into the right-to-farm law and

spoke with Bob Hornby at the CADB about the proposed ordinance changes and it appears that some of the changes may violate this law.

Jenelle Ditzell, 231 Wertsville Road, Ringoes, NJ - Ms. Ditzell asked Mr. Wolfe when did he know about the proposed ordinance and why didn't he shut it down then so it didn't make its way to the agenda tonight. Ms. Ditzell said she thought Mr. Wolfe was playing politics and was unfair to put this blame on Mayor Castellano. Ms. Ditzell felt that Mr. Wolfe's speech was a little over dramatic. Ms. Ditzell told Ms. Murphy that she has worked with her in the past; some good, some bad, but understands that Ms. Murphy is just doing her job. Ms. Ditzell also stated that she does not agree with some of the proposed ordinance changes, especially the one which would allow the ACO the right to enter a property; she would rather it be done by appointment.

Frances Gavigan, 123 Wertsville Road, Ringoes, NJ – Ms. Gavigan commented that she has known ACO Carolyn Murphy for years. Ms. Gavigan stated that she feels that Ms. Murphy and the animal ordinance ended up on the agenda based on miscommunication from the acting clerk who no longer here. Ms. Gavigan stated that this proposed ordinance should never have seen the light of day. However, there is a way to get to the win-win. The bottom line is everybody cares about animals but in Hunterdon County, people care more about a light touch or no touch government or one becoming heavy handed. Ms. Gavigan stated she has two puppies that have gotten out before and the mayor's wife and daughter helped catch them so she didn't get hurt trying to. Ms. Gavigan said that is what this community does; helps each other. Ms. Gavigan stated that Ms. Murphy has the community as an asset in East Amwell to help her do her job. Ms. Gavigan also asked Ms. Murphy where some of the information came from in the ordinance, such as the 40-foot distance off the property line and the leash length of 6 feet. Ms. Gavigan said let's see if we can come all come together and find some solutions to the Agricultural issues that Ms. Murphy has encountered and suggested contacting the Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Stan Krystek, 15 Back Brook Road, Ringoes, NJ – Mr. Krystek asked if there is going to be a continuation of this proposed ordinance in its current form or a future rewrite. He said many people spent too much time thinking about it and being stressed about it. He also asked if the township is considering rewriting the existing ordinance from 1979.

Unidentified resident - asked if there are existing laws covering public roadways and if those laws exist and don't allow for horses to repeatedly get loose, why can't the State Police, who cover East Amwell for these sorts of problems, address these issues. If it's a public hazard on a public roadway, there are probably state ordinances out there that address this issue already.

A motion made by Richard Wolfe, seconded by John Mills to close the meeting to the public for comments on the discussion with Animal Control Officer, Carolyn Murphy regarding Ordinance #22-03 was unanimously approved by voice vote.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no committee report updates.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC- Topics Not on the Agenda (limited to 10 min)

A motion made by Jenna Casper-Bloom, seconded by John Mills to open the meeting to the public was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Tamara Lee, 156 Lindbergh Road, Hopewell, NJ – Ms. Lee commented about an issue her neighbor brought to her attention regarding a person posing as an ADT representative who was going door to door for reasons which they felt were not legitimate. The ADT rep approached the neighbor who was able to get rid of the rep and then called the police. The police were aware of this person posing as a rep in this area and surrounding neighborhoods but had not been able to catch them yet. Ms. Lee looked into the Township ordinances and found that there is no ordinance here, for what is commonly referred to as a Peddlers Ordinance. This ordinance regulates people who go door to door trying to sell things. Ms. Lee said she would be happy to work with anyone on the Township Committee who is interested and willing to work with her to get this ordinance into a form they would be comfortable with.

Linda Ranft, 148 Cider Mill Road, Flemington, NJ – Ms. Ranft commented that she doesn't feel the meeting agendas and minutes are being sent out or posted in a timely manner because of short staffing and/or illness. Ms. Ranft suggested hiring a high school or college intern for the summer to help catch up with administrative issues.

Frances Gavigan, 123 Wertsville Road, Ringoes, NJ - Ms. Gavigan commented that the Township needs to hire someone soon to help with workload so not everything is falling to the Deputy Clerk to handle. Ms. Gavigan stated that the Deputy Clerk is managing the office. Ms. Gavigan stated that money paid for the previous office manager should be split amongst the people remaining who are running the office. Good employees should be rewarded and those that go above and beyond should be given incentives to stay.

A motion made by John Mills, seconded by Jenna Casper-Bloom to close the meeting to the public was unanimously approved by voice vote.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Resolution Approving the Raffle to Benefit the New Jersey State Golf Association Youth Foundation Inc.

RESOLUTION #64-22

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell that they hereby support the fund-raising efforts of the New Jersey State Golf Association Youth Foundation Inc., 3 Golf Drive, Suite 206, Kenilworth, NJ 07033;

WHEREAS, the organization has made application to hold a Raffle for a drawing on July 20, 2022, at The Ridge at Back Brook, 211 Wertsville Road, Ringoes, NJ 08551;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell, that the raffle be approved and processed.

CERTIFICATION

I, Pamela Dymek, Deputy Clerk, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution is a true and accurate copy of a resolution adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell at a regular and duly convened meeting held on May 12, 2022.

Pamela Dymek, Deputy Clerk

A motion made by John Mills, seconded by Jenna Casper-Bloom to approve the Consent Agenda Item for the Raffle to benefit the New Jersey State Golf Association Youth Foundation at the Ridge of Back Brook on July 20, 2022, was unanimously approved by voice vote, with Richard Wolfe recusing.

Resolution for Clawson Park Pavilion Rental Fee to Trust Fund

RESOLUTION #65-22

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell that Resolution #65-22, designates funds received for the Pavilion Rental in Clawson Park be deposited in the Clawson Park Memorial Trust Fund for Park related improvements effective March 1, 2022.

By Order of the Township Committee,

Mark Castellano, Mayor

CERTIFICATION

I, Pamela Dymek, Deputy Clerk, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution is a true and accurate copy of a resolution adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell at a regular and duly convened meeting held on May 12, 2022.

Pamela Dymek, Deputy Clerk

A motion made by John Mills, seconded by Jenna Casper-Bloom to approve the Consent Agenda Item for the Clawson Park Pavilion Rental Fee to Trust Fund, was unanimously approved by voice vote.

ORDINANCES- PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING

ORDINANCE # 22-04 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE 2022 SALARY AND WAGE SCHEDULE

As proof of publication, the legal notice from the Hunterdon County Democrat issue of May 5, 2022, was provided by the Deputy Clerk. The ordinance was posted and available to the public since introduction on April 28, 2022.

A motion made by Richard Wolfe, seconded by John Mills to open the meeting to the public for comment on Ordinance #22-04 was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Seeing no members of the public come forward, a motion made by Jenna Casper-Bloom, seconded by John Mills to close the meeting to the public on Ordinance #22-04 was unanimously approved by voice vote.

A motion made by Richard Wolfe, seconded by John Mills to adopt Ordinance #22-04 was conducted by roll call vote:

Ms. Casper-Bloom: Yes, Mr. Mills: Yes, Ms. Ramsey: Yes, Mr. Wolfe: Yes, and Mr. Castellano: Absent

The Notice of Adoption will be published in the May 19, 2022 issue of the Hunterdon County Democrat.

ORDINANCE #22-05 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 75, FEES, OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL, SPECIFICALLY SECTION 75.1 TO INCREASE AND ADD FEES FOR SUMMER PLAYGROUND

As proof of publication, the legal notice from the Hunterdon County Democrat issue of May 5, 2022, was provided by the Deputy Clerk. The ordinance was posted and available to the public since introduction on April 28, 2022.

A motion made by Richard Wolfe, seconded by John Mills to open the meeting to the public for comment on Ordinance #22-05 was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Seeing no members of the public come forward, a motion made by Jenna Casper-Bloom, seconded by John Mills to close the meeting to the public on Ordinance #22-05 was unanimously approved by voice vote.

A motion made by Richard Wolfe, seconded by John Mills to adopt Ordinance #22-05 was conducted by roll call vote:

Ms. Casper-Bloom: Yes, Mr. Mills: Yes, Ms. Ramsey: Yes, Mr. Wolfe: Yes, and Mr. Castellano: Absent

The Notice of Adoption will be published in the May 19, 2022 issue of the Hunterdon County Democrat.

ORDINANCES- INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

ORDINANCE #22-03 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL, CHAPTER 53, ANIMALS

The introduction and first reading of Ordinance #22-03 was not introduced.

EAST AMWELL TOWNSHIP

ORDINANCE #22-06

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL, CHAPTER 120, SOLID WASTE

BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell, in the County of Hunterdon and State of New Jersey that Chapter 120, Recycling Committee Membership is amended as follows:

Under § 120-7. **Recycling Committee** A. Membership (1) (e) Remove Seven members-at-large and replace with Not less than Seven members-at-large but no more than Eleven members at large.

Under § 120-7. **Recycling Committee** A. Membership Remove (2) and replace with All members shall be appointed by the Township Committee. The Recycling Coordinator will serve as established in § 120-6; the SWAC member will be ex officio, and the members of the Township Committee and Environmental Commission shall serve for one-year terms. At-large members shall be appointed to three-year terms. Thereafter, the terms of all at-large members shall be for two years. Youth members shall serve one-year terms. A quorum shall be composed of four voting members on the committee at that time. Members can be removed for cause, including missing more than three regularly scheduled meetings during the calendar year. (3) The Chair and Vice-Chair are chosen by a majority of votes of the regularly scheduled meetings during the calendar year.

Under § 120-7. **Recycling Committee** A. Membership add (3) The Chair and Vice-Chair are chosen by a majority of votes of the regular members of the committee. There is no term limit for these positions.

Under § 120-7. **Recycling Committee** B. add (2) The Recycling Committee shall continue to spearhead Recycling events such as township clean up days, recycling depots, and other special recycling related events.

Under § 120-2. **Fee** Remove the paragraph and replace with : The fee for the permit shall be \$25 for a car, \$35 for an SUV or other large capacity passenger vehicle, such as a minivan, and \$45 for a pickup truck. Trailers and trucks over one ton will have a fee between \$25 and \$75 priced at the discretion of the Township representative.

This ordinance shall become effective upon publication, according to law.

By Order of the Township Committee,

Mark Castellano, Mayor

Attest: _____
Pamela Dymek, Deputy Clerk

A motion made by Richard Wolfe, seconded by John Mills to introduce Ordinance #22-06 was unanimously approved by voice vote.

The Ordinance will be published in the May 19, 2022 issue of the Hunterdon County Democrat and the public hearing is set for the next regular township committee meeting on June 9, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

EAST AMWELL TOWNSHIP

ORDINANCE #22-07

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 75, FEES, OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL, SPECIFICALLY SECTION 75.1 TO INCREASE THE FEES FOR TRASH DAY PERMITS

BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell, that they hereby amend the Code of the Township of East Amwell, Chapter 75 Fees, as follows:

Section 75.1, Event fees and miscellaneous fees.

Change under B. Miscellaneous fees shall be as follows:

(1) Trash day Permit:

Change (a) to now read: Pickup truck: \$45 per pickup truck. (b) Car: \$25 per car. (c) SUV or other large capacity vehicle such as a minivan, is \$35 per vehicle.

Remove paragraph (e) and (f)

By Order of the Township Committee,

Mark Castellano, Mayor

Attest: _____
Pamela Dymek, Deputy Clerk

A motion made by Richard Wolfe, seconded by John Mills to introduce Ordinance #22-07 was unanimously approved by voice vote.

The Ordinance will be published in the May 19, 2022 issue of the Hunterdon County Democrat and the public hearing is set for the next regular township committee meeting on June 9, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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

Linda Ranft, 148 Cider Mill Road, Flemington, NJ – Ms. Ranft asked why the Township is losing money on clean-up day. She asked if it was because not enough people attended; she noticed that she didn't see too many people there this year.

Frances Gavigan, 123 Wertsville Road, Ringoes, NJ – Ms. Gavigan commented that the tipping fees have gone up in the County and for trash dumpsters so that is probably a contributing factor.

A motion made by Richard Wolfe, seconded by John Mills to close the meeting to the public was unanimously approved by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Bills of the Evening – May 12, 2022

A motion made by John Mills, seconded by Richard Wolfe to approve the bills of the evening was conducted by roll call vote:

Ms. Casper-Bloom: Yes, Mr. Mills: Yes, Ms. Ramsey: Yes, Mr. Wolfe: Yes, and Mr. Castellano: Absent

APPROVAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A motion made by Jenna Casper-Bloom, seconded by Richard Wolfe to approve the administrative reports was unanimously approved by voice vote.

CORRESPONDENCE

No discussion was held regarding correspondence.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion made by Jenna Casper-Bloom, seconded by John Mills to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m. was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Amy Jo Merz, Administrative Officer

Pamela Dymek, Deputy Clerk