

WESTAMPTON TOWNSHIP

6:00 PM CLOSED SESSION 7:00 PM REGULAR MEETING

MARCH 11, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mayor Carolyn Chang. Requirements of the Sunshine Law were read. This meeting was advertised in the Burlington County Times January 3, 2014. The flag was saluted and there was a moment of silence.

Roll Call:

Committeeman Daniels	Present
Committeeman Maybury	Present
Committeewoman Teleisa	Present
Committeeman Thorpe	Present
Mayor Chang	Present

George Saponaro, Solicitor, was present.

Donna Ryan, Clerk/Administrator and Marion Karp, Deputy Clerk were present.

Minutes of the 2/25/2014 meeting – motion to approve by Ms. Teleisa; second by Mr. Maybury. All voted yes, Mr. Thorpe abstained.

Scheduled Appointments

None

Comments on agenda items

Janet Curran – is surprised that the bond ordinance is back on the agenda; she thought it was tabled at the last meeting and she thought it would be held until the budget was approved. Although PDA installed the first soccer turf field, the football field still remains unfinished and she would like to see it finished first. She wanted to know when Township residents would be allowed to use the turf field.

Louis Lopez – asked about the appointment of the Deputy Court Clerk. Mayor Chang explained this was necessary due to an illness within their office.

Gil Gehin Scott – asked about the refund for Jefferson St. Partners tax appeal; he asked if it was reflected in the budget. It would not be, Donna explained. Regarding the PDA field, the costs are vastly different than the figures on the manufacturer's website. He said that our figures are larger for maintenance of a grass field than what is shown on the manufacturer's website. Regarding the schedule of usage it appears as if PDA is mainly using it. He asked if a 50/50 deal was the best they could strike with PDA, did the Committee try to negotiate?

Chris Parente asked if there was any kind of a tree buffer zone being considered to absorb sound. The noise level is louder each year, especially on the weekends, from early in the morning until late at night. People are also using air horns while in the stands. It has changed the quality of their neighborhood.

Anthony D'Errico has questions about the legitimacy of the numbers in the PDA report. He spoke regarding projected hours of usage of the fields; the standards say that a turf field can be used about 3000 hours per year without significant damage to it; however, we are projecting about 50% more hours of usage – 4400 hours per year. He had concerns regarding how long the field would last versus how long we would be financing the field. Removal costs are also tremendous. He has only heard the pros regarding the installation of the field and none of the cons. He asks that the Committee spend more time looking at this to see if it really benefits Westampton. He offered to volunteer his time to look into it. He spoke regarding an increase in crime related to the fields; the Mayor answered that there has not been an associated increase in crime. He found that hard to believe with all the people that this attracts. Lieutenant Otto confirmed that there is no increase in crime.

Old Business

None

New Business

Proclamation – K9 Veteran's Day 3/13/14 – the Mayor read the Proclamation aloud into the record. Mr. Daniels thanked the Committee for approving this proclamation. The Township has two police K9s and a fire dog.

Appoint Jodie Termini Temporary Deputy Court Clerk – motion to appoint was made by Mr. Daniels; Ms. Teleisa seconded the motion. All voted yes.

Appoint Bart Fitzpatrick to Recreation Advisory Committee, 3 year term – motion to appoint was made by Ms. Teleisa; Mr. Daniels seconded the motion. All voted yes.

Resolutions

33-14 Payment of Vouchers – motion to approve by Mr. Maybury; seconded by Mr. Daniels. All voted yes.

34-14 Approve Tax Appeal Settlement, Jefferson St. Partners – motion to approve by Mr. Maybury; seconded by Ms. Teleisa. All voted yes. Several years of the appeal were withdrawn which amounted to \$337,000. We did very well with this appeal.

35-14 MACCS Contract – motion to approve by Mr. Maybury; seconded by Mr. Daniels. All voted yes.

36-14 Addendum to Master Interlocal Service Agreement, Police Dept., New World System – motion to approve by Mr. Daniels; seconded by Ms. Teleisa. All voted yes.

37-14 Hire Police Officer, Joshua Woods – motion to approve by Mr. Maybury; seconded by Mr. Daniels. All voted yes.

38-14 2014 Proposed Municipal Budget – motion to approve by Mr. Maybury; seconded by Mr. Daniels. All voted yes. Public hearing and adoption will take place on April 8, 2014.

39-14 Executive Session – for discussion of personnel issues; motion to approve by Mr. Daniels; seconded by Ms. Teleisa. All voted yes, Mr. Daniels abstained.

Ordinances

2-2014 Bond Ordinance (first reading) – motion to approve by Mr. Thorpe; seconded by Mr. Daniels. All voted yes. Mr. Thorpe stated that he has spent an enormous amount of time and discussion on this issue. The fund is a dedicated fund and is in the budget and does not involve a tax increase. The fund was approved by tax payers years ago for this very reason. There are a lot of benefits; although there are some negatives. He believes that the benefits outweigh the negatives; he drove by the fields last Saturday, March 8 and the turf field was the only field being used as the others were not able to be used. It is nice seeing kids using the fields as early as March. Our maintenance costs will be less than that of a grass field. They would like to set up a new line item in the budget as a revenue item specifically for the fields; hopefully reducing our cost to less than 50%. The township is guaranteed \$10,000 per year as well as a minimum of an additional \$15,000 per year in regards to an agreement signed with Sportsflex, LLC. A side effect of the sports complex is bringing more business into town; we get 3% of each hotel room that is rented; people use the restaurants in town as well.

Mr. Daniels – this has been a matter that has given all of them great agita; it is significant to the community. Personally he believes this is an opportunity that needs to be taken advantage of; we couldn't have done it without the involvement of PDA. He has listened to the people as part of his due diligence; he thanks all of the residents. Our recreation programs are very rich across the board; our life in Westampton has been truly enriched. Todd is the expert on this; and Donna finds a way to make things happen in this town. It is relevant that the turf field is being used this early in the spring. He attended the Recreation and Parks convention last week; he wanted to have the opportunity to talk to other Mayors and Committee members to see what the best and brightest are offering

from a recreation perspective. Regarding the Vision Plan, it recommended that the Township was in need of more recreational opportunities. He is open and willing to meet with anyone as are all the Committee members are to discuss this. He hopes they understand how he feels about this matter. He thinks it is important to build our community in this manner.

Mr. Maybury – well said Mr. Thorpe and Mr. Daniels. In 2004 the land for the fields was purchased with Open Space funds; he wasn't part of the Committee at that time. In 2008 the vote came up to build Phase 1; he was opposed to it at that time like some are opposed to the phase 2 tonight. He voted no but the vote went through; since that time we have spent close to 6 million dollars; he came in tonight with his mind not made up; he was actually inclined to vote no. However he thinks that it makes sense; the project looked like it was doomed for failure but it was 100% successful.

Ms. Teleisa – wants everyone to know that the Committee has spent hours on this; they have done lots of research and have talked to their fellow neighbors and residents to get their feelings. Nothing is perfect, there are pros and cons; they feel that this project will help to spur growth and bring money into the town. PDA is an extremely stable national organization; this is a great opportunity to pair with them; we will be recognized. She was truly on the fence for a long time; she feels comfortable with her vote now.

Mayor Chang – was never on the fence; she was always for this project. Her children, neighbors and friends have benefited. It is a wonderful opportunity to put Westampton on the map and her vote will be yes.

3-2014 (first reading) – Dedication of Certain Township Revenues to Open Space and Historic Preservation – motion to approve by Mr. Maybury; seconded by Mr. Thorpe. All voted yes.

Correspondence

DVRCP – 2015 Transportation & Community Development Initiative Funding – this is an application for a grant; we will submit for this.

Rancocas Valley Clergy Association – Stand Up, Speak Out, 3/31/14

Westampton Township Public Schools – Diversity Essay & Art Contest – letter of appreciation received from Ginny Grossman, Superintendent

JIF Elected Officials Seminar – 3/12/14 @ 6 PM, Charley's Other Brother

Dates to remember

JIF Elected Officials Seminar – 3/12/2014 @ Charley's Other Brother

Workshops

None

Open to public Comment

Janet Curran – is disappointed; Todd has always done a wonderful job, we have a good Recreation Department. What are we doing about open space?

Gil Gehin Scott – any chance he could find out about Ordinance 3-2014. The Mayor explained that any revenue generated from the fields would be dedicated to Open Space, Historic Preservation and to paying down the bond. It would not go back to be used for Recreation.

Joe Krulik – congratulated Mr. Daniels on his enthusiasm; he thinks it is a great idea to dedicate the revenue as in Ordinance 3-2014.

Chris Parente – wondered if any more work was going on with the Township website. Mayor Chang advised him that we are getting a new website soon.

Anthony D'Errico – asked why we are bonding for the full amount if PDA is paying for half? He also asked why we are bonding for the new turf field if we have a dedicated fund where taxpayer dollars go for Open Space, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

Comments

John Augustino – daylight savings time; change batteries in smoke detectors.

Mr. Daniels – attended the National PTA Public Policy meeting in Washington DC this past week.

Mr. Thorpe – attended the Westampton Township Board of Education meeting which was very enlightening for him. They are a wonderful group of people who are extremely supportive of the children. The 2014 budget was introduced this evening; they were able to keep all staffing, no services were cut.

Ms. Teleisa – thanked Mr. Thorpe for attending the Board of Education meeting last night.

Mayor Chang – had the honor to present a proclamation to the AME Zion Church in Burlington Township as part of Black History Month; it was a wonderful service. The church began here in Timbuctoo. Lastly, she wants to thank every member of the Committee, our Solicitor and Donna for the amount of time, questions and concerns during the budget process and the PDA issues; they could not have worked harder. It is a testament to the fact that they all love their community.

There were no further comments and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Marion Karp, Deputy Clerk