

WESTAMPTON TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

7:00 PM Regular Meeting Minutes

April 20, 2021

The meeting was called to order and opened at 7:03 PM by Mayor Sandy Henley. Requirements of the Sunshine Law were read. This meeting was advertised in the Burlington County Times on January 4, 2021. This meeting was held remotely via telephone conference call and the Zoom app. The flag was saluted and there was a moment of silence.

Roll Call:

Committeeman DeSilva	Present
Committeeman Eckart	Present
Mayor Henley	Present
Committeewoman Mungo	Present
Committeeman Wisniewski	Present

Administrator Wendy Gibson and Marion Karp, Clerk, were present. Robert Wright, Township Solicitor, and Ronald Gordon, COAH counsel, were also present.

Approve Agenda – motion to approve the agenda made by Ms. Mungo; second by Mr. Wisniewski. All voted yes.

Minutes of the 4/6/21 meeting; executive session minutes of 4/6/21; motion to approve by Mr. DeSilva; second by Mr. Wisniewski. All voted yes, Ms. Mungo abstained.

OPM Mailbox – Nancy Burkley had submitted several questions for the Committee.

Scheduled Appointments: None

Public Comments on Agenda Items

Nancy Burkley – asked if the Committee got raises this year. She then asked about vehicles and what they were for the firehouse. The vehicles to be purchased are two Tahoes; one is to replace one that is nearly 17 years old. The money is coming out of the fire prevention bureau fund. She asked why they were so expensive; Craig Farnsworth stated that they include emergency lights, all equipment and upfit materials. She asked about the correspondence received from the water company; she asked if the Township could find out what the fee

for Westampton would be. Wendy said there is a special section on the Township website regarding the water company.

Monthly Reports: Police, WTES reports

New Business: None

Ordinances:

a. 4-2021 Ordinance to Amend the Code of Township of Westampton, Chapter 250, Zoning (second reading, motion & second required, then open to public) – this ordinance supplements Chapter 250 by adding the Agrihood Mixed Use Zone. Motion to approve made by Mr. Wisniewski; seconded by Mr. DeSilva. This was opened to the public for comment.

Bill Rafuse, Fernbrooke Drive – he didn't see a rezoning map; Marion Karp explained that the map was contained within the agenda packet and has been posted on the website twice; he wants to know where the warehouse is going to be put on the site. It is nearest the Hilton Garden Inn. When the Hilton went in, the Fernbrooke residents negotiated for a berm, along with trees and a fence. It was explained to Mr. Rafuse that this would not be possible until the site was actually developed and a plan was brought before the Land Development Board.

John Wisniewski spoke, as a member of the Land Development Board, he thought they always looked out for the residents and their needs. He also spoke about the number of homes that was planned for the opposite side of the site; he himself had concerns about how this would increase taxes and overcrowd the schools. He explained that it is impossible to predict the future but the best they could do was to try to plan for it.

Mayor Henley explained that the Hancock Family are Westampton residents as well and they do have the right to sell and or develop their land.

Bryan O'Neal, 15 Mayfaire Circle – asked if the Township Committee was responsible for rezoning land in the community. This rezoning of the Hancock Farm was part of the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan; it starts with the Committee and then goes back to the LDB for review. He asked who determines that you have to have affordable housing in certain areas. Ron Gordon, solicitor, explained that each municipality has the obligation to provide a reasonable opportunity for affordable housing. It is a constitutional obligation; if not provided, a municipality can be stripped of home rule and the courts will take over. Generally, there is a 20% set aside for affordable housing, for rental units there is a 15% set aside for affordable housing. The municipality **must** zone to allow for this housing.

Susan Baldassare, 429 West Country Club Drive – has concerns about the size of the development and the tax burden. She was concerned that the development would come in with a PILOT. Mayor Henley explained that there is no PILOT deal and that they don't usually agree to them for residential developments. Ron Gordon explained that the only way to stop development is to use the powers of eminent domain and seize the property. All the Township has done is to set the boundaries, nothing is being done until an application is brought before the LDB; the market will dictate how the property is developed. She was worried that they wouldn't be paying taxes and that the other residents would have to support them.

There being no further comment from the public, the meeting was closed. All voted yes.

b. 5-2021 Ordinance Authorizing Westampton Township to Enter into a Financial Agreement with Westampton Logistics Urban Renewal, LLC, Block 902, Lots 1, 2 & 3 (first reading, motion & second required) – this ordinance authorizes the Township to enter into a PILOT agreement with MRP Industrial on land that was designated as a redevelopment area, as per the attached agreement. Motion to approve made by Ms. Mungo; seconded by Mr. Eckart. All voted yes.

Resolutions:

a. 53-21 Payment of Vouchers – this resolution approves the payment of bills through 4/20/21. Motion to approve made by Mr. DeSilva; seconded by Mr. Wisniewski. All voted yes.

b. 54-21 Contact Person, EPT Attorney Consultation Service – this resolution appoints Wendy Gibson as the contact person and Stephen Ent as the additional contact person. Motion to approve made by Mr. DeSilva; seconded by Mr. Eckart. All voted yes.

c. 55-21 Refund Duplicate Tax Payment – this resolution refunds taxes that were overpaid due to a payment by both a title company and a mortgage company as per the attached memo. Motion to approve by Mr. Wisniewski; seconded by Mr. DeSilva. All voted yes.

d. 56-21 Refund Homestead Rebate – this resolution allows for the refund of a homestead rebate on a property that is exempt from taxes as per the attached memo. Motion to approve by Mr. DeSilva; seconded by Mr. Wisniewski. All voted yes.

e. 57-21 Adopt 2021 Municipal Budget – this resolution adopts the 2021 Municipal Budget. The total for the Budget is \$12,467,275.00; the local purpose tax rate is .663, an increase of .015 over last year. Motion to approve made by Mr. DeSilva; seconded by Ms. Mungo. All voted yes.

f. 58-21 Lease/Purchase 2 Vehicles – this resolution authorizes the Township to lease/purchase two vehicles for WTES, not to exceed \$140,000. Motion to approve made by Mr. Wisniewski; seconded by Ms. Mungo. All voted yes.

Correspondence: OPM mailbox – questions were received from Nancy Burkley. Wendy Gibson had already answered her questions.

Committee Liaison Reports: None

Dates to Remember:

Next Township Committee Meeting – May 4, 2021 @ 7 PM

Open to public Comment

Nancy Burkley, Olive Street – May 1st, Rancocas Ham Dinner, takeout, 4 PM -7 PM, \$15. Many from the village work with helping with this event. She asked at what point can people who are building ask for a PILOT deal. She wanted to know if we could have an ordinance that dictates when they must apply for one.

Bryan O'Neal, 15 Mayfaire Circle – asked about Virtua Hospital, rumors have been going around that they won't be building the hospital; did the Committee have any information on this.

Committee Members Comments

Mr. Wisniewski – commented regarding the hospital; he believes they are going forward with improving the existing hospital in Mount Holly. The new hospital may not actually come to fruition in Westampton. Regarding PILOTS; he thinks any proposal would have to be presented at the beginning of the project. Although a lot of people hate warehouses, they bring in good ratables with the least amount of services required as compared to commercial or residential construction. He welcomes people coming out and giving their input.

Mayor Henley – thanks to John for doing a great job answering questions as well as our professionals; the Committee tries to put people in place to help them make good decisions for the Township. They truly do care about Westampton. There were many meetings at which the Hancock Farms development was discussed. They are residents just like everyone else.

John Wisniewski – has family members who live in Fernbrooke; they will try to do their best for the residents that live there.

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Mungo; second by Mr. Wisniewski. All were in favor.

There were no further comments and the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marion Karp, Municipal Clerk