

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 7:00 PM on July 13, 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 Jenna Casper-Bloom

Absent: None

Also present were Attorney Frank Whittlesey and Municipal Clerk Linda Giliberti. There were approximately 19 members of the public present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The municipal building will be open from 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM Mondays through Thursdays, 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM on Tuesday evenings and 8:00 AM - 12:30 PM on Fridays through Friday, September 8, 2023. Please check our website or call the office prior to coming to the Municipal Building to make sure who you need to see is in the office.
- East Amwell Park & Recreation Committee's Friday Night in the Park will be held on July 14th from 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM. A fun evening in the park for all!
- Estimated tax bills were mailed on June 16th and are due by August 1st. Please be advised, any payments received after the August 10<sup>th</sup> grace period, will be charged interest back to August 1st. Your remaining tax bill will arrive in late September. Please reach out to us anytime with any questions at 908-782-5209 or by email: [asilvia@eastamwelltownship.com](mailto:asilvia@eastamwelltownship.com)
- The East Amwell Parks & Recreation Committee would like you to join them at a Somerset Patriots Baseball Game at TD Bank Park this summer. Tickets are \$10 per person and available for purchase at the Municipal Building for either Saturday, July 29th at 7:05 PM against the Bowie Baysox or Sunday, August 27th, at 1:05 PM against the Hartford Yard Goats. There are 30 tickets available for each game and they will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis.
- East Amwell Recreation Committee's Friday Night in the Park Music Fest "The Sound of Summer Concert" will be held on July 29th from 4:30 p.m. until dusk. A fun evening in the park for all!

Residents are strongly encouraged to regularly check the East Amwell Township website for updates regarding the Township.

Mayor Casper-Bloom also reminded everyone that the Municipal Building is available for organizations needing a place to hold a meeting and if interested, they should reach out to Clerk Giliberti to reserve the space. She also announced that Saturday, July 14<sup>th</sup> is the Sourlands Mountain Festival. Tickets are still available.

### OPEN TO THE PUBLIC- AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

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

Seeing there were no comments from the public, a motion made by Dante DiPirro, seconded by John Mills to close the meeting to the public was unanimously approved by voice vote.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

June 8, 2023 Regular Session Minutes

A motion was made by Tara Ramsey and seconded by Michael Dendis to approve the June 8, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes and were approved by voice vote.

#### SPECIAL DISCUSSIONS/PRESENTATIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mayor Casper-Bloom acknowledged Municipal Clerk, Linda Giliberti, for negotiating with two vendors used by the township who tried to raise their prices substantially and having them decrease their charges resulting in a savings of over \$1,200.

#### KLEINSCHMIDT PROPERTY

Mr. Dendis stated that the committee has a \$40,000 grant-funding opportunity to take care of the Kleinschmidt property. Mr. DiPirro commented that the plan is to demolish and remove the house, bring in clean fill for the foundation so it is safe, and abate the nuisance. Under this plan, the Township will not take ownership and would not have liability. We would need a formal determination by the building inspector. We would need to provide notice to see if a landowner comes forward and if not, the Township would have the opportunity to perform the work. We would secure proposals and select a contractor. Our effort is to try to get this resolved without any or little cost to the town. Mr. Mills commented that as the liaison to the Historic Preservation Committee, he appreciated everyone's efforts.

#### SPOTTED LANTERNFLY GRANT

Mayor Casper-Bloom stated that recently the State of New Jersey offered a grant to treat the spotted lanternflies. East Amwell was a recipient of a \$15,000 grant. The details are still being worked out, but this will be at no cost to the residents.

#### CLAWSON HOUSE SECURITY

Mayor Casper-Bloom stated that she and Clerk Giliberti recently received an email from the Historic Preservation Committee Secretary saying that the Historic Preservation Committee approved a motion to ask the Township Committee to take immediate action to fully secure the Clawson House and its contents. The Mayor asked Ms. Frances Gavigan to speak on the subject. Ms. Gavigan responded that there have been some items taken from the house or broken in the past, but most recently her projector and screen were stolen. She brought it to the attention of the Historic Preservation Committee. Tonight, she shared a letter to the Township Committee with some proposed Clawson House security improvements such as installing five Amazon Blink Cameras in the museum, hardware and purchase of the premium plan which would be provided for by the Historical Society. Mayor Casper-Bloom said they will look into the recommendations.

#### RECYCLING COMMITTEE – CLEAN-UP DAY AND STYROFOAM SHED

Ms. Rosemary Georgett and Mr. Leo Rommel from the Recycling Committee approached the dais to speak about the annual clean-up day and Styrofoam storage shed. Ms. Georgett commented the township has been holding a clean-up day every year. This event costs the township thousands of dollars every year to bring in dumpsters and staff and is an expense to the township. While the fees to the residents were increased a bit last year to cover some of the cost, the Recycling Committee feels that there was a very poor turnout this year. Therefore, they are looking to determine what our residents need and whether they should hold the event every year or possibly every other year. Ms. Georgett mentioned that there are other options in the County to dispose of certain items or that they could be donated to charities and maybe we should advertise that, but it wouldn't be as convenient as dropping all of their stuff off at the municipal building. Mayor Casper-Bloom thanked Ms. Georgett and Mr. Rommel for bringing it to their attention.

Ms. Georgett stated that the shed at the end of the municipal building parking lot that stores Styrofoam, TerraCycle Recycling, Trex plastic and miscellaneous things that the Green Scene uses is breaking down. Each year, the Recycling Committee receives a grant from Clean Communities and the committee sent a request to them asking if they could use the grant money to purchase a new shed as an equipment purchase. They got approval to pay for 80-85% of the shed with Clean Community funds and the Recycling Committee has saved almost \$16,000 (25% of the annual grant for the past 4 years) which can be used towards the cost of an equipment purchase. A discussion ensued on replacing the shed and what the cost would be to dispose of the old shed.

SALT BARN

Mayor Casper-Bloom stated that prior to her serving on the Township Committee, \$300,000 had been put away for a new salt barn. It recently came to her attention that the township has the option of storing the salt at a county facility. Mayor Casper-Bloom asked Mr. Dendis to speak on this.

Mr. Dendis commented that the salt can be purchased from the county and stored at their facility in West Amwell to save East Amwell the approximate cost of \$350,000 for a new salt barn. Mr. Dendis talked to DPW Superintendent, Jason Silverthorn, over the last few months about concerns that he has over storing the salt in West Amwell. Mr. Silverthorn was in attendance and shared his concerns about having the salt stored in West Amwell, such as the location being too far to drive to in the snow resulting in it taking more time to start salting the roads, the possibility of the trucks getting stuck in the snow if the roads are not properly cleared yet and said it's a matter of safety for the school and firehouse, if they call needing him to respond right away. Mr. Dendis said that some people have mentioned environmental concerns with having the salt barn at the Grit Yard. Mr. Silverthorn responded that he did speak with the Township Engineer, Paul Ferriero, regarding those concerns and Mr. Ferriero said that the new salt barn is above the minimum standards for the state as far as storing goes and several other towns have the same salt barn with no issues.

The discussion continued between Mr. Dendis, Mr. Silverthorn, and Mr. Brad Myhre, County Administrator. Mr. Dendis invited Board of Health Chairperson, Tracy Carluccio, to express her concerns about the possible environmental and human health impact if we continue to store the salt at the Grit Yard and if it were to get into the groundwater and wells.

Ms. Frances Gavigan commented that the road to go to the West Amwell facility is a winding road and she supports having the salt barn in East Amwell. Ms. Linda Ranft asked if a smaller salt barn could be purchased to decrease the cost. Mr. Richard Wolfe commented that he likes the idea of trying to use the West Amwell facility once or twice during the next couple of storms to see how it works.

After a lengthy discussion, Mayor Casper-Bloom stated that much information has been collected and that this discussion will be carried to next month's Township Committee Meeting.

The meeting recessed at 8:47 PM.

The meeting reconvened at 8:56 PM.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTSMAYORAL APPOINTMENTS

- APPOINTMENT OF JAMAL KADRI – FARMLAND/OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE – 3-YEAR TERM TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2025
- APPOINTMENT OF RICH CATENACCI – PLANNING BOARD MEMBER – UNEXPIRED TERM TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2023
- APPOINTMENT OF JENNIFER FRANK – RINGOES VILLAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER – 3-YEAR TERM TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2025

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

- APPOINTMENT OF LEONARDO DECANDIA – BOARD OF HEALTH - UNEXPIRED TERM TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2024

The appointment of Mr. DeCandia was confirmed on motion of Ms. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Mr. Di Piro and unanimously approved by voice vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-09 – FIRST READING/INTRODUCTION

Ordinance No. 23-09 was read by title by Ms. Giliberti “AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CERTAIN SECTIONS OF CHAPTER 122 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL, ENTITLED “STORMWATER MANAGEMENT”

EXPLANATION

Mayor Casper-Bloom explained that this ordinance establishes minimum stormwater management requirements and controls for major development and minor development.

A motion made by Mr. Mills, seconded by Ms. Ramsey and carried unanimously, it was moved to introduce Ordinance No. 23-09 with a Public Hearing date of August 10, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Dendis, Mills, Ramsey, Di Pirro, Casper-Bloom

Nay: XXX

Abstain: XXX

**ORDINANCE NO. 23-10 – FIRST READING/INTRODUCTION**

Ordinance No. 23-10 was read by title by Ms. Giliberti “AN ORDINANCE GRANTING RENEWAL OF MUNICIPAL CONSENT TO COMCAST OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY II, LLC. TO CONSTRUCT, CONNECT, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN A CABLE TELEVISION AND COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM IN THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, STATE OF NEW JERSEY”

EXPLANATION

Mayor Casper-Bloom explained that this ordinance grants renewal of municipal consent to Comcast to construct, connect, operate and maintain a cable television and communications system in the township.

A motion made by Ms. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Dendis and carried unanimously, it was moved to introduce Ordinance No. 23-10 with a Public Hearing date of August 10, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Dendis, Mills, Ramsey, Di Pirro, Casper-Bloom

Nay: XXX

Abstain: XXX

**ORDINANCE NO. 23-08 – SECOND READING/PUBLIC HEARING**

Ordinance No. 23-08 was read by title by Ms. Giliberti “ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, ADOPTING THE FINANCIAL AGREEMENT, ACCEPTING THE APPLICATION FOR TAX EXEMPTION UNDER N.J.S.A. 40A:20-1 ET SEQ., AUTHORIZING TAX EXEMPTION AND PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES IN CONNECTION WITH THE EAST AMWELL SENIOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND CONFIRMING THAT THE EAST AMWELL SENIOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT HELPS TO SATISFY A NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE TOWNSHIP”

EXPLANATION

Mayor Casper-Bloom explained that this ordinance authorizes the township to enter into a financial agreement with Region Nine. This ordinance has been amended since introduction to clean up some typographical errors.

On motion of Mr. Dendis, seconded by Ms. Ramsey and carried unanimously, it was moved to amend Ordinance 23-08.

PUBLIC HEARING

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

**Linda Ranft** – Ms. Ranft asked what was the meaning of “area median income” stated in the financial agreement. Mr. Whittlesey responded that this is the standard for people that are eligible for this housing. She then asked about the formula in the financial agreement. Mr. Whittlesey said the formula part of it is statutory, but the percentage is what was negotiated with the entity. Ms. Ranft asked what the property taxes would be for this building if we were entering into the PILOT agreement. Mr. Whittlesey said this cannot be compared to a commercial building since it is a non-profit entity building a building that is being used solely for subsidized senior housing. Mayor

Casper Bloom added that if we were to not accept payment in lieu of taxes, the entity could file for an exemption which would most likely be granted and then the township would not receive any payment.

**Frances Gavigan** – Ms. Gavigan questioned the assessed value of the building as she felt it was extremely low. Mr. Whittlesey explained that the amount is not an assessment, but an appraisal from the Tax Assessor. It is the amount that is being assigned to the improvements of the building and is subject to change in the future. The amount cannot be considered in the same sense as taking the number and multiplying it by the tax rate. The payment being received is based on the annual operating revenues. It is different than if we were treating it as a commercial building. Mayor Casper-Bloom advised Ms. Gavigan to read Exhibit A in the ordinance to see how the amounts were calculated.

**Barbara DiPierno** – Ms. DiPierno asked how the UAW become interested in this property and if anyone in the township going to be gaining financially from this? Mayor Casper-Bloom stated that she did not think anyone in the township would be gaining financially from this and it fulfills part of our Affordable Housing requirement. Ms. DiPierno asked will be the cost to the taxpayers. Mayor Casper-Bloom stated that UAW is paying the cost.

**Richard Wolfe** – Mr. Wolfe commented that this is not the first time the financial agreement had been discussed. The agreement was discussed with the Planning Board when UAW came before them to ask whether the Planning Board would be receptive to building the facility and was discussed again when Mark Castellano was Mayor. He also stated that before the UAW acquired this property, it generated approximately \$8,000 in property taxes each year resulting in the township keeping about \$800 of the \$8,000. The agreement states that East Amwell will collect about \$9,500 in the first year and the township will keep 95% of that amount. The other 5% will go to the county. The \$794,000 assessment is because it is not generating market rents and is rent-restricted. UAW is applying for grants to build the building. Mr. Wolfe said that this is costing the taxpayers nothing besides the cost of having the township attorney review the agreement.

There being no further comments, on motion made by Mr. Di Pirro, seconded by Mr. Mills and carried unanimously, it was moved to close the Public Hearing.

A motion made by Mr. Dendis, seconded by Mr. Mills and carried unanimously, it was moved to adopt amended Ordinance No. 23-08.

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Dendis, Mills, Ramsey, Di Pirro, Casper-Bloom

Nay: XXX

Abstain: XXX

**CONSENT AGENDA**

2023-106 APPOINTMENT OF RINGOES VILLAGE ADVISORY SECRETARY – MILLS

2023-107 APPROVAL OF BLUE LIGHT PERMIT – HURBAN

2023-108 APPROVAL OF MAJOR TAYLOR CYCLING CLUB BICYCLE RIDE EVENT

2023-109 RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE BILLS AND CLAIMS

On motion of Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Mr. Dendis and carried unanimously, it was moved to approve Resolution Nos. 2023-106 through 2023-109, as filed in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Recorded Vote

Aye: Dendis, Mills, Ramsey, DiPirro, Casper-Bloom

Nay: XXX

Abstain: XXX

**RESOLUTIONS**

2023-110 RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF EAST AMWELL UAW URBAN RENEWAL HOUSING CORP TO APPLY FOR AND OBTAIN FUNDS FROM THE NJ DCA, NJ AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND PROGRAM

Resolution 2023-110 – Mayor Casper-Bloom explained that this resolution allows the UAW to apply for and obtain funds from the NJ Department of Community Affairs Affordable Housing Trust Fund program.

On motion of Ms. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Dendis and carried unanimously, it was moved to approve Resolution No. 2023-110, 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 –July 13, 2023**

A motion made by Tara Ramsey, seconded by John Mills 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 Tara Ramsey, seconded by Michael Dendis to approve the Administrative Reports was unanimously approved by voice vote.

**CORRESPONDENCE - NONE**

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

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

**Barbara DiPierno** – Ms. DiPierno asked if anyone knew about a plane who keeps circling over the area of her property. She also inquired as to whether it costs the taxpayers money when a resident is compensated by the county for right-of-way property and then the county does not use the property. Mr. Whittlesey responded saying that the county would still own that property whether or not they chose to use it.

**Frances Gavigan** – Ms. Gavigan responded to Ms. DiPierno’s question regarding the plane and stated that there is a “donut-hole” in the FAA maps for practicing stunt pilots and it is right above East Amwell. She also asked if the Township Committee was going to accept Tim Willey’s resignation from the Planning Board.

Seeing there were no further comments, a motion made by Dante DiPirro, seconded by Tara Ramsey to close the meeting to the public was unanimously approved by voice vote.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, a motion made by Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Ms. Ramsey to adjourn the meeting at 9:49 PM was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Giliberti  
Linda Giliberti, RMC  
Township Clerk

8/10/2023  
Date Approved