

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 7:17 PM on September 14, 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 Township Attorney Frank Whittlesey and Municipal Clerk Linda Giliberti.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion of Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Mr. Dendis and carried unanimously, it was moved to adopt Resolution 2023-113, as filed in the office of the Township Clerk, to enter executive session.

On motion of Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Ms. Ramsey and carried unanimously, it was moved to adjourn from executive session at 7:15 PM.

REGULAR MEETING RECONVENED

The Regular Meeting reconvened at 7:17 PM with Mayor Casper-Bloom, Mr. DiPirro, Mr. Mills, Ms. Ramsey, Mr. Dendis, Ms. Giliberti and Mr. Whittlesey present.

There were approximately 11 members of the public present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- All tax bills will be mailed by September 30, 2023. The bill includes payments for the fourth quarter due on November 1, 2023 and the first and second quarter of 2024.
- East Amwell Recreation Committee's Friday Night in the Park will be held on September 15 from 5PM -7PM. There will be music by Highway Run Band and Food Truck Vendors, Marley Gotham Grill and Good Humor. A fun evening in the park for all!
- Hunterdon County Utilities Authority will hold an Electronic Waste Collection on September 23, 2023 from 9am - 1pm at the Hunterdon County Complex at 314 Route 12, Flemington. Contact 908-788-1351 for details.
- The Municipal Offices will be closed on Monday, October 9, 2023 in recognition of Columbus Day.
- Voter registration deadline for the General Election is October 17, 2023.

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

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.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 10, 2023 Regular Session Minutes

A motion was made by Tara Ramsey and seconded by Dante DiPirro to approve the August 10, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes and were approved by voice vote with Mr. Mills abstaining.

SPECIAL DISCUSSIONS/PRESENTATIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mayor Casper-Bloom acknowledged Mr. Dendis and Ms. Ramsey for being in attendance tonight since it is Back-to-School night. She also acknowledged a letter sent by School Nurse, Amy Billera, complimenting all the Summer Playground Directors for a job well done with the Summer Playground Program this year. Mayor Casper-Bloom also recognized and thanked all of the directors. Ms. Ramsey also acknowledged Nathalie Nelson and the Parks & Recreation Department, also.

KATHERINE FULLERTON – HUNTERDON COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD - AMWELL VALLEY CONSERVANCY FARMLAND PRESERVATION, EAST AMWELL BLOCK 8, LOTS 25, 26, AND 26.02

Ms. Fullerton spoke about the resolution on tonight’s agenda regarding the farmland preservation of Block 8, Lots 25, 26 & 26.02.

CRAIG BAILEY, TREASURER - AMWELL VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Bailey approached the dais to request that the permit fee for a new generator be waived for the fire department. A motion made by Mr. Dendis, seconded by Ms. Ramsey to adopt a resolution to waive the generator permit fee for Amwell Valley Fire Department was conducted by roll call vote.

Recorded Vote:

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

Nay: XXX

Abstain: XXX

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

APPOINTMENT OF DAVID WANG-IVERSON – BOARD OF HEALTH – ALTERNATE NO. 1 – TERM TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2024

The appointment of Mr. Wang-Iverson was confirmed on motion of Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Mr. Mills and unanimously approved by voice vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-10 – SECOND READING/PUBLIC HEARING

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.

Mr. Whittlesey commented that after this ordinance was introduced, it was sent to the Board of Public Utilities who suggested some slight changes to the ordinances, typographical in nature, that have been amended since its introduction.

On motion of Ms. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. DiPirro and carried unanimously, it was moved to amend Ordinance 23-10.

PUBLIC HEARING

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

Frances Gavigan – Ms. Gavigan asked if Comcast was giving the town any money for allowing them to operate in the town.

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. Mills, seconded by Ms. Ramsey and carried unanimously, it was moved to adopt amended Ordinance No. 23-10.

Recorded Vote:

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

Nay: XXX

Abstain: XXX

ORDINANCE NO. 23-07 – FIRST READING/INTRODUCTION

“AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL PERSONNEL POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SECTION, BENEFITS SCHEDULE, SECTION FIVE, COMPENSATORY TIME”

Mayor Casper-Bloom stated that Ordinance No. 23-07 is being tabled.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-11 – FIRST READING/INTRODUCTION

Ordinance No. 23-11 was read by title by Ms. Giliberti “AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST AMWELL, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING AND ENCOURAGING ELECTRIC VEHICLE SUPPLY/SERVICE EQUIPMENT (EVSE) & MAKE-READY PARKING SPACES PURSUANT TO P.L. 2021, C. 171”

EXPLANATION

Mayor Casper-Bloom explained that this ordinance sets forth procedures for the installation of electric vehicle supply service equipment and make-ready parking spaces and establishes associated regulations and other standards within the township. This recommendation came from our Master Plan.

A motion made by Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Ms. Ramsey and carried unanimously, it was moved to introduce Ordinance No. 23-11 with a Public Hearing date of October 12, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 2023-114 ACCEPTANCE OF THE 2022 MUNICIPAL AUDIT
- 2023-115 ACCEPTANCE OF THE 2022 MUNICIPAL COURT AUDIT
- 2023-116 PERSONNEL – HIRING OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE SECRETARY – MILLS
- 2023-117 REFUND – ESCROW FUNDS – BLOCK 11/LOT 5 – 147 LEWIS STREET LLC
- 2023-118 RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE BILLS AND CLAIMS

On motion of Ms. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Mills and carried unanimously, it was moved to approve Resolution Nos. 2023-114 through 2023-118, as filed in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: XXX

Abstain: XXX

RESOLUTIONS

- 2023-119 RESOLUTION APPROVING PROPOSED ACQUISITION OF DEVELOPMENT EASEMENT DESIGNATED AS BLOCK 8, LOTS 25, 26 & 26.02

2023-120 AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE DOCUMENTS AND AGREEMENTS FOR THE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN WITH THE COUNTY OF HUNTERDON

2023-121 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE NJ STATE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Resolution 2023-119 – Mayor Casper-Bloom explained that this resolution gives final approval to the proposed acquisition of a development easement on the property owned by Amwell Valley Conservancy, designated as Block 8, Lots 25, 26 & 26.02.

On motion of Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Mr. Mills and carried unanimously, it was moved to approve Resolution No. 2023-119, as filed in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Recorded Vote

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

Resolutions 2023-120 & 2023-121– Mayor Casper-Bloom explained that as part of our Master Plan, some work needed to be done on the Farmland Preservation Plan. These resolutions authorize a plan grant agreement for participation in the Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Program in the amount of \$10,000.

On motion of Ms. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. DiPirro and carried unanimously, it was moved to approve Resolution No. 2023-120, as filed in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Recorded Vote

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

On motion of Mr. Mills, seconded by Ms. Ramsey and carried unanimously, it was moved to approve Resolution No. 2023-121, as filed in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Recorded Vote

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

Resolution 2023-122 – Mayor Casper-Bloom explained that this resolution is to promote DPW employee, Travis Diminick, to DPW Supervisor, at the rate of \$27.00 per hour effective September 16, 2023.

On motion of Mr. DiPirro, seconded by Mr, Mills and carried unanimously, it was moved to approve Resolution No. 2023-122, as filed in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Recorded Vote

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

Resolution 2023-123 – Mr. Dendis explained that our DPW employees are working an 8.5-hour day and are paid for an 8-hour day. This resolution will adjust their hours to an 8-hour work day effective on Monday, September 18, 2023.

On motion of Ms. Ramsey, seconded by Mr, Mills and carried unanimously, it was moved to approve Resolution No. 2023-123, as filed in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: XXX

Abstain: XXX

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

RECYCLING SHED

Ms. Ramsey spoke about the removal of the existing recycling shed and the replacement of a new one. The Recycling Committee has put aside \$16,000 from their Clean Communities Grant. Quotes are still needed for the tear-down and removal of electrical from the existing shed to know how much the project will cost in full. The grant money will only cover 85% of the total cost. The township would need to cover the other 15%.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Mayor Casper-Bloom thanked Renee Stemcovski for her work on the Historic Preservation Committee as she has resigned as of October 10th. She will be missed. Aimee Mills, our Ringoes Village Advisory Secretary will now be the secretary for the Historic Preservation Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

RESCUE SQUAD

Mr. Dendis commented that the Rescue Squad is struggling for members and we are relying on mutual aid with Lambertville and Flemington who does bill for this service. He inquired if any of the residents knew anyone who wanted to be an EMT. The training is free, but it does take time. He asked the public if anyone had any suggestions.

Frances Gavigan – Ms. Gavigan stated that the Fire Company has a fire district tax for funding in addition to donations. In the past, the Township would give financial support to the rescue squad. She's not sure if people are aware that they are not funded by tax payer dollars. She thinks that some type of stable funding from the township would be helpful as well as reaching out to the high schools to see if young people can be recruited. Mr. Dendis commented that it costs about \$600.00 - \$700.00 to staff a crew of 2 EMT's for 12 hours which comes to about \$150,000 to \$160,000 per year, which is a lot of money for the township and that doesn't include equipment or supplies.

Noel Wiggins – Ms. Wiggins commented that Hunterdon County Polytech has a healthcare program and maybe some of those students could be recruited. Mr. Dendis responded that the students would have to be 18 years of age to ride the ambulance.

Rick Wolfe – Mr. Wolfe commented that if East Amwell Township were to fund \$150,000 a year with tax dollars that would save the insurance companies \$150,000 and would hoist that amount on the tax payers. As he understands it, most of the ambulances take the insurance coverage and do not take the rest of the balance owed.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Bills of the Evening – September 14, 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 Dante DiPirro, seconded by John Mills to approve the Administrative Reports was unanimously approved by voice vote.

CORRESPONDENCE

- *NEW JERSEY LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES*
- *UNITED STATES*
- *STATE OF NEW JERSEY*
NJ DEP - SUSPECTED HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE DISCHARGE
NOTIFICATION NJDEP CASE NUMBER: 23-08-28-1251-20

NJ DEP - SUSPECTED HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE DISCHARGE
NOTIFICATION NJDEP CASE NUMBER: 23-08-31-1607-57

- *HUNTERDON COUNTY*
- *EAST AMWELL TOWNSHIP*
AMY BILLERA, SCHOOL NURSE OF EAST AMWELL SCHOOL –
COMPLIMENTING SUMMER PLAYGROUND PROGRAM
- *SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES*
- *MISCELLANEOUS*

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.

Bob Kirchner – Mr. Kirchner expressed concerns over the landscaping business being operated at the property next door to him. He said that the one positive thing was that the junkyard was cleaned up in June. However, behind the pole barn there are truck beds, vehicles and containers. Most recently there’s a structure that was built off of the back of the pole barn. Township Attorney, Frank Whittlesey responded that he does not feel that the Township Committee should comment on an on-going enforcement matter that is being handled by the zoning official and he understands that there may have been zoning violations issued to the property owner. He said that Mr. Kirchner is free to file OPRA Requests for documentation. Mr. Whittlesey said he would follow up with the zoning official and he will convey what he finds out to Mr. Kirchner. Mr. Kirchner wants to know if there is a permit application for the structure that was put on the property. Mayor Casper-Bloom advised him to file an OPRA Request.

Frances Gavigan – Ms. Gavigan stated that she went back on the internet and found an article from February of 2016, where the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad charged \$800.00 per transport, at the time. After the insurance company pays their portion, the ambulance squad is required by state law to send out 3 billing notices for the balance of the bill, but they do not aggressively pursue payment. In response to Mr. Kirchner’s situation, Ms. Gavigan spoke about a shed that was on her property when she purchased it that was the neighbor’s shed.

Judy Adams – Ms. Adams asked Mr. Mills if he was able to get any statistical information from the State Police. Mr. Mills responded that aside from catalytic converter thefts, there isn’t much information to pass along. Mr. Dendis commented that the State Police does not have the same tracking system as other local police, so it is difficult to report the data.

Rick Wolfe – Mr. Wolfe complimented the new website format. He also commended the work that the Mayor and Committee have been doing and thanked them for their effort.

Seeing there were no further comments, a motion made by Dante DiPirro, seconded by John Mills 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 Mr. Mills to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Giliberti, RMC
Township Clerk

10/12/2023
Date Approved