

WESTAMPTON TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING  
7:00 PM Regular Meeting Minutes  
September 5, 2023

The meeting was called to order and opened at 7:00 PM by Mayor Sandy Henley. Requirements of the Sunshine Law were read. This meeting was advertised in the Burlington County Times on January 6, 2023. This meeting was held in person in the Westampton Township Municipal Building Courtroom. The flag was saluted and there was a moment of silence.

**Roll Call:**

Committeewoman Burkley	Present
Committeeman Carr	Present
Mayor Henley	Present
Committeewoman Mungo	Present
Committeewoman Wright	Present

Township Administrator Wendy Gibson, Township Solicitor Robert Wright ,Acting Chief of Police Brian Ferguson and Fire/EMS Chief Craig Farnsworth were also present.

**Proclamation:** Proclaiming the month of September as Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

**Presentation Resolution:** 131-23 Resolution Appointing promotion of Patrolman Dylan Relos

Motion to approve was made by Ms. Mungo; seconded by Ms.Burkley.

Motion carried 5-0.

Ayes: Burkley, Carr, Mungo, Wright, Mayor Henley

Naye: none

Abstain: none

**Presentation:** Oath of Office for Patrolman Dylan Relos

**Workshop:**

**American Legion Building**

Mayor Henley opened the workshop by stating that the American legion received a grant of twenty thousand., They asked if we could assist with helping them finish repairs to the porch and the roof. The interior of the building is also bad, and the appliances are old. He asked the committee for their thoughts.

Terrance Brown, 9 Pine Tree Drive, asked if the Township owned the building, and if the Township would be considered the landlord of the building. He referenced grant language stipulating number of years of ownership of the building, and what responsibility the Township would have as the landlord.

He stated that the building needs a lot of work, and he believes that the Township has an obligation to maintain the safety of the building.

Odie Carr stated he has had an opportunity to visit the building and confirmed that there are some unsafe conditions. He is in favor of dedicating funds to help with the repairs and not jeopardize the strategic positioning.

Audrey Kerstetter, 36 Dover Road, stated that her husband is a member of the American Legion, and she stated that organizations hold fundraisers and seek out companies to help fund projects and get grants. She suggested that the Township look into those opportunities before giving money away.

Mayor Henley mentioned he knows that some of the larger companies in the township may be able to donate supplies, and he agrees that there could be additional donations made to the American Legion.

Committeewoman Burkley asked where the money would come from the municipal budget if it was given to the American Legion. Mayor Henley stated it would come from the community development fund, where \$250,000 was donated from a warehouse project. He stated there is money left over in the fund after the basketball courts were reconstructed. He also stated that the entire sum of funds would not be allocated to the American Legion, and that the funds are to be used to different parts of the community.

Ms. Burkley agreed that the project falls under community development and agreed that the funds should be provided up to a certain amount. If the Legion needed more funds, they should approach the committee with the scope of work and amount needed.

Mayor Henley and Committeewoman Burkley discussed the amount of the grant and the usage of the funds as specified by the grant given to the Legion. Mayor Henley suggested that the work be done with the original funding of the grant, and then the Legion can come to the Township to ask for what they need.

Ms. Kerstetter asked if the building was under any historic preservation laws, to which Mayor Henley said it was not.

Mr. Brown stated that he believes the Township is legally responsible for the building repairs, and he was concerned about the expenditure of funds for the repairs by the tenant.

Mayor Henley stated that the work must be completed as outlined in the grant before additional work can be completed.

Mr. Carr and the Township Solicitor discussed liability based on the lease agreement. Ms. Burkley added information regarding liability insurance for the Rancocas Fire House building.

Mr. Brown commented on the liability and the legality of grant agreements and compelled the Township to move forward with repairs to ensure safety.

Mr. Wright confirmed it is customary to find private financing privately and for the Township to fill the gap.

Mayor Henley stated he was there when Congressman Kim toured the building and worked with the members of the Legion to remain transparent about the funding dedicated to building repairs.

Mayor Henley and Mr. Brown continued to discuss the liability and condition of the building and the dedication of the Township to repairing township assets.

### **Economic Advisory Committee**

Mayor Henley stated that this was a topic that residents have requested. The Economic Advisory Committee would be a committee to help businesses come into Westampton Township.

Ms. Burkley stated that Ms. Gibson had given her the contact information of an interested person, who has yet to return Ms. Burkley's calls.

Mayor Henley stated that he has contacted several individuals who are interested in participating. He stated that there needs to be an odd number of members in order to vote. Ms. Burkley requested a member of the Land Development Board be a member, as they would be aware of the upcoming changes in the township.

Mr. Brown inquired about how the committee will be structured. Mayor Henley confirmed that it would mirror some of the same groups in other townships to go in the right direction and be inclusive of all businesses, while gaining the support of the residents.

Mr. Brown requested a business resource site for assistance for business owners on the website. Ms. Burkley stated that the State has an economic resource organization that can be utilized. Mayor Brown agreed with these suggestions.

All in favor to close the workshop.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

- a. July 11, 2023 Executive Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve was made by Mr. Carr; seconded by Mayor Henley.

Motion carried 3-1-1.

Ayes: Carr, Wright, Mayor Henley

Naye: Burkley

Abstain: Mungo

b. August 8, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve was made by Mr. Carr; seconded by Ms. Mungo.

Motion carried 5-0.

Ayes: Burkley, Carr, Mungo, Wright, Mayor Henley

Naye: none

Abstain: none

**Open Meeting for Public Comments on Agenda Items Only:**

Diego Minacapelli, 211 Bridge Street, wanted to discuss Ordinance 10-2023: Chickens. He stated he is in favor of having chickens, but his neighborhood is not properly zoned. He is requesting to have the Ordinance amended to include zones R2 and R6. He also proposed additional elements to be amended to include permitting and education. He stated that he had sent a letter to the Committee with the recommendations he would like to see.

He also commended the Committee on the proclamation for Prostate Awareness. He stated he has a medical degree and stressed the importance of how to diagnose it and the awareness of this disease.

All in favor to close public comment.

**Ordinances, Second Reading, Open to Public Comment:**

- a. 9-2023 An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 12-1992: An Ordinance Amending the Code of the Township of Westampton to Provide for Licensing and Regulation of Towing and Storage Services

Motion to approve was made by Ms. Burkley; seconded by Ms. Mungo.

Motion carried 5-0.

Ayes: Burkley, Carr, Mungo, Wright, Mayor Henley

Naye: none

Abstain: none

Ms. Burkley asked if the Ordinance was applicable when residents contacted private towing companies for assistance. Township Administrator Wendy Gibson confirmed that it was only applicable when the Police Department required the services.

- b. 10-2023 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 88 of the Township Code of Westampton

Motion to table was made by Ms. Burkley; seconded by Ms. Mungo.

Motion carried 5-0.

Ayes: Carr, Mungo, Wright, Mayor Henley

Naye: Burkley

Abstain: none

Mayor Henley stated the committee continues to listen to the residents, and the suggestions made sense. Mr. Wright confirmed that he received the letter from the Administrator, and discussed the consistency of other townships' guidelines that would be appropriate for Westampton.

**Resolutions:**

- a. 130-23 Payment of Vouchers – this resolution approves the payment of bills through 09/05/2023.

Motion to approve was made by Mr. Carr; seconded by Ms. Wright.

Motion carried 5-0.

Ayes: Burkley, Carr, Mungo, Wright, Mayor Henley

Naye: none

Abstain: none

**CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS** - RESOLUTIONS NOTE: Consent Agenda items are considered to be routine and will be enacted with a single motion; any items requiring expenditure are supported by a Certification of Availability of funds; any items requiring discussion will be removed from the Consent Agenda.

- a. 132-23 Resolution Authorizing Sale of Microsoft Surface Pro
- b.133-23 Resolution Appointing Contact Person for Employment Practices Liability for JIF
- c.134-23 Resolution Authorizing Emergency Repairs to the Westampton Township Municipal Building
- d.135-23 Resolution Imposing Tax Lien
- e.136-23 Resolution Accepting Donation of Preowned Furniture
- f.137-23 Resolution Accepting the USPCA AKC Reunite Grant
- g.138-23 Resolution Approving Refunds Not Properly Issued for TDV

Motion to approve consent agenda resolutions was made by Ms. Burkley; seconded by Mr. Carr.

Motion carried 5-0.

Ayes: Burkley, Carr, Mungo, Wright, Mayor Henley

Naye: none

Abstain: none

**Open Meeting for Public Comment:**

Desire Cancila, 45 Dover Road, wanted to ask the Committee to put something on the agenda to discuss the homeless shelter at the County, and what they plan to do about the safety. She wants to know what the Township's position is on the burden of providing safety.

Audrey Kirstetter, 36 Dover Road, commented about the homeless shelter and where the homeless are residing within the town.

She also commented about a large party on East Pennington, which is being used as a fundraiser home and a party house. She stated there was loud music and outside drinking. She stated that a realtor had a fundraiser for businesses to come out. She said the township is starting to go downhill and that she is unhappy. She doesn't want people roaming around and does not want Air B&Bs in the town.

Vincent Parrott, 204 S. Hill Drive, commented that there are parking lots throughout the development, but kids are playing basketball and football in the parking lots and cars are being hit. He stated that people don't want to park in the parking lots, and are now double-parking in their driveways, which block the sidewalks. He contacted the Police Department, who informed him there was no Ordinance preventing a basketball net in the parking lot or on the street.

He also stated that there is a vehicle that has been sitting for a long time, and wanted to know how long before the Township considers the vehicle to be abandoned. He stated that he will start coming to every meeting, because he's not happy where Westampton is headed.

Tanya Ray, 20 Westwind Way, commented that the Spring Meadows tennis courts are in bad shape and asked if the Township could revitalize them. She thinks the area is going downhill and would like to see community support.

She also stated that she is beginning to see homeowners erecting fences and roofs that are against deed restrictions.

She also noted that there are cars parked illegally on the wrong side of the street, and that officers had driven past without stopping to ticket them.

All in favor to close public comment.

#### **Dates to Remember:**

Next Township Committee Meeting Sept 19th @ 7PM, Historic Commission Sept 27th @ 7PM, Land Development Board Meeting Sept 6th @7PM, Recreation Committee Meeting Sept 13th @7PM, Timbuctoo Day Sept 23rd Time TBD, Fire Prevention Open House Oct 12th @6PM.

Mayor Henley commented that the Timbuctoo Day event date has changed to September 30<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Committee Liaison Reports/Comments:**

Committeewoman Burkley commented that she has been to the Commissioner's meetings in the County and communicated with Commissioner Felicia Hopson regarding the shelter, but there was no specific communication and she felt they were hiding things from her. She stated that the county owns property in the township, but they don't pay taxes. She stated the Township will need to utilize their own services for the upcoming

development, and with the shelter, the Township will need to take on more responsibilities. She requested that the County assist with the burden to the Township. Committeeman Carr congratulated Patrolman Relos and stated that he hopes he will make a career in Westampton Township.

He stated he supports to help renovate the American Legion Building, an organization that advocates patriotism selflessly and we have an opportunity to help them. He stated the Committee approved the playground in spring meadows to be renovated. Ms. Gibson stated that the old playground had been demolished and that the Township was still waiting for the new equipment to be installed, with a projected start date of the week of September 11th.

He stated that he understood residents' concerns about the emergency shelter and confirmed that it is not a place where people will stay long-term. He stated that he has been discussing the shelter with Commissioner Hopson to try to get some information about what is going to happen.

Committeewoman Mungo congratulated Officer Relos and welcomed him aboard. She also commented that she supports the American Legion and helping to fund the repairs. She thanked the residents for coming out and voicing their concerns. She shares their same concerns. She feels confident and safe in the neighborhood due to the Police and Fire Departments and the community.

Committeewoman Wright congratulated Officer Relos. She thanked the residents for coming out. She stated that she's a newer resident to the Township, but has witnessed some of the concerns, especially interactions with children at the Wawa. She stated she hopes to get some answers from the County regarding some of the residents' concerns.

Mayor Henley congratulated Patrolman Relos and stated that adding another Police Officer is never a bad thing. He stated that in the last three to four months, we have added more officers to assist with the growing township.

He stated that he spoke to the County to set up a date and time for them to address the Committee and residents on the Emergency Shelter. He stated the County advised that the Emergency Shelter will help with the lingering homelessness within the township. He advised that he provide everyone enough time to plan to attend to voice their opinions and concerns.

Mayor Henley then commented on the parking lot in Rolling Hills, stating that he had discussed the issue with the former Police Chief. He stated that he felt that the best approach was to provide a warning before ticketing. He stated that the parking lot will either be empty enough for kids to play in it, or there will be a lot full of vehicles that no one wants.

He commented on the Spring Meadows playground and stated that the basketball court will be resurfaced. Ms. Gibson stated that the playground will be replaced sectionally

because each area is very expensive. When asked, she advised that the playground vendor isn't the right vendor for resurfacing courts. Mayor Henley stated that he has been consistently following up on the playground, because the new development does not have facilities for the kids to play and will be coming over to Spring Meadows.

He then commented on the residents' concerns about the fences, stating that there are deed restrictions that cannot be broken.

Township Solicitor Bob Wright confirmed there is an Ordinance that prohibits vinyl fencing where there is not a deed restriction, which can be amended; however, cannot be changed for neighborhoods that have an HOA or deed restriction that outlines the type of fence allowed.

Mayor Henley stated that he encourages residents to come to the meeting and ask questions, so that the Committee will know what needs to be addressed.

Ms. Gibson confirmed that the Mayor asked for a second workshop to discuss the fence Ordinance, which will be on the agenda for an upcoming meeting.

Mayor Henley stated that the Township cannot police different colored doors or roofs, that the residents need to seek a civil suit to resolve the issue.

Tanya Ray, 20 Westwind Way approached the Committee stating that there was a supply issue during the COVID-19 pandemic, and certain materials were not able to be procured. She stated that **if she followed the proper procedure, her home would be the one to stand out.**

### **Executive Session**

Resolution No. 09.05.2023 - Resolution Authorizing the Township Committee and Support Staff to Meet in Private Session and Authorizing the Exclusion of the Public From that Portion of the Meeting Dealing with Specific Issues Requiring Non-Public Discussions: Attorney-Client Privilege – Personnel.

Motion to approve executive session resolution was made by Ms. Mungo; seconded by Ms. Burkley.

Motion carried 5-0.

Ayes: Burkley, Carr, Mungo, Wright, Mayor Henley

Naye: none

Abstain: none

The committee exited the regular meeting at 8:21 pm and entered into Executive Session at 8:26 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 9:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Wendy Gibson, Acting Municipal Clerk